A LONGITUDINAL STUDY ON EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING DEVELOPMENT IN THREE LOWER PRIMARY GROUPS

„Szerintem fontos angolul tanulni, mert ez egy baby-könnyű nyelv, éppen gyerekeknek való.”

"I think it is important to learn English because this is a 'baby-light' language, just right for children."

Turányi Zsófia

Supervisor: Nikolov Marianne, DSc

Doctoral Programme in English Applied Linguistics and TEFL/TESOL
University of Pécs

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AfL	Assessment for Learning
ARG	Assessment Reform Group
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CEFR	Common European Framework of References
CPH	Critical Period Hypothesis
CRT	Criterion Referenced Test
CS	Communication Strategy
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELL	Early Language Learning
ELLiE	Early Language Learning in Europe
FL	Foreign Language
ID	Individual Differences
L2	Second Language
LLS	Language Learning Strategy
NCC	National Core Curriculum
PA	Peer-assessment
PS	Production Strategy
RQ	Research Question
SA	Self-assessment
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
YL	Young Learner

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Introduction

My interest in young learners' (YL) language education stems from a phenomenon I faced when I started to teach English in 2000. As an English teacher at a secondary school I had to evaluate the second language (L2) proficiency of my students at the beginning of their studies and group them according to their achievement on a placement test. Many of my students who got into the false beginner group had participated in several years of language education with little or no efficiency. Although they remembered many course-books, nice teachers and interesting language lessons, their proficiency hardly reached level A1 on *Common European Framework of References* (CEFR) (2001). By the time they started the secondary school at age 15, they had lost their interest and motivation, and many of them believed that they were unable to learn a foreign language (FL). Thus, I decided to find answers to the questions arising in my mind while listening to these students. The aim of my study is to reveal how I can scaffold learners' progress over the years, how they can apply diagnostic tests to monitor students' development, and how I can integrate diagnostic assessment into the teaching process. I also aim to provide insights into how children react to diagnostic feedback, their feelings concerning their assessment and their opinion on assessment tasks used in the classroom.

At this point I find it important to explain why I am working on this research as a practicing primary school teacher of English. In line with the rules of Hungarian teacher education, I graduated from the University of Debrecen as an English major, and I received a degree which allows me to teach English at any kind of institutions in Hungary. People with this degree usually teach in secondary school or in higher education. Primary school English teachers mainly hold lower primary college degrees which allow them to teach at primary level but not at secondary or higher education. Thus, the prestige of teaching at a secondary school is higher among teachers than teaching at a primary school. However, I have chosen to teach YLs as I was curious about the process of L2 development and wanted to gain first-hand experience about this process as a participant. So, after seven years of working as a secondary school teacher I turned to primary education and started to work on this research to get a deeper insight into the processes of my English classes. As integration and effective teaching of children with special educational needs (SEN) is my mission in my teaching carrier, I got a degree in teaching SEN children with

specialization in behavior problems. That is the reason why my dissertation includes a chapter on a student with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). As carrying out research is not a requirement in my position, I am intrinsically motivated to raise questions and to find answers to them to become a better teacher and to share knowledge with interested colleagues.

Research questions and the overview of the dissertation

My dissertation is divided into two parts and seven chapters. The theoretical background to the research studies is outlined in Chapters 1 and 2. The first chapter outlines the literature on early foreign language learning and L2 development elaborating on individual differences (ID) and teachers' roles. Chapter 2 overviews the literature on different types of assessment of language learners with special emphasis on dynamic and diagnostic assessment. Chapter 3 provides background to the context and the participants and outlines the research methodology applied in three empirical studies. These are the research questions (RQ) I aim to answer:

RQ1 How do diagnostic tests on speaking offer the teacher opportunities to scaffold children's development in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?

RQ2 How do the diagnostic tests work?

RQ3 To what extent can the tests give useful feedback to the teacher about the student's development?

RQ4 How do children's L2 proficiency and strategy use change over one year?

RQ5 How do the diagnostic tests contribute to cooperation in pairs and small groups?

RQ6 What beliefs emerge while children take the tests?

RQ7 How do children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence change over one year?

RQ8 How do the diagnostic tests work with a student with ASD?

Chapter 4 contains the findings of a study on the L2 proficiency and strategy use of three groups of students during an academic year (RQ4). The study reveals how the applied

diagnostic tests worked and to what extent they gave useful feedback about students' development for me as their teacher so that I could scaffold their learning (RQ3). Three subchapters about three different classes contain detailed descriptions of the findings that offer deeper understanding of L2 development (RQ1 and RQ2). Data from the researcher's observations during test taking give a detailed account on children's cooperation in pairs and groups (RQ5). Chapter 5 contains a thick description of qualitative data revealing how children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence changed over a year, and what beliefs emerged during test taking (RQ6, RQ7). Chapter 6 comprises the findings of a case study on a student with ASD revealing how the diagnostic tests work in the case of SEN (RQ8). Chapter 7 contains the summarizes of the findings of the three studies and the limitations as well as; a subchapter is devoted to self-reflection.

