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**USING PROJECTS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SENSE OF INITIATIVE
IN ENGLISH LESSONS IN GRADE 5**

DIPLOMA PAPER

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**PROJEKTU IZMANTOŠANA SKOLĒNU INICIATĪVAS UZŅEMŠANĀS
UZLABOŠANAI ANĢĻU VALODAS STUNDĀS 5.KLASĒS**

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I declare that this study is my own and does not contain any unacknowledged work from any source.

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ABSTRACT

The project “Skola 2030” is gradually introducing changes into the Latvian education system, competence-based education being one of them. The educators are expected to teach students eight key competences of life-long learning; however, some of them, such as a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, is more difficult to develop. Thus this case study was conducted to explore whether projects could be used to improve students’ sense of initiative in English lessons in Grade 5. Three various projects were implemented into the lessons, and a journal, observation checklists, and questionnaires used to assess if any changes had taken place. It was concluded that the relationship between the students majorly influenced the results and the most distinguished differences could be seen in a classroom with more peaceful, quiet children.

Keywords: competence-based education, key competences, sense of initiative, projects.

ANOTĀCIJA

Projekts “Skola 2030” pakāpeniski ievieš pārmaiņas Latvijas izglītības sistēmā, kompetenču izglītībai esot vienai no šīm izmaiņām. No skolotājiem tiek gaidīts, ka viņi iemācīs skolēniem astoņas mūžizglītības galvenās pamatprasmes, tomēr dažas no tām, piemēram, pašiniciatīva un uzņēmējdarbība, ir grūtāk attīstāmas. Šis atsevišķā gadījuma pētījums tāpēc tika veidots, lai izpētītu, vai projekti var tikt izmantoti skolēnu pašiniciatīvas uzlabošanai angļu valodas stundās piektajās klasēs. Trīs dažādi projekti tika iekļauti nodarbībās, un žurnāls, novērošanas kontrollapa un aptaujas tika izmantotas, lai noteiktu, vai kādas pārmaiņas bija notikušas. Tika noskaidrots, ka skolēnu savstarpējās attiecības pamatīgi ietekmēja rezultātu un ka vislielākās atšķirības varēja manīt klasē ar mierīgākiem, klusākiem skolēniem.

Atslēgas vārdi: kompetenču izglītība, pamatprasmes, pašiniciatīva, projekti.

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INTRODUCTION

According to the National Centre for Education (VISC, 2016) approximately every twenty years, the main approach to learning has changed. In the 1960s the emphasis shifted from individual learning to the actual learning process, in the 1980s the focus drifted from the learning process to the result, where the acquired knowledge was more important than the process leading to it. In the 2000s, it altered again and brought attention to sustaining skills and abilities; however, at this point, education is closely connected to lifelong learning and competences.

The term “lifelong learning” was introduced in 1971 in Denmark by Leslie Watkins (Jarvis, 2007). The main thought behind this concept can be seen in the manner of today’s teaching, many teachers have already implemented some aspects of it, and nevertheless, “Skola 2030” has stated that in a few years each subject will have to be taught in a competence-based approach. It is not looked upon as just a better way of teaching anymore, but as something that each teacher will have to intertwine with their subject’s content. If some competences such as digital competence and communicative competence seem easier to execute because of the many ways and methods how it can be applied to the lessons, then it might be more difficult to understand how to deliberately teach students the sense of initiative, how to make them want to learn and dedicate their time outside the school to deepen their knowledge in other aspects of the subject.

According to Erik Erikson (1998), “Initiative versus Guilt” is the third stage of a child’s psychological development, after “Trust versus Mistrust” and “Autonomy versus Shame.” Though children start developing this stage as young as at the age of 4 to 5 years, it is important to continue improving students’ sense of initiative, help them not to be afraid to devise new ideas, to take their time and do more than is asked of them, to invest themselves into new projects and continue self-learn.

Marylin Prince – Mitchell (2018) pointed out that, when a teacher wants to help students take more initiative, it is important to remember three things:

- The children have to choose the projects or activities themselves; it has to come from them.
- The activities must have challenges and rules; it must be complex enough and have some link to the real world, as well as have intrinsic rewards that are something else than getting a grade or being better than other classmates.

- The projects must take time, rather than be done in a few hours or days; it is better to concentrate on one thing for a longer period than do many activities one after another.

This Diploma Paper, therefore, explores what competence-based education is and how it differentiates from traditional education. It analyses the eight key competences and studies the necessity of each of them. Furthermore, it resources what strategies can help improve students' desire to learn new things, take the initiative, and research the information, devise new ideas. The method of using projects in the lessons is chosen to improve this competence, the process is closely monitored, and any differences in students' attitude are accounted for.

The **aim** of the Diploma Paper is to explore how using projects in English lessons can improve students' sense of initiative and their willingness to learn in Grade 5.

Therefore, the **objectives** for the Paper are the following:

1. To study the relevant literature on competence-based education, key competences and strategies on how to improve students' initiative in primary school;
2. To observe students in English lessons, mark their behavior and participation in a journal, as well as give them a questionnaire to gather information about their attitude towards learning and the language;
3. To carry out a variety of tasks and activities to help achieve the aim;
4. To ask an objective observer to monitor students in a lesson; give students the same questionnaire to track any progress;
5. To analyze the acquired data on how projects can help improve students' sense of initiative in English lessons in form 5.

The **research questions** are the following:

1. How does the competence-based education differ from traditional education?
2. What are the key competences?
3. How does the sense of initiative develop, and what strategies could be used to improve it?
4. How can implementing projects into lessons influence students' sense of initiative?
5. If and how do students display any initiative in English lessons before the implementation of projects?
6. How have the chosen methods altered students' attitude in lessons?

The author of the Diploma Paper chose case study as the **method of research** to conduct an in-depth study of what methods could help improve students' sense of initiative and their

willingness to learn and how these tasks and activities could influence students' attitude towards the language.

The research was carried out in Āgenskalns primary school from the middle of January until the end of April 2019. The **research sample** consisted of three groups of 5th-grade students, each group having 13, 14, and 17 students; 44 students altogether. Since Āgenskalns primary school is a German language instruction school, this was the first year these children were having English lessons, which meant that this was the first year they were directly learning the English language in the school environment.

The **methods of data collection** for this research were threefold – an observation checklist filled by an objective outsider at the beginning and the end of the practice to better track whether any progress could be seen, a journal to follow everyday participation and any evidence of an initiative from the students written by the Author of the Diploma Paper, and lastly a questionnaire in January and April to collect information from students about their attitude towards the English language and learning.

The **first chapter** of this Diploma Paper consists of an analysis of competence-based education and the main characterizations that differentiate it from traditional education. It is followed by a description of the eight key competences.

The **second chapter** explores the eight psychological development stages in a human's life, according to Erik Erikson and how the sense of initiative is developed. The next subchapters contain the analysis of the strategies that can be used to improve students' initiative and willingness to learn in English lessons in primary school, as well as examine the factors that should be considered before implementing projects into lessons.

The **third chapter** describes the implementation process of the chosen method, and analyses the data acquired from the observation checklists, journal, and questionnaires, mentioning any successes and failures that occurred during the research.

1. COMPETENCE-BASED EDUCATION

According to the information provided by the National Centre for Education (Valsts Izglītības Satura Centrs or VISC in Latvian), the main focus on education in Latvia has changed approximately every 20 years since the 1960s. Based on the information given in “Ceļā uz kompetenču pieeju mācībām” (VISC, 2016) in the 1960s, which was the time of industrialization, the emphasis in the education changed from individual learning to the actual process of learning. The students became more equal, and the syllabi that needed to be followed were established.

Approximately twenty years later, in the 1980s, the process of teaching changed again. The path to students gaining the knowledge was not as important as reaching the goal. The students still were considered equal and were not seen as individuals. The testing became standardized, which meant that students in every school took the same tests, and were expected to gain the same results.

In the 2000s, the process of globalization changed education. The Programme for International Student Assessment, commonly known as PISA tests, took place for the first time, observing students' knowledge in reading, mathematics, and science. This testing included many countries, giving the opportunity to observe how students in Latvia were doing in comparison to students from other cultures. Furthermore, the focus on teaching again changed from gaining knowledge to gaining skills and abilities that would be necessary for the future.

Finally, with the upcoming “Skola 2030” already in process, the approach to teaching changed again from simply gaining skills to competence-based education that focuses on eight key competences that each student should master while learning in school. Nowadays, each student is looked at as an individual with his or her weaknesses and strengths, learning approaches, etc.

Though this is a new approach for Latvian schools, competence-based education has been applied in many countries already during the last few years and in the first subchapter the concept of competence-based education will be analyzed and compared to the traditional teaching approach used in Latvian schools at the moment to emphasize the changes that the new education system will bring.

1.1. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMPETENCE- BASED EDUCATION AND TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

If looking for a one defined explanation on what characterizes a competence-based education, there is no answer. According to the Glossary of Education Reform (2014), competence-based learning “(...) refers to systems of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating that they have learned the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education. In public schools, competency-based systems use state learning standards to determine academic expectations and define “competency” or “proficiency” in a given course, subject area, or grade level (...)”. Based solely on this definition, competence-based teaching focuses on students acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary for the syllabi the school has set, and, what is more, closely followed. Therefore it is not quite clear how this competence-based approach is different from the education system that we have now. However, if we look at another source, Doctor Robert Mendenhall in 2012 has said the following, showing quite clearly the distinction between the two: “*The most important characteristic of competency-based education is that it measures learning rather than time. Students’ progress by demonstrating their competence, which means they prove that they have mastered the knowledge and skills (called competencies) required for a particular course, regardless of how long it takes.*” He continues by saying that in the traditional approach the time for the student to learn a particular topic is set, no matter whether he or she has already gained the knowledge in half the time or is still struggling to understand it when the time has passed.

This though raises the question of whether the period of time meant for learning and sustaining competences is the only change in education that will occur when transitioning to competence-based education in all Latvian schools. If we look for another opinion, Nina Lopez, Susan Patrick, and Chris Sturgis in their paper “*Quality and Equity by Design: Charting the Course for the Next Phase of Competency-Based Education*” (2017) have compared both teaching approaches to emphasize better the differences that come with the competence-based education.

First, as mentioned by Robert Mendenhall in the previous paragraphs, there is a distinction regarding **the period of time** necessary for a specific skill or knowledge to be obtained. In competence-based learning, the time revolves around the students and not the timeline set by the school or the teacher. If in the traditional approach there is the possibility that students may not have understood the information or mastered the specific skills at the end

of the fixed period of time, then in the competence-based approach students continue to receive the crucial support from the educators until they have finally reached the goal.

Second, there is the variation at how the **learning target** is presented. Nowadays, the objectives are set based on students' grade level, giving them the basis of some skill or knowledge that might be built on in the future after leaving school. In the competence-based learning, however, the targets are clear and transparent to students, giving them "greater ownership over their education" (Lopez et al., 2017). They also have the opportunity to transfer that knowledge to different tasks, using new contexts.

Third, traditional education is more standardized with students having the same goals and expected results at the end of each school year, regardless of their previous knowledge and language foundation. Some students may get extra support if their knowledge is significantly higher or lower than the rest of the classmates, but the competence-based education adjusts to the individuals, and their learning needs, providing them with the **support** each person requires. The same can be said not only about the teacher, but the school's organization, which, in the latter approach, is more flexible.

The next change comes in the form of the **assessment**. The traditional approach follows the set learning timeline, usually consisting of a test after the end of a unit. Even if it is another kind of assessment, such as a project or a presentation, not a written test, the students usually are given the same criteria, the same context, and format. Even the reason behind the assessment is not the same – here it is meant to show what the students have learned in that period of time, but in the competence-based education the assessment is meant for the students themselves, to see how far they have come and what still needs to be worked on. Assessment is a part of the learning cycle, not the finish line for each unit or aspect of the language as it is in traditional education. What is more, in the latter approach, students have the freedom to choose the format of their assessment themselves.

After analyzing the assessment, it has to be mentioned that the **learning outcomes** are not the same, either. The traditional education emphasizes the necessity of knowledge, academic skills, the memorization, and the comprehension of context (Lopez et al., 2017). On the other hand, the competence-based education, as it is mentioned in the name of the teaching approach itself, is based on students gaining competences necessary for lifelong learning, a deeper understanding of the knowledge and skills to show their mastery in that particular topic or aspect of language. The academic skills and memorization are put in the background, giving space to work on the higher stages of Bloom's taxonomy.

Last but not least, the significance of **grades** is not the same in both of these teaching and learning approaches. In traditional education, grades are made of students' scores in tests,

presentations, projects, etc., their behavior/attitude, and their participation in lessons, completion of tasks and homework. In the words of Nina Lopez, Susan Patrick, and Chris Sturgis, in the traditional approach, grades are used to rank and sort students (2017). In the competence-based education, however, students are closely observed, and their progress monitored throughout the whole year, so the grades are used to show students the growth in their learning process.

However, just reading about the differences shows how much teaching and learning has to change in order to be ready for the project “Skola 2030” and implementation of competence-based learning in the Latvian education system. The Author of the Diploma Paper, who is teaching seven primary school classes for the first year, has trouble imagining how some of these things could be carried out, especially without at least an assistant to help support each student and give them individual attention, and make sure chaos does not occur.

Therefore, continuing consulting the “Quality and Equity by Design: Charting the Course for the Next Phase of Competency-Based Education” the Author of the Diploma Paper included a list of four key points or issues that have to be taken into consideration for qualitative competence-based education. They are the following:

- Equity;
- Quality;
- Meeting students where they are;
- Policy.

In their report “Quality and Equity by Design: Charting the Course for the Next Phase of Competency-Based Education” the authors insist that students need **equity** and not equality anymore, which means that students do not need the same assistance and chances as the others, rather that they need to have the same result. Therefore, there will be students who will need additional support from the teachers and some, who will need to be left alone to study and simply checked upon once in a while.

Connected to equity is **quality**. The authors of the paper write that it is essential to see students’ potential and build on that to gain a preferable result. It does not matter how far along the path they are as long as they are determined to get to their destination, and it is the teacher’s job to support and encourage them.

Intertwined with quality and equity comes the next key issue: **meeting the students where they are**. This key point is very closely related to the rapport between the teacher and the students and understanding their strengths and weaknesses. It means that students should be treated as individuals; that the approach to teaching should be personalized, and overall the

students should be regarded as “co-constructors of knowledge, rather than passive consumers of content” (Lopez et al., 2017).

Lastly, the **policy** regards the external factors, which can either interfere or advance the outcomes of a competence-based education, but since this is an aspect that the Author of the Diploma Paper cannot vary in any degree, it will not be discussed any further.

After including and analyzing all the key differences and issues of a competence-based education, it is time to take a closer look at the eight competences that are the foundation of this teaching and learning approach.

1.2. THE KEY COMPETENCES OF LIFE-LONG LEARNING

According to “Mūžizglītības galvenās pamatprasmes” (Izglītības un kultūras ĢD, n.d.), which is based on a European Communities document was written in 2007, there are eight key competences that should be taught in every school. Even now, more than ten years later, the key competences in Europe have not changed and are the following:

- Communication in the mother tongue;
- Communication in foreign languages;
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
- Digital competence;
- Learning to learn;
- Social and civic competences;
- Cultural awareness and expression;
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (Youth workers online training, n.d.).

These eight competences are said to be the foundation of skills and abilities necessary for the students’ future and the basis of lifelong learning. Each competence consists of many sub-skills that are connected, and in this chapter, each of the eight main competences will be briefly summarized.

Starting at the top of the list, the **communication in the mother tongue** consists of many skills related to concepts, facts, feelings, and understanding. It is important that students learn how to express themselves in oral and written form, use not only verbal but also nonverbal communication skills. They ought to learn how to not only listen but hear the other person and distinguish how to react in different situations properly. This, in the Author of the Diploma Paper’s opinion, is one of the most important things children have to learn in order to be able to exist in society successfully. Nowadays, the necessity of foreign languages is put into focus.

However, the Author believes that the beauty of the Latvian language is slowly diminishing because of the influence of these languages. Additionally, the Latvian lessons in school focus more on the linguistic aspect and not so much on the oral skills, therefore it would be a welcomed change if schools could implement elocution lessons, where the focus would be on improving students' speaking skills and expanding vocabulary, teaching them ways to express themselves more beautifully and euphoniously.

The next key competence, **communication in foreign languages**, is quite similar to the first one. Therefore there has been debates to join them together. This competence ascertains that the students can understand others and manage to express themselves in a foreign language. Therefore the vocabulary, grammar, and the overall use of the language are essential parts for this competence. Furthermore, intercultural competence is a must so that they do not offend people from other countries and cultures. In a way, foreign language competence is one of the most complex ones and is becoming more and more necessary in today's job market. Most of the careers connected to customer service or public relationships include the use of English or Russian, sometimes both, as a requirement, not a preference. It also opens many possibilities for working abroad, which is becoming more and more popular in the modern age. That is why schools in Latvia offer students to learn more than just one foreign language. If most schools provide students with the opportunity to learn English and Russian, then in the last years it has become possible to learn German, French, Spanish and more foreign tongues.

In the opposite direction from the communication competences, **the mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology** teach students the use of constructed thinking and reasoning, according to the "The eight key competences of European Union" (n.d). The third competence is not only about the abilities in math such as numbering or measuring something; this competence includes the skills to solve whatever problems students may face in the future as well as the basic understanding on how things work, even the development of critical thinking and analysis are connected to the third competence. It is responsible for students' development and improvement of logical thinking, which is necessary for every aspect of life.

However, if the previous competence develops skills that are important in analyzing the gathered data and evaluating the truth in them, then the digital resources have become the main tool for inquiring such information in the 21st century and there hides the necessity of **digital competence**. The same as it is with the necessity of foreign languages, in the last years the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has grown and very few school subjects are taught without any form of ICT in the lessons. The teachers are supposed to help students learn how to efficiently use ICT for the countless possibilities it creates, such as finding and

sharing information, communicating with others, even participating and sharing opinions about problems that occur in the society. Technologies have become a part of learning both inside and outside the school and universities. Therefore students have to know their way around the most basic opportunities technologies can offer.

Since the benefits of the digital resources include creating the opportunity to find information about almost all aspects of life quickly, no matter the knowledge the person is trying to gain, the students have been given a chance to widen their horizon, if only they have the urge to do it. Therefore it is essential that they are taught to *want* to learn, to be inquisitive, and here comes the next competence- the **learning to learn**, which teaches the necessity of lifelong learning, the importance of intrinsic motivation. This competence emphasizes the need to take the initiative and be a self-directed learner. Besides, according to Gedvilienė and Bortkevičienė (2013), leaning to learn is a complex competence, which includes students' reflections on themselves and their experience, the analysis of their strengths and weaknesses and the use of that knowledge for the future tasks and assignments. Though not easy to be taught, this is a competence that is intertwined with almost everything, and thus, it is fundamental to find approaches or teaching methods that can improve this competence.

The next competence, probably more than the others, is connected to the specific individual's role in life and society. The **social and civic competences** focus on the person, his or her personality traits, and attitudes. Though it deals with the individual's role in society, his/her responsibilities and interactions with others, which is obvious from the name of the competence, it also emphasizes such personality traits as honesty, tolerance, confidence, understanding, and evaluation of others' opinions (Gedvilienė and Bortkevičienė, 2013), therefore it is a competence that in one way or another should be implemented in every school subject, especially since it is such an appreciative thing to be implemented into many topics in school subjects.

Though somewhat mentioned in the communication in the foreign language and social and civic competences, **cultural awareness and expression** are separate and second to last in the list of eight key competences regarding lifelong learning. As stated in "The 8 key competences of European Union" (n.d.), the seventh competence is not only responsible for the knowledge of cultural diversity and tolerance, but also the ability to work in a multi-national team and even thrive in it, using the cultural differences as a benefit to find the best solutions to every problem. Twenty years ago, it would not be a problem. However, the Author of the Diploma Paper feels like nowadays people have become more sensitive and easily offended, therefore the need for intercultural competence has also become a requirement for a successful work environment.

Finally, the last competence on this list is the one that is the most essential for this Diploma Paper. **Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship** includes such skills and abilities as turning the idea into action, planning and managing tasks and it is the one with the biggest necessity for creativity, independence, motivation, and determination of the eight, therefore, in the Author's opinion, it is the most difficult to teach. There are no questions how to implement digital competence or social competence into school subjects, but how can a teacher show students be creative and determinate, to take the initiative and try, and *keep* trying even after failing the task at first? What methods are the best to improve students' sense of initiative already at such a young age as eleven?

Having analyzed the competence-based education, first of all, exploring definition of the approach, then listing the key differences between traditional education and a competence-based one, even studying the eight key competences, it is not yet clear how to improve one's sense of initiative. Therefore, in the next chapter, the psychological development of a child and the sense of initiative will be analyzed thoroughly, looking at when and how this sense develops, as well as the strategies that could be used to improve the eighth competence will be listed.

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND SENSE OF INITIATIVE

In the previous chapter, competence-based education was analyzed, showing the differences between it and traditional education. The chapter then concluded with a list of competences that are supposed to be taught in a competence-based approach, one of them being the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship. This chapter will focus on that competence; nevertheless, before taking a closer look on how it is developed and methods that could be used in school to improve it even further, the psychological development will be studied in order to understand a child's growth better.

For this task, the eight stages of psychological development by Erik Erikson were used. Even though Sigmund Freud, the other pillar of psychology, has left a lasting impression on how nowadays people look at childhood, sexuality, personality and other aspects of life, in the opinion of the Author of the Diploma Paper, Erik Erikson's views of how society and surroundings can influence the development of another human being is more precise and therefore is the theoretical foundation of the next subchapter.

2.1. STAGES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN A HUMAN'S LIFE ACCORDING TO E. ERIKSON

Throughout life, there are moments when the reaction of the person to a particular situation, even crisis distinguish the person one grows to be. According to the German – American psychologist Erik Erikson, there are eight stages of psychological development that each has to go through during their lifetime, and they are the following:

1. Trust vs. Mistrust;
2. Autonomy vs. Shame;
3. Initiative vs. Guilt;
4. Industry vs. Inferiority;
5. Identity vs. Role Confusion;
6. Intimacy vs. Isolation;
7. Generativity vs. Stagnation;
8. Ego Integrity vs. Despair (Eriksons, 1998).

Before we can talk about the sense of initiative, which should be developed at the age of four to five, each stage will be shortly analyzed to get the overall idea of what it is that an

individual is supposed to learn in each stage of his/her life, and what are the values that are emphasized in each of the eight stages.

The first stage, **Trust versus Mistrust**, begins with the birth of a child and continues for the next twelve to eighteen months. This is a crucial stage because in this period the child develops either a sense of trust or mistrust when it comes to people around him/her and the feeling that he himself /she herself is trustworthy (Erikson, 1998). This stage, naturally, is out of the child's control and completely dependent on the people around him or her, especially the mother and father. If the parents care for the child, calm him/her down when he/she is crying, and overall are successful in developing trust, that leads to the child feeling **hopeful** that they will stand by him/her and support him/her overcome any situation or crisis that might occur; the failure of this, however, will result in the development of fear, mistrust, anxiety and severe insecurities (McLeod, 2018). Therefore, already before the age of one, the baby indirectly learns what to expect from others when a crisis happens.

The second stage in psychological development is **Autonomy versus Shame**. From the age of eighteen months to approximately three years, the child develops a sense of control when it comes to physical abilities and sense of independence (McLeod, 2018). In this time, children learn the power of **will** if the parents have been supporting and encouraged the child to be independent. What is more, research has shown that people who have learned control at this age, have no problem following rules, seeing the law as a necessity for freedom and independence to prevail, rather than a forced injustice (Karpova, 1998, p. 88). However, if unsuccessful, during this stage, the child develops the feeling of shame, condemnation of mistakes, even doubts about his/her abilities. That verifies once more the importance of parents' actions to children's thirst for knowledge.

The third stage is the most important one for this Diploma Paper. **Initiative versus Guilt** lasts for approximately one year, and up until the age of five, this is the period when children are the liveliest when they want to play games, they ask questions about everything they see and socialize with to them yet unknown people. If parents do not let them play the activities they crave or do not answer their questions and make them feel bad for asking them, even criticize them, children may develop guilt and in some cases even aggression and feelings of vengeance (Karpova, 1998, p. 89), they might be slower to interact with others in the future and their creativity might also suffer. On the other hand, the positive effect is that children establish the beginning of a sense of initiative and **purpose**. Thus, the work that parents or guardians do during these years influence how motivated, ambitious, dedicated their children are later in life.

The fourth stage, **Industry versus Inferiority**, is the first stage that has another fundamental factor in addition to parents that influences the child's psychological development.

This stage is set to occur, starting at the age of five and lasting until the age of twelve. During this time, the individual learns what it is that he/she likes and is good at, develops different abilities, improves nimbleness, accumulates knowledge. At this point in life, school and teachers become almost as important as the parents in the development of the child's personality, and for the first time in the children's lives, we can talk about **competences**. This is also the time when it is easier to work with improving students' sense of initiative since it was or at least should have been developed in the previous stage. The same can be said about other competences, such as communication in foreign languages because younger children tend to understand and learn other foreign tongues with less difficulty.

The fifth stage, **Identity versus Role Confusion**, happens during the teenage years (13-19), when the individual is in the process of growing up, becomes more independent and has to find his/her own identity, and is probably the most visible stage of them all. Based on what Erikson himself has said, this is the most fundamental stage (Karpova, 1998, p. 89). In this period of time, that person has to analyze all the roles in his/her life, such as a son or a daughter, a friend, a boyfriend or a girlfriend, a student, a musician or an athlete, etc., find what it is that makes them *them* and shape their inner world. They have to start making choices for their future, such as decide whether to pursue a higher education or get a job, what careers should they go for, whom they want to build relationships with, etc. It is at this stage that teenagers develop their **fidelity**. Accordingly, at this period of time teenagers are the most confused, angry, moody, even rebellious versions of themselves, and in some cases they display all of their emotions to the people around them without any filter, sometimes making the teacher's job quite difficult. However, it is essential to keep in mind what they are going through at that time and offer them help and support, if necessary.

The next step in the psychological development, **Intimacy versus Isolation**, comes as a continuation to the previous one. After the individual has grasped his or her own identity, next comes the desire to share one's life's experiences with another human being. A person aspires to form relationships with others. However, the success of that is dependent on three things from the previous stage, and those are the feeling of loyalty, the ability to compromise and make sacrifices for the good of the other person in that relationship (Karpova, 1998, p. 94). In this stage, a person learns the meaning of the word **love**. However, if the relationships take a negative direction, a person can become lonely and isolated, and start building only shallow, surface-level relationships, without having a deeper, meaningful connection to another individual. Thus, even if people at this point do not go to high school anymore, there is a chance that they could take part in, for example, an English course, and in those cases, the teacher

should divide his/her attention between the teaching and building relationships with the students.

After the individual has started developing long-term relationships, comes one of the longest and second to last stages, and that is **Generativity versus Stagnation**. It can be characterized by people “wanting to leave their mark” (McLeod, 2018), to build or create something that outlives them. In this period of time, people focus on their careers, having a family, and raising children, giving something back to their community and being involved in it. If before we could have talked about the feeling of “taking” or “receiving,” for example, knowledge, skills and abilities, competences, even materialistic help, then in this stage the individual is in the process of “giving back.” The main virtue of this stage is **care**; however, if unsuccessful, it can lead to the person being quite ego-centric and disconnected to the community.

Finally, the last psychological stage in human’s life, according to E. Erikson, is **Ego Integrity versus Despair**, which begins at the age of sixty-five and lasts till our last breath. This is a reflective period of time, and the past events are responsible for either the integrity or the despair that the individual feels at that age. Additionally, this stage is looked upon as the time for **wisdom**, since the individual has already experienced all the previous stages and overcame the crisis that comes with them.

Having looked through the multiple development stages, it is clear that at this point in life, the research sample students have already gone through the first three stages, which means that they should already know the role of hope, will and purpose in everyday life and be in process of developing competences, which is corresponding to the competence-based education Latvia are transitioning to. However, the sense of initiative that a person feels and shows is connected to that individual’s upbringing, and the parents play the most prominent role in that. Therefore, there is a question of how a teacher can still influence a child’s sense of initiative if the process of developing that sense happened before the child came to school. In the next subchapter, this sense will be studied more thoroughly, and strategies on how to improve it will be analyzed.

2.2. SENSE OF INITIATIVE IN A CHILD’S LIFE AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE IT

In the opinion of the Author of the Diploma Paper, not many people understand how crucial the first years of a child’s life are. Not everyone knows how their actions, no matter how seemingly unimportant, shape the personality of their offspring, for example, that letting

children make their own decisions and answering their questions, no matter if they are difficult or make the other person feel uncomfortable, are fundamental in developing their sense of purpose. The Author's personal experience reflects how the feeling of silliness and even stupidity for asking questions and having received no answer or even disdain for such an inquiry has developed into lack of motivation and sense of initiative, even guilt for not knowing the answer to the question. What is more, the result of the failure of the Initiative versus Guilt stage is something that continues throughout the next years and implicates other aspects of life until it is dealt with.

Working in a primary school has shown how many students do not feel confident in themselves, and rather do whatever is asked of them without any inquiry or questions, rarely asking for additional work or projects. Even more, some students are afraid to show that they do not know or understand a topic, a vocabulary item, use of a specific tense, etc. though it is sometimes perceived simply as a lack of motivation that is not always the case.

Teachers usually want students to like the subject they are teaching, and they would prefer to see students take the initiative and learn things additionally outside the classroom and the curriculum, especially in primary school, where they are finding out their likes and dislikes. However, even though teaching someone to take initiative is important and that competence will probably be used in the future in both personal and professional aspects, there are two hardships that teachers are faced with: first, it is not easy to understand and determine what teaching methods to use in order to improve this competence, since it is not thoroughly researched yet. The second problem regards the difficulty of measuring whether any progress has taken place. If there are many methods that can be used to measure students' vocabulary or grammar in English, finding a way to calculate the level of this competence seems abstract and unclear.

Keeping that in mind, the research for strategies to use in the classroom to improve students' sense of initiative and motivation were searched, and the main ideas that were found to be useful were recorded in the following paragraphs.

One of the suggestions that were found was to incorporate as many projects as possible, which relates to the objectives of this Diploma Paper. It was recommended to use any opportunity that is given to let students make either many smaller or a few more difficult projects regarding the topic they are studying at that time. It is, however, the one constant method mentioned when talking about improving students' sense of initiative. Therefore the other suggestions are connected to it, simply more detailed.

First, there was the recommendation to collect data from students in order to understand them better, know what motivates them, what type of exercises they like, what projects they

have already done, how they like to pass their free time etc. to gain a better perception on what could be the projects they could do and plan the lessons for the following months accordingly.

The second recommendation, similar to the first one, is letting the students choose what they want to learn about. After collecting their answers, there should be a discussion where students are given a small variety of topics they can research and later present. With older students, the level of control should be lower than with the primary school children. Therefore, if in the 10th-grade students are simply given a broad theme, and they can choose their topic, for example, write anything they want regarding medicine and health, then in the 5th grade, the overall topic for their project should be more detailed.

After giving students the opportunity of choosing the topic of the project, they can also be given multiple format choices, such as presenting with posters they have made, using technology to make either posters or presentations, even using a video camera to capture their ideas, etc. However, the students should know how to use all of the proposed formats, especially the sites or programs that help visualize their work through the use of technology. That is why the teacher should at least give the students a quick walkthrough on how to properly operate in those sites, if not a whole lesson based on using them.

Additionally, after finishing and presenting the project, or having done any other activity during the class, the students should be given effective and objective feedback. They should feel like the work and effort that they have given to complete the task have been appreciated. Therefore praises should be a must in class; however, it is just as essential to give them objective criticism, so that they can see what still needs to be improved on and grow.

Lastly, teachers should think about the materials and exercises the students are given. It is better to provide authentic materials instead of abstract challenges that they need to complete. It is always more motivational if the students can somehow connect themselves to the texts they are reading, topics they are discussing or problems they are trying to solve. In the opinion of the Author of the Diploma Paper, the time of worksheets full of grammar exercises without any kind of context has passed, especially in younger classes. Quoting K. Manurung (2012) *“transformative pedagogy has brought new horizons in teaching learning process where there must be balance between cognitive skills and emotional skill.”*

Therefore, the topic for this Diploma Paper was chosen carefully, and projects as the method for improving students sense of initiative was decided on. Based on the information from both the Internet resources and printed text, it was decided that projects could intertwine if not all, then at least most of the previously mentioned strategies for keeping students motivated and allowing them to take the initiative and decide for themselves what it is that they desire to research more.

Before implementing them into the lessons, though, it was essential to research what the teacher should contemplate, what problems could arise and what should be monitored carefully in order for this case study to have a positive result. All of the findings were summarized in the next subchapter.

2.3 WHAT TO CONSIDER BEFORE IMPLEMENTING PROJECTS INTO ENGLISH LESSONS

A psychologist Nicky Hayes has stated that “perhaps the most important principle of child-rearing, in psychological terms, is that child development should be a continuous process of developing a sense of competence and effectiveness in dealing with the world.” (Hayes, 2017, p. 193). Dr. N. Hayes then continues by saying that children should never stop improving their skills and abilities. Nevertheless, the confidence in the said abilities is just as important as the competences themselves. The role of certainty in their knowledge is something that the Author of the Diploma Paper has encountered every day and has seen the consequences of it on students’ behavior and participation. Even if there are students who know the right answer to a question or have a different opinion to present, they will probably keep it to themselves in fear of making a mistake. Thus comes the necessity of praises and support the teacher should provide.

Therefore the first thing the Author of the Diploma Paper should need to consider for this research is the environment that the students are working in, especially the relationships between the students’ themselves. The overall atmosphere in the lessons can influence students’ behavior, participation, and even grades. Thus it can also impact their sense of initiative. If the student does not feel confident in his/her knowledge, and some of the classmates’ remarks on that lack of insight, it can lead to negative feelings toward the subject and diminish the motivation to voice his/her opinions and keep track of what is happening in the lesson. What is more, not feeling safe in the classroom can and probably will decrease their will to do any projects because of the fear of presenting the result. Since projects have been chosen as the method to improve children’s sense of initiative, the ways to make the environment more friendly and secure should be seriously considered.

Another thing that is typical for this age and should be contemplated beforehand is that students need an example before doing the task themselves. They should not be presented with a project or a more difficult task without an example to base their work on. If not doing something similar beforehand, the teacher should at least provide a similar task or a case not

too far from what they are asked to do, and analyze it together, emphasizing the parts that students need to replicate in their projects.

When finally implementing the projects into the lessons, there are three competence areas that define the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship according to the “Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship: a Reference Framework for all citizens” (Bacigalupo, 2015), and those are the following: “ideas and opportunities”, “resources” and “into action”. Though the names of these three stages can change, the meaning does not – first the student has to visualize the result and plan the road leading to it, then he or she has to find the necessary resources and gather information, and only then can he or she actually start writing, doing, building whatever it is that they have planned. Fortunately, these are the same steps that have to be made in order to accomplish any kind of a project, which the research sample will be doing during these months.

Therefore, naturally, the first part of taking the initiative and creating something is planning. In this phase, the focus is on spotting opportunities, thinking out of the box, and being creative. It also encompasses listening to others, valuing their ideas and input, and envisioning the result. The same can be said about planning the project. The students need to take time to find the topic they feel passionate about, consulting with others, and asking for advice and guidelines. For many people, this could be the most difficult part because it requires more than just a simple repetition, which they are used to do in school. Instead, they have to have a somewhat unique vision; thus, this part can take almost as much time as the other two combined.

After the initial planning comes the next part, which is finding resources and analyzing the acquired data and information. In this stage, it is essential that the students believe in themselves and their abilities, keep being motivated, and scan the information until getting to the essential one. In this stage, digital competence appears because nowadays, most data comes from the Internet. Therefore the students have to be able to find what they are looking for and then be able to analyze that information critically. The teacher in this age group should provide help with finding the resources, either giving out printed text or showing sites that can be used to acquire information.

Lastly, when the theoretical part has been done, next comes the actual “doing” part of the project. The last stage of the task, the students should do individually with as little help from the teacher as possible to give the project their unique spin and let the children be creative. From the teachers’ side it is essential to ensure that there is enough time for the student to go through all three stages when choosing the topic for the project, then gathering information and lastly presenting the acquired data for others.

Having analyzed the eight stages of psychological development defined by Erik Erikson, studied the strategies that could be used to improve a child's sense of initiative and resourced what to take into consideration before implementing projects into school subjects, the Author of the Diploma Paper used the acquired information to try to implement this method into the English lessons in Grade 5. The process and result of this research will be thoroughly analyzed in the next chapter.

3. THE PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS IN ENGLISH LESSONS IN GRADE 5 TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SENSE OF INITIATIVE

The analysis of the relevant literature summarized the differences between the traditional education system and competence-based one, showcasing the main key points that distinguish them. After inspecting the eight key competences and comparing them to the psychological development stages and the morals that a human being learns from each of them, the author of the Diploma Paper chose projects as the primary method to improve students' sense of initiative in English lessons in Grade 5. Strategies to help boost this competence were searched for and reviewed, then listed in the previous chapter, considering that they could help the researcher accomplish the aim of this Paper.

To examine whether projects could be used to improve students' sense of initiative in English lessons in Grade 5, the author of the Diploma Paper carried out a case study during the first three-and-a-half months of the second semester at Agenskalns Primary School. The research sample consisted of forty-four students from three fifth grades. Each group could be characterized differently, and each group had distinctive relationships with the teacher and each other, which at the end undoubtedly influenced the results of this case study.

The initial idea was to observe the students already in the beginning/middle of January before the implementation of these activities meant to improve their sense of initiative had started. Because the researcher had been working with the students since the beginning of the school year, the children were more comfortable with the researcher, and no time had to be wasted to make them feel safe. Since the feeling of being safe and accepted influenced not only students' behavior in lessons but also their participation among other things (Fraser, 1998), this came as a massive benefit, for the researcher believed three-and-a-half months were too short time to make any actual progress with this specific competence. What is more, the author of this Paper saw the already established connection with these children as a possible bonus, considering that the teacher already had an inkling of what to expect from each student and therefore was more equipped to plan the practical part of this research.

However, the first step of the practical part was to gather information about students' preferences regarding what projects they would want to perform. Another teacher was also asked to join a lesson to monitor students' behavior and participation, and observe whether any student at any point in time had shown any inkling of an initiative. All of the acquired data before the implementation of the projects were gathered and analyzed in the following subchapter.

3.1. THE ANALYSIS OF THE GATHERED DATA BEFORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECTS

Before the implementation of tasks and projects could be put into motion; however, it was necessary to understand students' preferences regarding the topics, forms of presentation, and sources used to find the necessary information. Therefore a questionnaire containing inquiry about the previously mentioned aspects (see Appendix No. 1) was handed out to the students for the researcher to have a better insight of not only what they had already done in school, but also see if the students used English to gain new knowledge or just as an entertainment or communication tool.

The first question was related to how often the students use English outside of school and the lessons. More than half of the students (55%) indicated that they used this foreign language two to four times a week. The next popular answer was "every day or every other day" with 25%, and 18% of students claimed to use it once a week. Only one student confessed that he used the language only when it was necessary for school. No one marked answers "once every two weeks" or "once a month." After gathering students' answers for the first question, the author of the Paper was delighted to see that so many students (80 %) were already using the language in their free time at least 2-4 times a week, which in her opinion is one of the key aspects of learning a foreign language.

The next question was connected to the previous one, asking students to check the boxes that matched the activities on how they use English in their everyday life. Only one person out of the 44 respondents said that he did not use English in his free time, which was the same boy that in Question 1 claimed to use this language only when it was necessary.

Figure 3.1.1 in the next page displays the answers that the students chose, divided into two groups – boys and girls – since the most differences between the answers occurred because of the gender, not classes. The most popular answer that all but one of the 44 children marked is watching videos. In the second place came listening to music with 90% of respondents admitting to either playing music in the background while doing some other activities, such as doing the homework, tidying the room, etc. or actively listening to the songs in English. The other ten percent claimed to either listen to only Latvian music or not listen to music in general. Another favored activity, which is twenty percent more popular among the boys than girls is watching movies in English; the rest of the respondents claimed it was easier for them to watch films in their mother tongue, so they did not miss any crucial details. Some answers, such as using English to find information about a specific topic or to communicate with others, were

equally in demand between the genders. However, girls were more interested in reading books or blogs than boys. Nevertheless, the biggest difference between the boys' and girls' answers was in regards to playing video games, with a considerable 76, 21% large gap in favor of the boys.

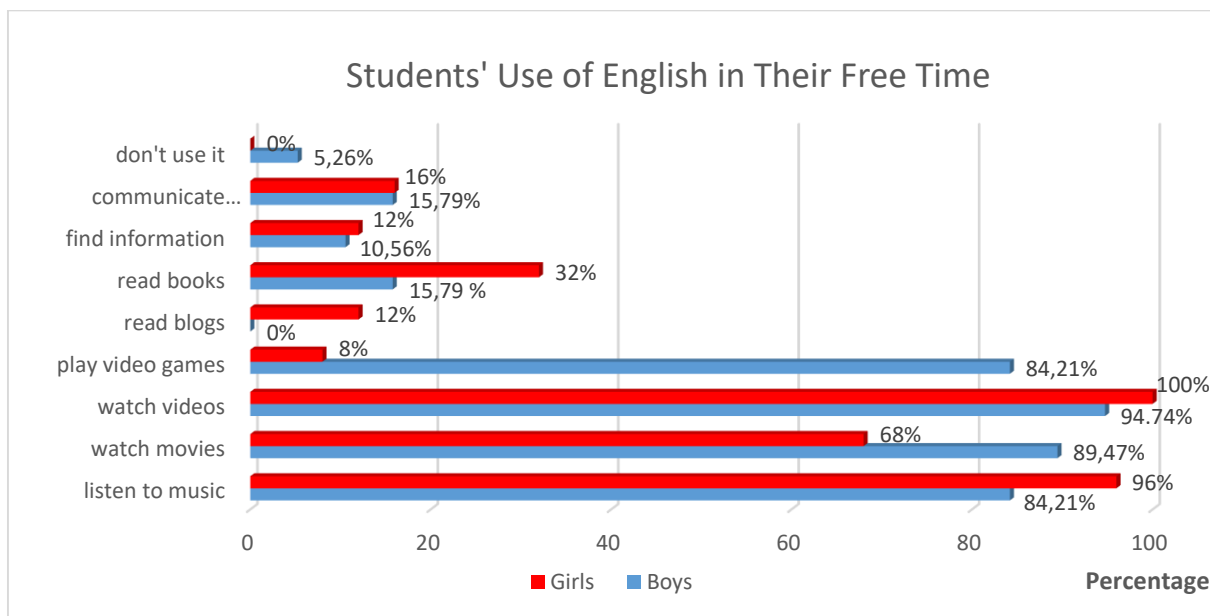


Figure 3.1.1. Students' Use of English in Their Free Time

The most important answer to this question for the research was the one regarding finding information. Since approximately only 11% of the students claimed to use this language to acquire new knowledge deliberately, the author of this Diploma Paper understood that it would be essential to dedicate time to show students what websites to use, when they are looking for information for their projects. Another conclusion from this particular question was that videos could and probably should be used in lessons, probably as a lead-in activity or a filler later in the lesson to gain their attention and motivate them to do tasks, as well as provide educational information.

The third question regarding whether they had ever watched educational videos in their free time; most of the students were not able to answer. The majority wrote that they had probably seen one or two, but they had no idea what type of videos they were or what topics they were covering, so no actual information was obtained, except for the fact that the only sites mentioned were either YouTube (7 students) or British Council (3 students). That led to the conclusion that even though almost every student in the Grade 5 was watching videos in English, they mostly held the entertainment factor.

The next two questions showed the research sample's attitude towards projects. This is where the differences in the answers occurred not so much between genders, as it was in the second question, but rather between the classes (see Figure 3.1.2). Though the profiles of each of the classes will be analyzed in the next subchapter, these questions very clearly showed that the majority of class A were in favor of doing projects. Class B, on the other hand, was very clearly against them with only two of the seventeen students saying they would not mind them and only one saying he liked the research type of tasks. Class C had quite mixed feelings when it came to doing projects, five students saying they would like to do some research and then present their findings, four respondents saying they would not mind them and five children claiming they disliked doing this type of tasks. The more negative approach to doing projects in this class as well as in Class B was coming from the girls as it can be seen in the figure below.

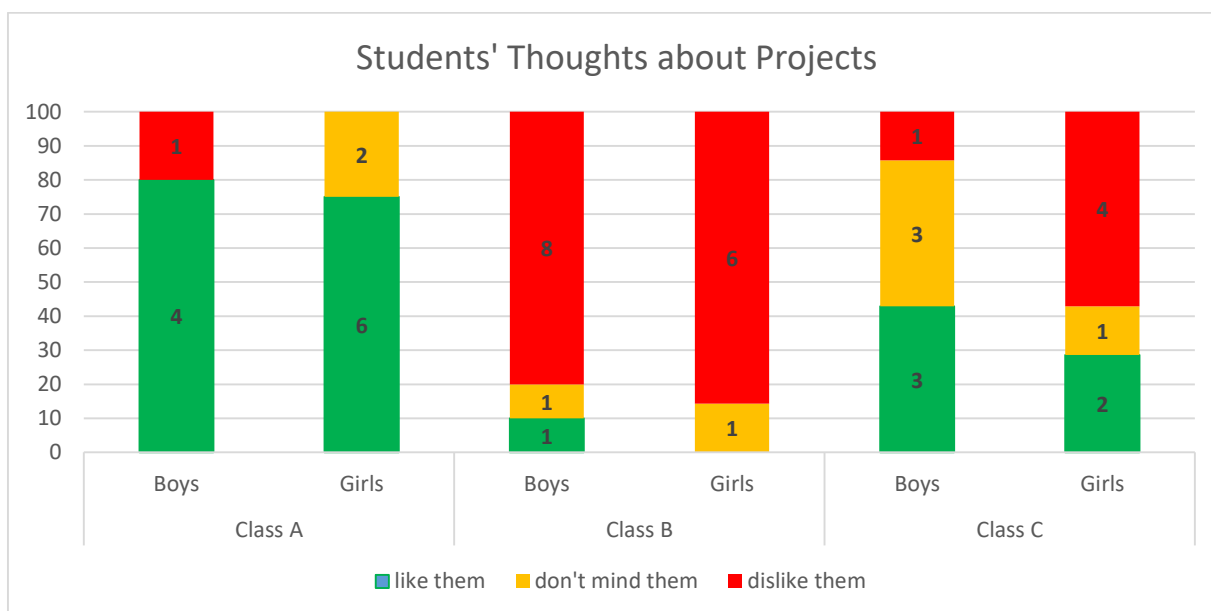


Figure 3.1.2. **Students' Thoughts about Projects**

Therefore, this question prepared the author of the Diploma Paper for the reactions these students could have against this whole research. It was clear that Class A would be the most eager to participate, but some strategies to change Class's B opinion about doing there research type of tasks should be put into motion.

As for their previous experience, the questionnaire revealed that up until this point in the semester the students had done projects only in German, where they had to talk about their family tree and cities in Germany, and Science, but there their projects had more of an experimental nature. The students wrote that from all of the projects they had done thus far, they liked the one about the family tree the best since it had a personal touch and it was interesting to learn about their family's history. This had both an upside and a downside –

making a family tree was one of the projects the author of the Diploma Paper had intended to do during the semester. However, the fact that they had already done it in another subject meant that there would not be the need to do any research if they had still kept their previous work. On the other hand, the students had said that they had liked to learn about their relatives, and this was a great opportunity to both learn the lexis regarding family members and make the lessons relative to the students, though the researcher marked in a notebook that there had to be a conversation with their German teacher to learn how long ago and what exactly did these students had to do in that task.

When asked how they found the necessary information to complete the projects in their past, students pointed out they had used the information provided by the teacher, consulted with the parents or older siblings, especially when they were making the family tree, and five students used some Internet sources which that teacher had suggested. Not one respondent circled the answer “I use books, magazines, etc.” which was something the researcher had expected, but still had to verify.

Regarding how they would like to present their finished projects, 55% of the students said that they would prefer a digital presentation (PowerPoint most probably), 25% claimed to want to present their work with no visual aids, leaving only 20% of students choosing to make a poster. Unsurprisingly, those students who chose the second answer were the ones who usually liked to do the bare minimum and improvise instead of studying, which could be seen in the previous semester when they had any oral tests. No students, though, had any other idea of how to present their work, leaving the line in option d) blank.

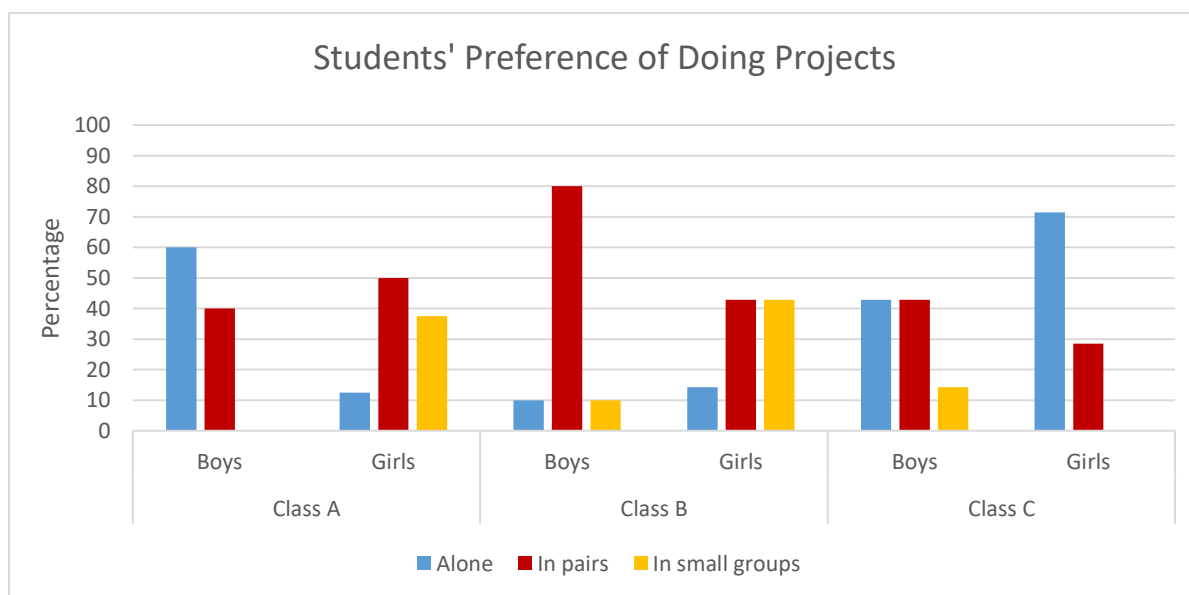


Figure 3.1.3. Students’ Preference of Doing Projects

Finally, Figure 3.1.3 demonstrates the students' preferences when asked whether they would like to do the projects alone, in pairs or small groups. Class A selected working in pairs as their favorite option of the three, followed by working alone. Boys of Class B very clearly preferred working in pairs; the same answer being popular between the girls too. What is interesting, though, only two of the 17 students in this class wanted to do the projects alone. On the contrary, Class C choose to work alone as their preference, with only one of the fourteen students choosing small groups as their preference.

Since the researcher had planned to do three small project kind of tasks during the three and a half months of practice time, the students would have the opportunity to do them both in pairs and individually. This questionnaire made the teacher conclude that small groups could only be an option if students could not be divided into pairs.

Having analyzed the information the questionnaire had presented, the author of the Diploma Paper asked another teacher from the school to observe these students in English lessons, note their behavior and fill out the observation checklist, thus providing the initial level of their involvement in the lesson. The next subchapter is based on the findings of the other teacher and the author of the Diploma Paper's observations.

3. 2. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ALL THREE PARTICIPATING CLASSES

Since the characteristics of students' relationships with each other and the rapport with the teacher have an effect on their behavior in lessons and their participation, after completing the first phase of the practical part, the author of the Diploma Paper asked another teacher to monitor one lesson with each class before the tasks and projects were implemented into the lessons in order to have another objective opinion. This task was entrusted to the art teacher, who was working with each of the classes once a week and had the time to observe all of the three classes involved in this research.

The researcher had designed a special lesson around the culture part of the unit, which involved housing options around the world. The students were given the opportunities to voice their opinions; they had to analyze the given information, match the statements, etc. After watching the students' work, both teachers came together to discuss the findings, and since the differences between students in all classes were quite noticeable, this subchapter was necessary to display better how exactly did these classes diverge from one another.

Before diving into the differences between the three participating groups, it is worth mentioning the similarities, since the basis stayed the same for all participants:

- all students have German as their first foreign language and English as their second;
- this is the first year they have English as a school subject;
- all students had to take a placement test at the beginning of the school year and were divided into the “strong” group;
- all groups have English lessons only two times a week.

As regards the differences, in the words of the art teacher, the children in Class A were almost the model students: they were quite quiet, did the work they were given without any disturbance, answered any questions they were asked, but they somewhat “lacked character” (see Appendix No. 3) When asked to elaborate, the teacher said that majority of these students did not seem keen on doing any work; they were going through the motions without any motivation or investment in the tasks. Though in this lesson it was not noticeable, the previous experience working with the class showed that the students in this class had small cliques and even though they did not have bad relationships with one another in general, small conflicts did arise from time to time. Therefore this meant that the researcher had to put more thought into how these students would be paired or divided into groups.

Class B was the class that the researcher had the most doubts about being successful in this project. Even if this class had just 3 or 4 students more than the other two, the atmosphere in these lessons was completely different. At the end of the first semester, it was explained that every new student that transferred to Agenskalns Primary School at that age was automatically added to Class B and therefore the whole group felt fragmented and quite unfriendly towards each other. Also, the teacher had the most difficult time to create a rapport with these students, and the boys completely dominated the girls by being louder, more active, and talkative than the other gender. After having witnessed the lesson, the art teacher used these three points to describe them – unfriendly, emotional, and with mixed-level knowledge and abilities. Since this was the last class she observed, she had the opportunity to compare all classes and she, therefore, emphasized that these students were more sensitive than the others, and the teacher had to spend extra time making sure that everyone who wanted to make a point had the chance to voice their opinion. Otherwise, they were quick to take offense. The teacher also had to be careful with pointing out inconsistencies in their work or correcting their mistakes. The worst part, though, was that these students were swift to laugh about each other, especially any pronunciation mistakes, so in addition to implementing the tasks for the project, the researcher still had to try to find ways to improve the relationships.

Lastly, Class C was the one that the art teacher praised the most. Even though the students in this class did not have as strong knowledge in the subject as the ones in Class A and

B, the children in this class were more active than the ones in Class A, friendlier than in Class B and more curious and inquisitive in general. Interestingly enough, the researcher had the best rapport with this class, and the art teacher claimed that it could be seen in the way they interacted with one another. The researcher would characterize this class as closer than the other two, joking and teasing one another, but helping each other when it was necessary. However, the problem with these children was that they liked to talk and discuss things. Therefore a good portion of time was invested in the speaking skills, sometimes sidestepping other tasks. Nevertheless, repeating the art teacher's words, out of all three of them, this class had the most "heart." It also, in her opinion, showcased the most initiative of them all, with three boys, in particular, asking questions and wanting to gain more information than they were given.

After quickly summarizing the essence of each of the classes with the help of the art teacher, the researcher started implementing carefully thought-out tasks to prepare students for their first project and obtain information about topics that could interest these students for their last project. These tasks, as well as the projects implemented into the lessons, are carefully described in the next subchapter.

3.3. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS INTO ENGLISH LESSONS

After gathering the first data and impressions from the art teacher regarding students' participation and behavior, it was time for the "action" part of the research to begin. Since the questionnaire revealed that the research sample had not done many projects during the first five years in school, the researcher understood that extra time and support would be needed to allow the students to see what exactly they were supposed to do and what their result should be like.

As previously mentioned in Chapter 2.3. "*What to Consider before Implementing Projects into English Lessons,*" it is important to remember that these students have the necessary additional time to gather the ideas for their project, but what is even more essential, is that they have to have an example, like a prototype they can base their research plan on. Therefore, the Project Week in Agenskalns Primary School, which happened during the 11th – 15th of February, was timed perfectly.

3.3.1. THE FIRST PROJECT "THE MANY SIDES OF AMERICA"

In the two weeks leading to the Project Week, the teacher gave students some small tasks with either an element of research they had to do themselves, for example, reading and writing

the ending of a fairytale and then finding how it actually ended as a homework, or tasks somewhat connected to the first topic of their projects, such as reading about students' everyday life from different parts of England.

On February 14 and 15, the author of the Diploma Paper had arranged the IT classroom for all three classes, where the students had the opportunity to put together the information they had gathered during the week and displayed it with the help of PowerPoint presentation. In the previous lesson, the teacher had divided students into groups of three (or four rather than two, if necessary), and given them the task – similarly to the style they had read and talked about students from various places in England, these students now had to choose one state in America, pick one city of that state and do a small presentation about that particular city, including the location, population, most popular sightseeing places, when differentiates them from other states, etc.

In order not to repeat each other and display the diversity of America, the states were chosen carefully. The teacher asked one group in each class to do the presentation about a city in Texas and Alaska, however the other states, though given, still could be negotiated if they had something specific in mind. The choice of the town, on the other hand, was completely dependent on what the students wanted to research themselves. However, it was a request of the teacher not to choose New York, Los Angeles, or Las Vegas since these three were the most known cities among the students. That day the students were divided into groups by choosing a random slip of paper, and the rest of the lesson was spent researching their state and picking out a city.

Each group then had almost a week to find the information, and on Thursday, the 14th of February, they gathered in the IT classroom and had 2 hours to put together a presentation about their selected city. If any group was struggling, they had the opportunity to stay in the classroom a bit longer and continue their work with the next class, since there were more computers than there were groups, and they had to present their findings the next day.

The presentations themselves were quite similar to one another since this task was quite controlled and did not give much space to do anything unique. However, some of the students in Class B used the opportunity to play games or watch videos after putting minimal effort into their presentation on Thursday, since they knew it would not be graded, and therefore saw this week more as a relaxation from the lessons instead of a chance to focus on learning new thing about United States and developing their intercultural competence. What is more, Class B and some boys from Class A did not respect their peers when they were presenting their chosen city and went even as far as mocking their classmates, when they made a grammar error or mispronounced some words. Because of the school policy, the boys in these two classes

believed this to be less important than a regular English lesson and therefore thought it acceptable that their behavior during these four lessons was not adequate. The researcher, therefore, noted that even though the sense of initiative should come from the students themselves and a grade for their research should not be what motivates them to do the projects, it was a necessity with this age group for them to show the most input.

Tasks between the first and second project

After their first initial project that they had done in small groups with the support of their English teacher, the students were given another set of tasks in the hopes that these activities would awaken their thirst for knowledge and curiosity. Keeping in mind that the teacher had a fixed curriculum that had to be followed, these activities and exercises could only be intertwined with the knowledge and language skills the children were supposed to learn in the school year.

Even though the author of the Diploma Paper had always lived by the proverb “*There is no shame in not knowing; the shame lies in not finding out.*” and had encouraged students to do the same, to reach for the answers by asking questions and researching the topic they were interested in, there still were students who rather kept quiet instead of seeking help. Therefore, these weeks between the first and the second project were dedicated to developing students’ sense of inquiry.

The first assignment right after the project week was a quite simple but effective exercise to see how many students would admit to needing help. Their task was to read a text that had a more difficult vocabulary than the ones they were used to; then they had to answer questions about the fairytale they had just read and then write their ending (see Appendix No. 5). They were given the translations to some of the words, but not all, and the researcher wanted to see how many students would try to understand the text without the unknown vocabulary and how many would raise their hand and seek help from the teacher or other classmates. The researcher had emphasized that she or the other classmates who had a stronger knowledge in the language were here to help; all they had to do was ask. The teacher then monitored students and neatly wrote down the observed, which can be seen in Figure 3.3.1.

In Class A, which is the strongest class, there was only one boy who wanted a translation, though it appeared that the other students had understood the text since every person the teacher later called on to translate, was able to give the correct answer and their worksheets were completed correctly. Class C had a more difficult time with the text, with half of the students requesting help with the meaning of some of the vocabulary, six students having no difficulties with the text or the tasks and one person failing to ask for the necessary support. It is worth

mentioning, that the girl who needed the help but did not seek it was a very shy person who does not like to speak up either in English or in her mother tongue and is working with the school's support staff to change that.

Class B, on the other hand, tried to do everything without the help of the teacher, even if some children looked lost while reading the fairytale and their answers to the questions made the impression they had no idea what they were supposed to look for. One boy, who wanted to understand some of the lexis, mispronounced the unknown word, and three of his classmates started to laugh and mock him. The atmosphere turned hostile with the boys starting a verbal fight which turned physical. After the incident, three students quietly came to the teacher for help, but most of the children chose to forgo the necessary support. Therefore, Figure 3.3.1 shows that from the 12 students that did not seek the required help, 83% were children from Class B.

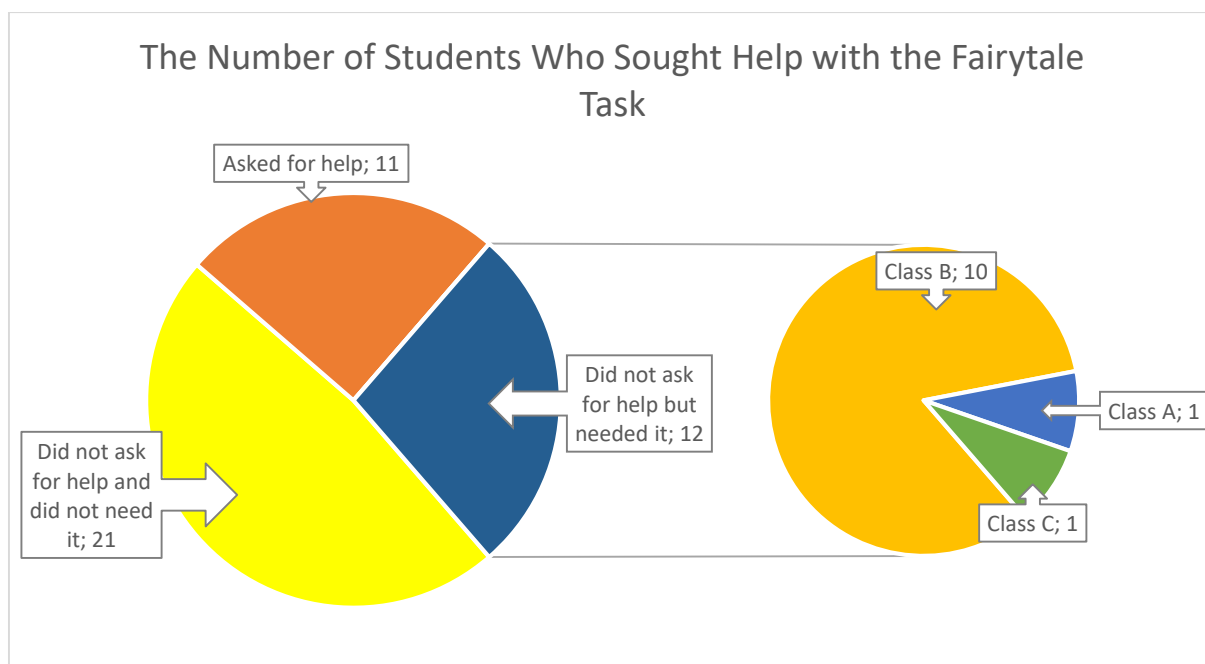


Figure 3.3.1. The Number of Students Who Sought Help with the Fairytale Task

The following week, when the worksheets were corrected, the teacher discussed with the students why they had been hesitant to ask for help, and encouraged them again never to be afraid to admit to not knowing something. Also, the researcher showed the students a video containing a funny situation about a guy who had claimed in a job interview that he had done something similar in his previous workplace, which led to him being entrusted with many tasks he had no idea how to execute. The guy had many opportunities to ask his new co-workers for help, but he refused to do so, and the video ended with a complete disaster. The author of the Diploma Paper then discussed the moral of the story with the classes and the ways this man

could have avoided the fiasco; agreed upon never bottling in questions or pretending to understand or know vocabulary items, grammar tenses or any kind of information discussed in the lessons.

After this lesson, the author of the Diploma Paper took every opportunity to intertwine exercises that could stimulate students' willingness to participate in lessons and desire to learn new things by encouraging them to ask questions and be curious. The children were given activities that taught them to take the initiative and gain the answers themselves, for example, one of the exercises was a mystery game. The students were given small role-play tasks, where each player had vital information and only after acquiring all clues from all participants were they able to solve the mystery. They needed to communicate with their classmates to solve the puzzle, and therefore, they had to take the initial step and do the "investigation." During the time they were learning how to describe a person's looks, the author of the Diploma Paper included a "Guess Who I Am" game, where the students had to research a celebrity, and then describe their look, age, height, mention their profession etc. and the other classmates had to guess whom that person was, asking only yes or no questions, if they could not tell it from the description. The classes did similar activities until the spring holidays when they were given the next project.

3.3.2. THE SECOND PROJECT "MY FAMILY TREE"

During this time, the big unit for these classes was called family members. Therefore the second project they had to do was make a family tree. After the conversation with their German teacher, it was explained that even though the students had to do something similar in their first foreign language, that had been done in the third grade, and at that point, they only had to talk about their closest family members. The design was simple as well - they had to find a picture of each family member and glue it to a piece of paper, write down who it was and then describe the family members to the rest of class, so it was not even a family tree as some students had called it in their questionnaires.

Hence, the lessons before the spring holidays were spent working with family trees, doing some comprehension and recreation tasks. The last lesson before the break the teacher helped the students make a draft of their own tree with the information these students had about their relatives, answering their questions and correcting some inaccuracies in their work (some students were not sure how to show the relationships between people and they had, for example, drawing the tree in a way that made their brother be their husband, etc.). The students then had

the whole spring break in questioning their relatives to complete their draft with the missing information and design a poster showcasing their family.

Since this time their work was graded, when the time to present their project came, the teacher was pleased to see that almost everyone had done their work, and even though some of the children (1 boy and 1 girl from Class C and 3 boys from Class B) did not have a poster, which was one of the points in the evaluation grid, they drew their family tree on the whiteboard while talking, therefore they had at least some kind of visual aid. The majority of the students had a large family, therefore they had only researched their relatives until their grandparents, however there were some students who did not have any siblings, and their parents were the only children in their respective families, therefore they were asked to go further back and research their grandparents' siblings and their parents. One boy from the Class A stood out because he had done more than what was asked of him, with his family tree going four generations back including all the siblings, husbands and wives, and children. He also talked very enthusiastically about his research, and after the lesson, he discussed with the author of the Diploma Paper how he had gathered the whole family together, went through some old pictures and together with his parents, and his godparents created the poster.

The second project, however, had a crucial effect on Class B. After presenting or waiting to present their family trees, the boys in Class B did not respect their classmates who were taking their oral test at the time and conversed with one another about unrelated topics. When the teacher reproached them, the boys turned their negative feelings for being interrupted and forced to listen towards their classmates, which in turn resulted in serious arguments between the classmates. After the lesson, the author of the Diploma Paper consulted their homeroom teacher and school's social educator about the hostilities that the students displayed in the lessons during the whole school year. Since this was not the only subject where the children had shown traces of mobbing, the homeroom teacher and the school's support staff promised to handle the situation, but the growing tension and negative atmosphere that happened to worsen any time students had to present something made the researcher rethink her study and bring it to an end.

Thus as of the end of March, seventeen students from Class B were relieved of participating in this research and continued their studies without any projects. The priority in this class shifted from improving their sense of initiative to improving their relationships and respect towards another human being. While Class A and Class C continued to work with exercises similar to the ones they had been doing for the last couple of months, the tasks in Class B were now connected to social competence, emphasizing such values as respect, tolerance, kindness, responsibility, etc.

Tasks between the second and third project

After the unsuccessful attempt at the second project with Class B, the author of the Diploma Paper was more careful and thoughtful when it came to choosing the type of exercises to present for the remaining two classes. This period between the projects was dedicated to personalizing the experience for the students, giving them the possibilities to voice their own opinions, discuss their preferences regarding their taste in music, movies, books, school subjects, etc.

Considering the topic for the following and last project the students had to do during this case study, alongside the tasks about their likes and dislikes, the classes were given reading texts about students traveling and visiting foreign countries. The research sample read various journal extracts written about people's experience in foreign countries, e-mails to friends or family members, and short videos about visiting new cultures with comedic aspects.

The project this time was less controlled than the other ones. The children chose the countries themselves without the help of the teacher; the only restriction was that America or England could not be selected as their topic. Students could also present their project either with the help of a PowerPoint presentation, or a poster. Though the teacher allowed the children to use technologies to present their work through other websites or apps, such as Canva, Prezi, Google Slides, etc., the children favored the ones already known to them.

For this project, students divided themselves into pairs, except one boy from Class A, who rather wanted to do the project alone than in a small group with two other classmates. They were given one week to decide upon a country, with the condition that no land could be repeated in the same group in class. Class A only needed a day for all pairs to agree on their topic, but Class C used all the time given to them. When all the themes were confirmed, the teacher and students discussed what they needed to include in their presentations. They came to an agreement that the capital city, official language, population, flag, and location in the map should be mentioned. The students should also introduce the class to the most popular cities and sightseeing places in their specific land, as well as give a reason why they chose this particular country, and some interesting facts about the country would be appreciated. The students then were given almost full two weeks to make their work presentable.

3.3.3. THE THIRD PROJECT “COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD”

After carefully deliberating what country each pair wanted to research and later present to their classmates, children selected these:

- Australia (2);
- Canada (1);
- China (1);
- France (2);
- Germany (2);
- Greenland (1);
- Ireland (1);
- Italy (2);
- Japan (1);
- Sweden (1).

The number in the brackets shows how many groups presented about that specific land, two being the maximum since only two classes were participating in the research at this point and no pairs in the same class could select the same country.

There were no big surprises when the author of the Diploma Paper saw the list. Some countries, such as France and Italy are quite beloved vacation spots; since German is the first foreign language for these students, the researcher expected at least one pair of students to pick that as their project. The boys that chose Japan are big anime fans, so they selected the country responsible for creating them. The most unexpected one was Greenland, though, but one of the girls from that pair had always wanted to visit it, so she persuaded her friend to pick it since this country would be less known and therefore their presentation might be more engaging for the classmates. However, children’s negative reaction towards Russia was astonishing. When the teacher mentioned Russia as one of the countries students could talk about, they all as one said they would never choose that country, and some of the boys even booed Russia.

The other deduction from students’ choices was that majority of the selected countries that were located in Europe (see Figure 3.3.2. on the following page), which was not that unanticipated, however, not one pair decided on picking a land from Africa even if that continent has the most countries out of the seven. Similarly, no one decided on South America or Antarctica. The remaining three continents each had two pairs talking about them. The researcher observed that it corresponded to the videos and texts the students had been watching and reading during the previous weeks. The materials focused on countries from Europe, North

America, and Asia, which were later mirrored on students' choices. The author of the Diploma Paper, therefore, noted to look for more diverse information for the future.

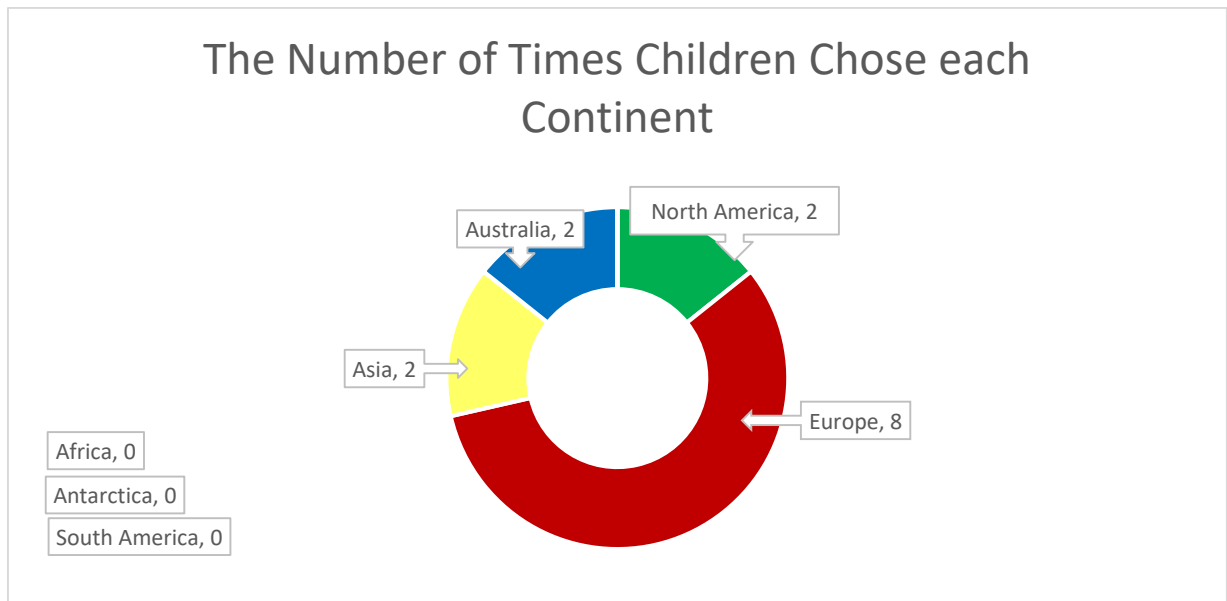


Figure 3.3.2. The Number of Times Children Chose each Continent

The projects were done carefully and thoughtfully, all pairs but two displaying their work with the help of a PowerPoint presentation. They had included all the information the teacher had agreed upon, but some students did not know what “fun facts” to say about the country. Therefore five presentations did not include them. One presentation, made by the boy in Class A who chose to present by himself, included pictures with his family members and himself visiting the country when he was a baby. He said that from the stories that vacation had sounded amazing, and he would like to return to Australia once more when he was older and had the opportunity.

However, in the feedback, one presentation of a pair in Class C was anonymously voted as the best by the children. Two boys, who selected Italy to be their topic of choice, made a poster, which was beautifully decorated. They had printed some pictures, such as the flag and the location on the world map. However, one of the boys has a wonderful talent, and he had made some drawings that completed the information, such as an erupting volcano when they talked about Pompeii, etc. The other boy, however, has a very charming personality and a talent for storytelling; combined with the poster and the information they had found, their presentation truly left the author of the Diploma Paper feeling joyful and proud.

Without the Class B participating, this last part of the project ran smoothly. The two remaining classes had researched their topics and presented them in the best way they could. The classmates listened to the presenters, wrote feedback on slips of paper that the teacher first

gathered to proofread that no offensive comments were said, then passed it to the respective pairs. What is more, there were two girls in Class C that were nervous about presenting and during their presentation forgot some of the vocabulary items they had wanted to use, and could not think of other words that could replace them; before the teacher could engage and help, their classmates were already giving them suggestions on how to formulate their thoughts into words. That situation alone proves how important it is that the classmates are supportive of each other, especially at this time when the researcher is encouraging students to take the initiative and learn on their own, it is fundamental that they are not mocked or laughed at for making mistakes, but rather receive the assistance that they need to be successful.

3.4. THE OBSERVATIONS MADE AFTER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS

Since the researcher was also the English teacher to these students, the observations whether any progress had taken place could be made throughout the rest of April and May. After the last project, the children were given a similar questionnaire to complete; then another lesson was monitored by the same art teacher. The information gathered by the end of the case study was analyzed and will be outlined in this subchapter. The author of the Diploma Paper did not expect any fundamental changes since it was quite improbable to improve students' sense of the initiative in such a short time. However, any differences in students' behavior were noted and believed to be the result of this case study.

The second question in the questionnaire already showed some changes in the way these students used English in their free time (see Figure 3.4.1). Though it is not clear what made the students use this language to communicate with others more than at the beginning of the semester, the other two were connected to this research and activities done during the lessons. The biggest change could be seen in the option "find information"; if at the beginning of the semester only 11 percent of boys and 12 percent of girls checked this answer, then now the number of students was almost quadrupled. Researching the information for their projects had helped them see that they could use their knowledge in another language to gain a new perspective on things and that their English was already good enough to understand most if not all the information provided in online articles.

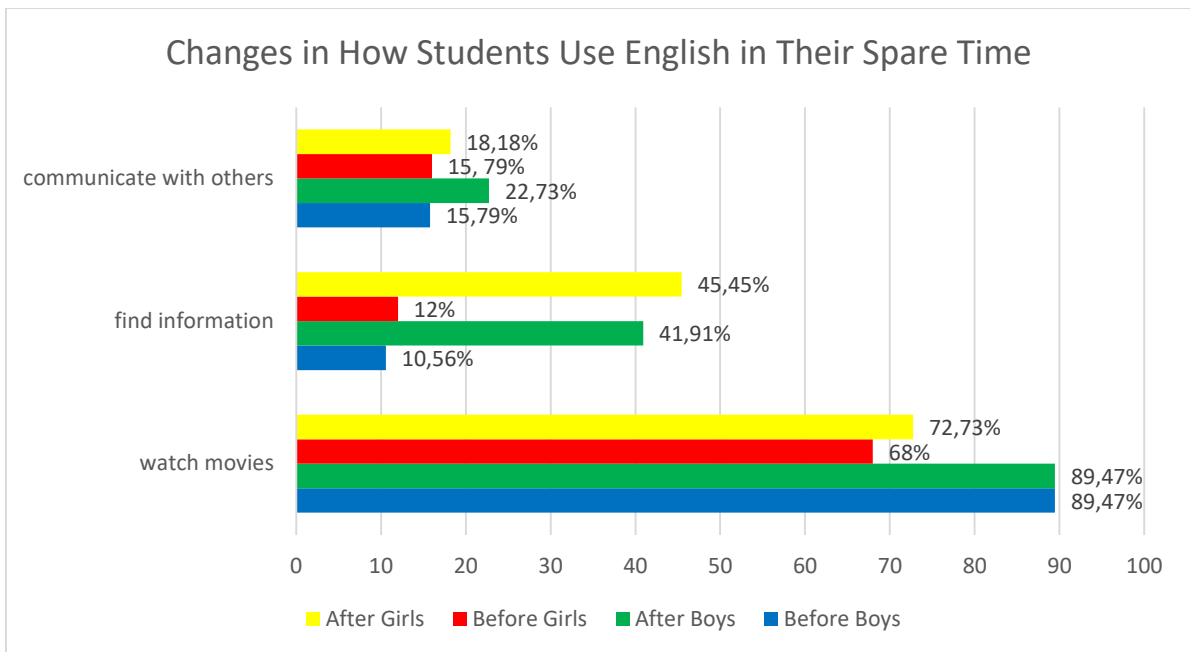


Figure 3.4.1. Changes in How Students Use English in Their Spare Time

The other answer that more girls had circled was “watch movies,” which can be explained by the fact that we had watched some films during the second semester when the other English teacher was sick, and the whole class had English lessons together. During that time, one other girl from Class B realized that watching movies in English was an option for her as well. The other answers did not contain any changes.

Regarding students’ thoughts about doing projects, the results were different for each class. In question No. 3 they were asked to order five types of tasks (game-type activities, worksheets, exercises from the student’s’ books, research tasks, and creative tasks) from the best (1) to the worst (5). In Figure 3.4.2, the order for the projects can be seen for each class before and after the implementation of projects.

Not one student selected projects as their first choice; that spot unanimously went to the game-type activities both before and after the research. Class A did not experience any fundamental changes, with only one person changing their opinion from 4th to third place. However, this group of students was the most positive about this type of tasks. Therefore the fact that no one disliked them was also a small success.

After the case study, the students from Class C ordered projects little bit higher than before, with no one selecting this answer as their least favorite task, and five children chose to do projects right after playing games. This also corresponds to the observations made in the classroom, where it seemed like the children enjoyed doing the research.

Class B, on the other hand, went in the other direction. After the case study, which was stopped prematurely because of the attitude problems, more students claimed to dislike doing

this type of tasks with eight people out of seventeen putting research and projects at the very end. Only one person put this answer in a higher position than before, others either not changing their perspective or putting it lower. This, though, could be explained with the unsuccessful presentation part, since the students, who already were not confident in their abilities, were even more afraid to speak in front of the class after the second project, and the slighting remarks other classmates exclaimed.

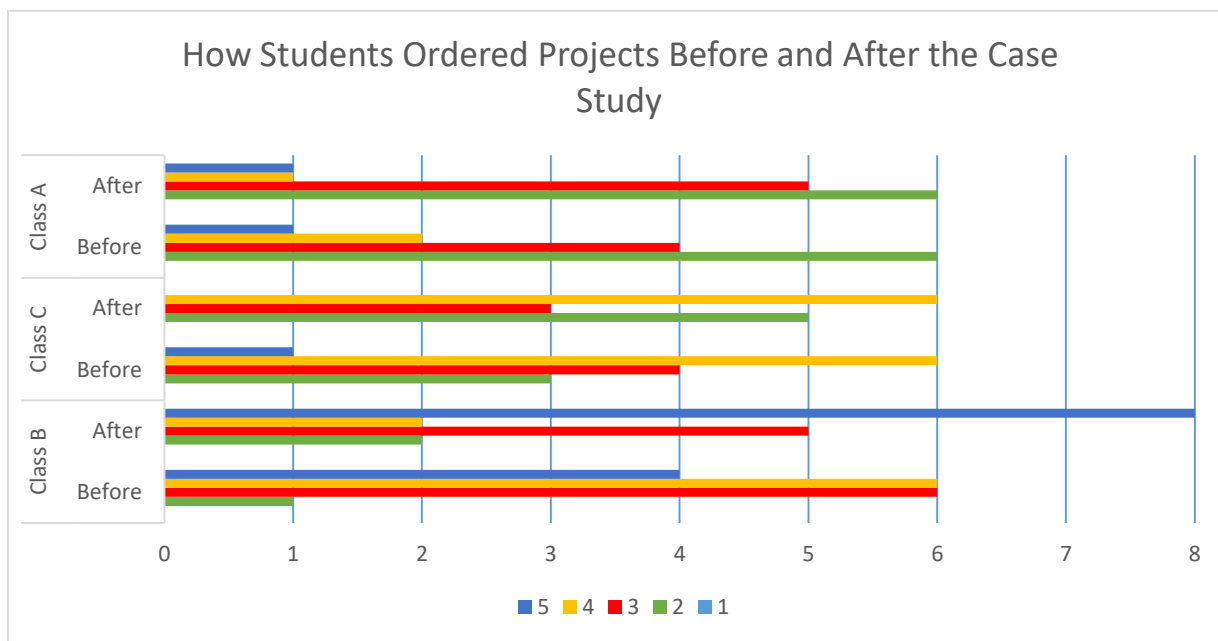


Figure 3.4.2. How Students Ordered Projects Before and After the Case Study

Nevertheless, from all the projects, 90% of students claimed that their favorite one was the second project about their family tree since that had a personal touch and the children thought it was interesting to research their relatives. The rest of the respondents marked the last project as their favorite one, leaving the one about states and cities in America as the only answer not to get any votes. When asked, if they wanted to intertwine some projects in the next semester, the majority of students in Classes A and C answered positively, however, Class B was more skeptical, with only one student saying he wanted to continue with these tasks, eight students saying that it depended on the topic and eight students saying they would not like to do it, no matter the topic.

The other source of information about the success of this project came from the same teacher who was asked to join and watch a similar lesson to the one at the beginning of the school semester. From the conversations with the art teacher and the observations made throughout the case study by the researcher, the author of the Diploma Paper came to the conclusion that the best effect on the whole class could be seen in Class A, because the students

were more open and lively than before, asked questions about the texts they were reading, and seemed more curious and not so apathetic as before. However, the most progress could be seen with a boy from Class C, who seemed to like these projects, and even after the practical part had ended, he continued to write in his notebook the things he wanted to research later at home. For example, even when the class was watching a movie, where KGB, MI6, and CIA were mentioned, and the teacher quickly explained what these letters stood for, he noted to look into this topic more since he found it interesting.

On the other hand, the situation in Class B was quite different. The art teacher noted that the relationships between the students themselves had become quite tense, and the whole environment was not as pleasant as it was in the other classes. The students were doing the exercises they were supposed to do, but there were no discussions or inquiries; instead, it felt like everybody was waiting on something terrible to happen. Therefore, the main conclusion drawn after the experience was that even though the literature mentioned that the relationships between the classmates and the general atmosphere in the classroom could influence the result, in this practice it showed that it had a major role on students' confidence and their willingness to participate in such activities. Thus, before doing something similar in the future, the author of the Diploma Paper will most definitely make certain that nothing like this will ever happen and students have enough respect for the teacher and one another not to mock every student that makes a mistake openly.

CONCLUSION

One of the most distinguished changes that the project “Skola 2030” is introducing in the Latvian education system is competence-based education. While teaching students the subject, teachers are also expected to help them develop eight key competences of life-long learning. Though some of the competences, such as digital competence or mathematical competence, have been intertwined in other school subjects for a while now, the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship is more difficult to implement and teach, especially at a younger age.

According to German - American psychologist Erik Erikson, human beings go through eight psychological stages during their lifetime, the third one being Initiative vs. Guilt, during which children should develop the foundation of this competence. However, if this stage is not successful, and the individual does not learn the moral of this stage, which is “purpose”, it is more difficult for these children to develop the eighth key competence.

This Paper, therefore, aims to explore whether using projects in English lessons in Grade 5 could help improve students’ sense of initiative. In order to verify the aim, a case study was carried out in Agenskalns Primary School from the middle of January until the end of April. The research sample consisted of 44 Grade 5 students, who were observed at the beginning of the school semester by the school’s art teacher, monitored during the research by the author of the Diploma Paper and then observed again at the end by the same art teacher as before. To gain a better perspective, the students were asked to fill in a questionnaire in January and in April as well.

During this period, three projects were implemented in the lessons. The first project, “The Many Sides of America,” was carried out during Project Week in February to ensure that the students had an example they could base their following tasks on. The children were divided into small groups and had to make the presentation during the lessons in school so that the teacher was there to support and help them, if necessary. The following two projects they did themselves or with the help of their relatives (for “My Family Tree” project).

The author of the Diploma Paper did not expect any fundamental changes since three and a half months, and a handful of tasks and three projects are not enough time for students to improve their sense of initiative; however, some changes in students’ behavior were observed. Class A, who were more peaceful and quiet than the other two classes, and in the words of the art teacher “lacked character”, had become more open and talkative. More students were participating in the lessons, and they were more keen on discussions than they were before. Class C also displayed some changes in their behavior, however, not that distinguishable.

Nevertheless, it was concluded that one of the main conditions for success is a positive classroom environment. If the students do not have mutual respect, their poor relationships influence their willingness to participate in the lessons, and in this case, students' confidence while presenting their research to others. Thus, before using projects, it is an absolute necessity to make certain the students have a good rapport and will not mock one another for making grammar or pronunciation mistakes. This was the exact reason why Class B did not do well in this research and was stopped before doing the last project.

This research was limited by a short period of time, and the author of the Diploma Paper will continue to use projects with Class A and Class C throughout the next year to maintain working on their sense of initiative, since the majority of students in these classes claimed to want to do research type of activities in the next school year as well. However, at this point using projects to improve students' sense of initiative in Class B will not be possible, unless their mutual relationships are improved.

THESES

1. The competence-based education differentiates from traditional education not only by the eight key competences of life-long learning but also by learning targets and outcomes, assessment, the meaning of grades, teacher's support, and time period (Lopez et al., 2017).

2. The eight key competences, which the educators are expected to teach each student, are the following: communication in the mother tongue; communication in foreign tongue; mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; digital competence; learning to learn; social and civic competences; cultural awareness and expression; and sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (Youth workers online training, n.d.).

3. According to E. Erikson (1998), Initiative vs. Guilt is the third stage in psychological development and occurs at the age of four to five. During this time, a child should develop the foundation for the sense of initiative.

4. Before implementing the chosen method, the teacher should consider giving the students many easier rather than fewer but more difficult projects. The children should also be allowed to choose the topic of their research and the form of their presentation.

5. During this case study, three various projects were implemented in the lessons. The research sample had the opportunity to work alone, in pairs and small groups, as well as chose their topics for two of them.

6. The questionnaire at the end of the project verified that the most beloved of the three projects was the one about students' family trees since it was the most personal and therefore the most engaging for the children.

7. This study proved that the role of a positive classroom environment and mutual respect between the classmates could not be overestimated, especially regarding the presentation part of the research. If the classmates have a terrible rapport with each other and the teacher, that problem should be solved before using projects to improve the students' sense of initiative.

8. Though this was too short a period of time to see any distinctive changes in students' initiative, the most distinguished differences could be observed with the quieter, more peaceful class, which had become more talkative and open then at the beginning of the school semester.

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APPENDICES

Questionnaire to Students

This questionnaire is designed to show students' attitude towards English as a language, and whether they use it outside the classroom, as well as their previous experience and preferences regarding projects. Please read the questions below and answer honestly.

1. How often do you use English outside school and lessons?
a) every day or every other day b) 2-4 times a week c) once a week
d) once every two weeks e) once a month f) only when I have to

2. How do you use English in your everyday life? (more than one answer possible)
a) listen to music b) watch movies c) watch videos
d) play video games e) read blogs, websites f) read books, magazines
g) find information h) communicate with others i) I don't
j) other: _____

3. What type of tasks do you prefer to do? Order them (1 – the best, 5 – the worst)!
___ playing game-like activities ___ doing worksheets
___ doing tasks from the book ___ doing research tasks, such as projects
___ doing creative tasks, such as writing a story, etc.

4. What are your thoughts about doing projects?
a) I like them! b) I do not mind them c) I dislike them

5. In which school subjects have you had to make a project already? What were the topics?

6. How do you usually find the necessary information?
a) I use Internet sources b) I use the materials the teacher has provided
c) I use books, magazines, etc. d) I ask my parents/siblings for help

7. How would you like to present your project?

- a) make a poster
- b) make a presentation with the help of PowerPoint
- c) with no visual aids
- d) other: _____

8. Would you like to do the project alone, in pairs or small groups?

- a) alone
- b) in pairs
- c) in small groups

THANK YOU!

Questionnaire to Students

This questionnaire is designed to show students' attitude towards English as a language, and whether they use it outside the classroom, as well as their previous experience and preferences regarding projects. Please read the questions below and answer honestly.

1. How often do you use English outside school and lessons?
b) every day or every other day b) 2-4 times a week c) once a week
d) once every two weeks e) once a month f) only when I have to

2. How do you use English in your everyday life? (more than one answer possible)
b) listen to music b) watch movies c) watch videos
d) play video games e) read blogs, websites f) read books, magazines
g) find information h) communicate with others i) I don't
j) other: _____

3. What type of tasks do you prefer to do? Order them (1 – the best, 5 – the worst)!
___ playing game-like activities ___ doing worksheets
___ doing tasks from the book ___ doing research tasks, such as projects
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4. What are your thoughts about doing projects?
a) I like them! b) I don't mind them c) I dislike them

5. How do you usually find the necessary information?
b) I use Internet sources b) I use the materials the teacher has provided
c) I use books, magazines, etc. d) I ask my parents/siblings for help

6. How would you like to present your project?
b) make a poster b) make a presentation with the help of PowerPoint
c) with no visual aids d) other: _____

7. Would you like to do the project alone, in pairs or small groups?

- b) alone b) in pairs c) in small groups

8. Which was your favorite project that you did this semester? Why?

9. Would you like to do more projects next year?

- a) yes b) no c) maybe, depends on the topic

THANK YOU!

Appendix No. 3
Observation Checklist

OBSERVATION SHEET

Date: 1.02.2019 Lesson: 5A Grade: 11.40-12.20

1. RICH AND STIMULATING CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT ○ The physical layout of the classroom provides access to materials, computers, and centers ○ Bulletin boards/classroom displays relate to current content ○ There is a display of current student work ○ Evidence of Framework for Learning being used	1	2	3	4
	Comments HARD TO SAY			
2. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT OF RESPECT ○ Evidence of an established culture of learning ○ Evidence of well-established routines and procedures ○ Teacher-students interaction demonstrates caring and respect ○ Classroom environment of respect and rapport between students and between teacher and student	1	2	3	4
	+	+	+/-	+/-
Comments MOST, NOT ALL				
3. ENGAGED STUDENTS: ○ If working in groups, students are working well together. ○ Students appear aware that the teacher is taking note of their level of engagement. Students try to increase level of engagement when prompted. ○ Teacher uses physical movement to maintain students' engagement; students move easily about the classroom. ○ Teacher uses pacing techniques to maintain students' engagement	1	2	3	4?
	Comments SKOLENI IR SAJAS "STACIJAS"			
4. CLEAR FOCUS: ○ The goals of the lesson, as identified in the Common Core Standards, are understood by the students. ○ Students can easily explain what they are learning, why they are learning it and how they will know that they have learned it. ○ The purpose of the lesson is clear to the observer. ○ The lesson or activity is clearly structured to help students master a particular skill or "big idea".	1	2	3	4
	+	+	+	+
Comments				
5. RIGOROUS INSTRUCTION: ○ Students are working on complex, challenging tasks that require them to think critically and grapple with questions for which there is no single correct answer. ○ Students are asking questions, forming opinions based on evidence, and engaging in thoughtful conversations with teachers and one another. ○ Teacher asks students to explain or provide evidence of understanding that require student to make inferences about the content. ○ Evidence of students critiquing multiple forms of text.	1	2	3	4
	+	+	+	-
Comments SOME, NOT ALL				

How many students are actively participating in the lesson? How can you tell?

MEITENES STUNĀ IR AKTĪVĀKAS ZINŠĀKAS PUISIS M. VĒL AKTĪVI PIEDĀLĀS,
ATBILD UZ SKOLOTĀJAS JAUTĀJUMIEM, PATS PĪSĀKĀS DISKUTĒT. PĀRĒSIE 4
ĀRĒKĀS, KA ĀRĒDAS SEIT TĪKĀI TĀPĒC, KA JĀBŪT, BET NAV IEINTERĒSĒTI
MOTĪKOSĀJĀ. MONOTONI DARA VEICĒTO DARBU

How many students are asking questions? How does the teacher respond?

PĀRSVĀRĀ DIVAS MEITENES UN VIENS PUISIS PĀRĒSIE NAV TĪK AKTĪVI,
SKOLOTĀJAI SPECĪĀLI VIŅI JĀUZŪRŪNĀ, JĀPĀSKUBĪNĀ. BET UZ VIŅIEM
ĀDRĒSĒTIEM JĀUTĀJUMIEM ATBILD VISI.
DAŽĒRĒI SKOLOTĀJĀ PATI NEŠTEIDZĀS ATBILDĒT, BET POD BĒRNIEM

IESĒJU IZPALDZĒT SAVĒH KLASEBIEDRIEM UN DĒRĀDT SAVAS
ZINĀŠANAS

How would you characterize the children and the atmosphere in the classroom?

BĒRNI IR DĒRĀGAN MIERĪGI, KLUSI. NAV NEKĀDU STRĪDU SAVĀ STĀDĀ,
PROT SAJARBOTIES.
RESPEKTĒ SKOLOTĀJU, BEZ KOMENTĀRIEM DARA SAVU DARBU, ČĀKLI.
PĒT STUNDU IETURAS DĒRĀGAN BEZPERSONĪGI.

How would you characterize the rapport between the class and the teacher?

SKOLĒNI RESPEKTĒ SAVU SKOLOTĀJU, JA NEZINA KAUT KO (KAS
SAV NEBĪZA BĪŽĪ) DĒDD JĀUTĀJUMUS UN SNĪEDZAS PĒC PALI-
DEĪBAS.
NO SKOLOTĀJAS PUSES ĀRT LĪEKAS, KA VIŅA RESPEKTĒ BĒRŅUS, BĒT
TUVĀKĀS ATTĪELĪBAS IR ĀR PUIŠI M UN MEITENĒM M UN D,
KAS ĀRT STUNDĀS IR ĀRTĪVĀKĪE BĒRNI.

Appendix No. 4
Observation Checklist

OBSERVATION SHEET

Date: 26.04.2019 Lesson: 11.40-1230 Grade: 5A

1. RICH AND STIMULATING CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The physical layout of the classroom provides access to materials, computers, and centers o Bulletin boards/classroom displays relate to current content o There is a display of current student work o Evidence of Framework for Learning being used 	1	2	3	4
	+/-	+	+	+/-
Comments				
2. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT OF RESPECT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Evidence of an established culture of learning o Evidence of well-established routines and procedures o Teacher-students interaction demonstrates caring and respect o Classroom environment of respect and rapport between students and between teacher and student 	1	2	3	4
	+	+	+	+
Comments				
3. ENGAGED STUDENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If working in groups, students are working well together. o Students appear aware that the teacher is taking note of their level of engagement. Students try to increase level of engagement when prompted. o Teacher uses physical movement to maintain students' engagement; students move easily about the classroom. o Teacher uses pacing techniques to maintain students' engagement 	1 +	2 +	3 -	4 +/-
	Comments			
4. CLEAR FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The goals of the lesson, as identified in the Common Core Standards, are understood by the students. o Students can easily explain what they are learning, why they are learning it and how they will know that they have learned it. o The purpose of the lesson is clear to the observer. o The lesson or activity is clearly structured to help students master a particular skill or "big idea" 	1 +	2 +	3 +	4 +
	Comments			
5. RIGOROUS INSTRUCTION: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Students are working on complex, challenging tasks that require them to think critically and grapple with questions for which there is no single correct answer. o Students are asking questions, forming opinions based on evidence, and engaging in thoughtful conversations with teachers and one another. o Teacher asks students to explain or provide evidence of understanding that require student to make inferences about the content. o Evidence of students critiquing multiple forms of text. 	1 +	2 +	3 +	4 -
	Comments			

How many students are actively participating in the lesson? How can you tell?

SKOLENI IR DAUDZ AKTIVAKI NEKA IEPRIEKŠ. VIENS NO PUSIEM JOPROJAM
TURAS NOSTĀK NO PĀRĒJIEM UN VĒL VIENA MEITELE ĒMĒ BURTĪCĀ,
UZ KO SKOLOTĀJA NEKĒNGĒ, BET PĒC ŠĪ LAIKA BĒRNI DAUDZ
LAPRĀTĪGĀK ĪESAISTĀS DISKUSIJĀS PĒRĀDĀS PRASĪT PALĪDĪBU SAVAI
SKOLOTĀJAI VAI KLASEBIEDRIEM.

How many students are asking questions? How does the teacher respond?

SKOLOTĀJA JOPROJAM DOD PĀRĒJAI KLASEI ĪESPĒJU ATBILDĒT UZ JAVTĀ-
JUMIEM UN TIKAI TAD ĪESAISTĀS PATI. ŠĀJĪTĀ KA BĒRNIEM TAGAD IR
LĀDĀKĀS ATTĪCĪBAS AR SKOLOTĀJĀM, JĪTAS ĒRTĀK STUNDĀ UN NEBĀDĀS
JAVTĀT PAR LIETĀM, KĀS VĀU LĪDZ GALĀM SKĀDRĀS

Jā iepriekš viņi koncentrējas uz galvenās domas saprašanu, tad tagad viņi vēlas izprast katru vārdu, iesaistās diskusijā par teksta mīnētu splidzinājumu.

How would you characterize the children and the atmosphere in the classroom?

Atmofēra viennozīmīgi ir mainījusies uz labo pusi. Jā iepriekš varēja runāt par respektu, tad tagad viņiem ir labas attiecības ar skolotāju, kas arī izmaina to, kā viņi uzvedas stundās. Bērni vairs nav tik monotoni, klusi. Patik izteikt savu viedokli un pieredzi. Draudzīga klase, pasmežas viens par otru, bet bez strīdiem un apvainošanās. Brīva atmofēra.

How would you characterize the rapport between the class and the teacher?

Saustarpējās attiecības noteikti ir palikušas labākas, draudzīgākas. Bērni ir palikuši atvērtāki, patik iesaistīt skolotāju diskusijās. Reizēm skolotāja arī izsaka kādu joku, kad apstaigā klasi. Skolotāju joprojām respektē un griežas pie viņas pēc palīdzības.

Appendix No. 5

The Fairytale task

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN



Hans Christian Andersen is one of the most famous storytellers in the world. He was born in Denmark (1805 – 1875) He has written many fairy tales, including “The Little Mermaid”, “The Ugly Duckling” (neglītais pīlēns), “The Snow Queen” and today’s fairy tale – “The Little Match Girl”.

1. Read the story and answer the questions. The table could help you understand the story better.

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL

It was so terribly cold. Snow was falling, and it was almost dark. Evening came on, the last evening of the year. In the cold a poor little girl, **bareheaded** and **barefoot**, was walking through the streets. Of course when she had left her house she'd had **slippers** on, but what good had they been? They were very big slippers, way too big for her, because they had **belonged** to her mother. The little girl had lost them running across the road. One slipper she'd not been able to find again, and a boy had run off with the other. And so the little girl walked on her naked feet, which were quite red and blue with the cold. In an old **apron** she carried packages of **matches**, and she held a box of them in her hand. No one had **bought** any from her all day long, and no one had given her a cent.

Shivering with cold and hunger, she crept along, a picture of misery, poor little girl! The snowflakes fell on her long fair hair, which hung in pretty curls over her neck. In all the windows lights were shining, and there was a wonderful smell of **roast goose**, for it was New Year's eve.

In a corner formed by two houses, she sat down and drew up her little feet under her. She was getting colder and colder, but did not dare to go home, because she had sold no matches, nor **earned** a single cent, and her father would surely beat her. Besides, it was just as cold at home as it was on the street.

Her hands were almost dead with cold. Oh, how much one little match might warm her! If she could only take one from the box and rub it against the wall and warm her hands. She **drew** one **out**. *R-r-ratch!* How it burned! It made a warm, bright flame, like a little candle, as she held her hands over it; but it gave a strange light! It really seemed to the little girl as if she were sitting before a great **iron stove**. How wonderfully the fire burned! The girl stretched out her feet to warm them too; then the little flame **went out**, the stove vanished, and she had only the used match in her hand.

bareheaded	pliku galvu
barefoot	basām kājām
slippers	čības
belong	piederēt
apron	priekšauts
matches	sērkociņi
bought	nopirkt
shiver	drebēt, trīcēt
earn	nopelnīt
drew out	izvilkt
iron stove	dzelzs krāsns
went out	izdzisa
struck	tekstā: aizdedza
transparent	caurspīdīgs
cloth	audums
roast goose	cepeškrāsnī gatavota zoss
stuffed with apples and prunes	pildīta ar āboliem un žāvētām plūmēm
rich merchant	bagāts tirgotājs
dissappear	pazust, izgaist

She struck another match against the wall. It burned brightly, and the wall became **transparent** and she could see through it into a room. On the table a snow-white **cloth** was spread, and on was a **roast goose, stuffed with apples and prunes**. Then the match **went out**, and she could see only the thick, cold wall. She lighted another match. Then she was sitting under the most beautiful Christmas tree. It was much larger and much more beautiful than the one she had seen last Christmas through the glass door at the **rich merchant's** home. Thousands of candles burned on the green branches. The little girl reached both her hands toward them. Then the match went out, and the Christmas tree **disappeared**.

Full fairytale can be found here: http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/vaerk/hersholt/TheLittleMatchGirl_e.html

Answer the questions about the story.

What was the girl selling? _____

What day was it? _____

Why didn't the girl want to go home? _____

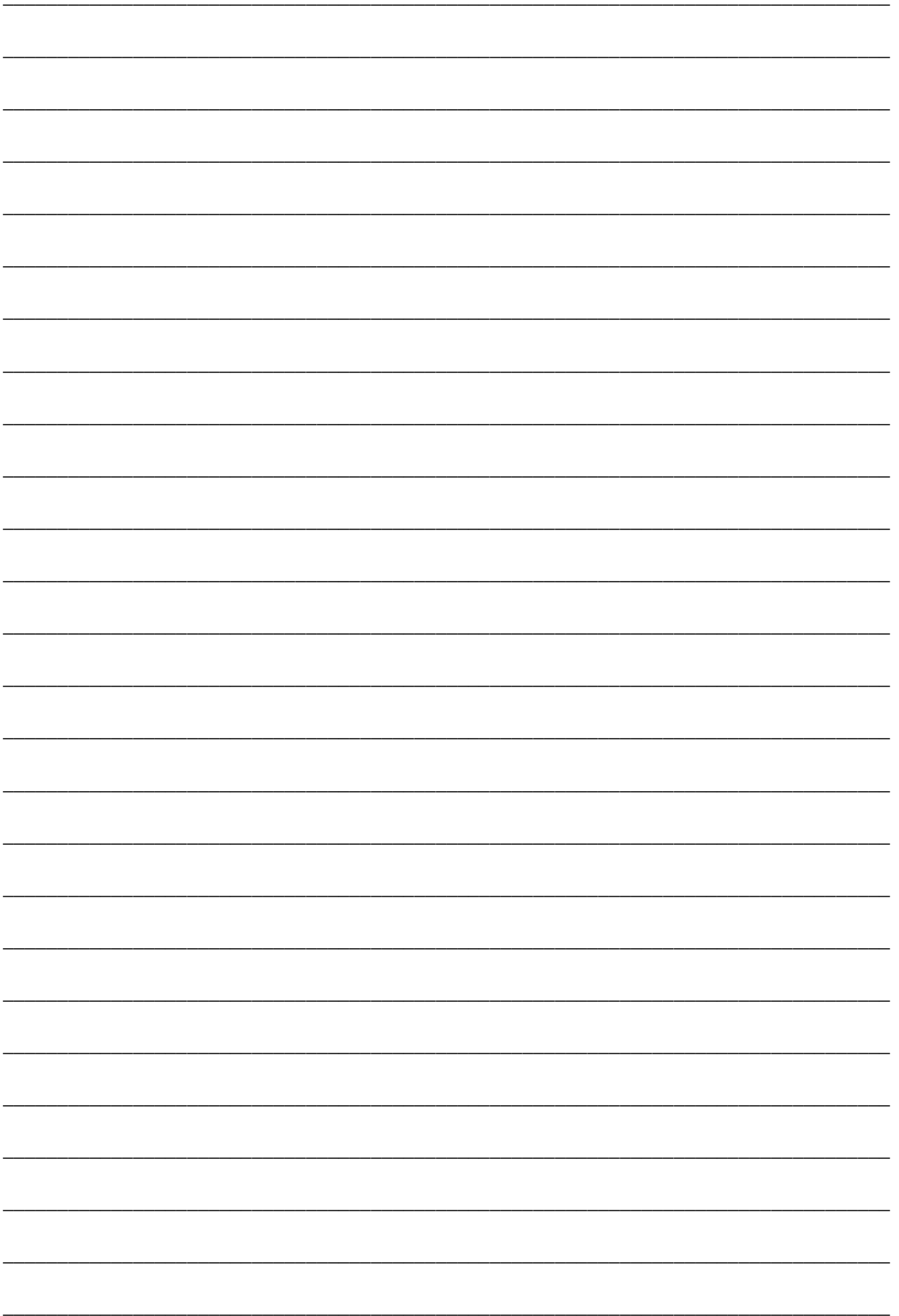
Why did the girl light the matches? _____

What did she see, when she lighted the first match? _____

What did the girl see, when she lighted the second match? _____

How many matches did she light? _____

2. Try to think what happened next. Write your own ending to the fairy tale.



Diplomdarbs „Projektu izmantošana skolēnu iniciatīvas uzņemšanās uzlabošanai angļu valodas stundās 5. klasēs” izstrādāts LU Pedagoģijas, psiholoģijas un mākslas fakultātē fakultātē.

Ar savu parakstu apliecinu, ka pētījums veikts patstāvīgi, izmantoti tikai tajā norādītie informācijas avoti un iesniegtā darba elektroniskā kopija atbilst izdrukai.

Autors: _____ Katrīna Caune
(paraksts)

Rekomendēju/nerekomendēju darbu aizstāvēšanai

Vadītāja: lektore M. ped., M. fil. Sandra Kalniņa _____ .____.2019.
(paraksts)

Recenzents: asociētā viesprofesore Elīna Maslo

Darbs iesniegts LU PPMF _____ .____.2019.

Dekāna pilnvarotā persona: studiju metodiķe Inese Ranka, _____
(paraksts)

Darbs aizstāvēts Valsts pārbaudījuma komisijas sēdē

____. ____ .2019. protokola nr. _____, vērtējums: _____

Komisijas sekretārs: Anita Auziņa _____
(paraksts)