CHAPTER 1

Young Learners

The first part of this chapter overviews the theory of early foreign language learning and L2 development: the second half elaborates on ID and teachers' roles.

1.1. Early Foreign Language Learning

1.1.1. Introduction

Offering early language learning (ELL) opportunities in EFL programs has recently gained importance in the competition of Hungarian primary schools for pupils. While parents are eager to ensure their children the possibility of learning a FL in the lower-primary grades, there is a constant debate about the effectiveness of EFL programs among experts (Cameron, 2001; Genesee, 1978; Muñoz, 2006; Nikolov 2000a, 2009a; Scovel 1988). In this section I am going to overview the literature on the pros and cons of starting FL learning early.

1.1.2. Critical Period Hypothesis and early start

Before overviewing the literature on an early start of FL learning, it is essential to define what early means in a FL context. According to Nikolov and Mihaljević Djigunović (2011, p. 96), pre-school children between the ages of three to six are called *very young learners*, whereas primary-school pupils between seven to twelve are *young learners*, although in certain contexts even 14-year-olds are included in the YLs' group.

The earlier the better idea is widely accepted among parents due to the common belief that those mechanisms which assisted first language acquisition can be activated to support second language acquisition more effectively before puberty (Cameron, 2001, p. 13). Although the relevance of the common belief that earlier exposure to a FL is always an advantage in language learning has been viewed critically recently (Cameron, 2001; Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2006, 2011; Nikolov 2009a; Pinter, 2006), it is still accepted by many parents around the world, including Hungary. This belief may be

supported by the assumption that there is a period in early childhood which is highly favorable for FL learning.

In Scovel's definition (1988), 'the critical period hypothesis (CPH) is the notion that language is best learned during the early years of childhood, and that after about the first dozen years of life, everyone faces certain constraints in the ability to pick up a new language' (p. 2). Cameron (2001) explains the CPH as an 'idea that young children can learn a second language particularly effectively before puberty because their brains are still able to use the mechanisms that assisted first language acquisition' (p. 13). DeKeyser (2000) constrains the concept of CPH by stating that children can rely on their implicit mechanism while learning abstract linguistic patterns and this mental possibility of implicit induction disappears between the ages of 6 and 17. Thus, the period between these two ages is really crucial concerning the acquisition of these patterns (p. 518). But he also states that children are better at acquiring FLs implicitly which requires an enormous amount of input; this can be provided only in immersion programs (p. 520). Nikolov (2002) also differentiates between L2 contexts when investigating 'the younger the better' idea. She concludes that 'most of the experiences with successful child second language acquisition (SLA) come from studies conducted in the host environment and these cases are overwhelmingly impressive. How much young learners benefit in foreign language classes is a different issue' (p. 42). While arguing that immersion programs can resemble the host environment context, she highlights that 'it is impossible to decide whether the early or later immersion programme model should be favoured' (p. 43).

Nikolov (2016) highlights that 'focusing on starting age as the key variable is misleading in a foreign language context' (p. 4). She reveals that 'the quality and quantity of early provision, teachers, programs, and a continuity are more important' and emphasizes that keeping up the motivation of children is a key component in early L2 context. (p. 4).

The review of the literature on early start provides no convincing evidence for or against it, however, I must agree with Nikolov's (2002) statement 'it is possible that an early start contributes to young learners' attitudes and motivation, which later ensure good proficiency' (p. 43).

As my study concerns the effectiveness of diagnostic assessment in an early FL program, in the next chapter I will overview the literature supporting an early start.

1.1.3. Arguments for early FL instruction

Referring to the optimal age of starting a FL, Genesee (1978) states that according to a cognitive approach, early start can result in a natural and 'painless' (p. 146) way to acquire a second language. He also highlights that this view is supported by neuropsychological research, as the maximum plasticity of the brain, thus the maximum potential for development, occurs at the same time. Concerning the affective domain, he introduces the term of 'affective purity' (p. 147) which, in his interpretation, also contributes to children's more effective language learning, as 'they have fewer affective dispositions' (p. 147) influencing their learning. While elaborating on the previous issues, he contrasts various views. He argues that the developed cognitive system and the capability of abstract thinking of the mature learner can make second language acquisition more conscious, thus probably more effective.

On the other hand, Gilzow and Rhodes (2000) summarize seven schools' successful early FL programs and highlight three major reasons why such programs are worth introducing. Early language programs (1) improve cognitive skills; (2) broaden children's world-view; and (3) form a positive attitude towards learning further languages. While investigating the cognitive development they emphasize the increased problem-solving ability and creativity of early starters besides their improved achievement on the Scholastic Aptitude Tests.

Nikolov (2000a) also concludes that 'early SLA may add a new dimension to general cognitive development, may influence the mother tongue in a favorable way through raising awareness and may encourage the acquisition of other languages' (p. 42). Thus, she highlights four further arguments for an early start.

> (1) Neuro-science and psychology suggests that early stimulation is generally favourable; (2) studies in child and adult SLA research indicate that the length of exposure may influence SLA in a favourable way; (3) the general curriculum for learners expands with age: one of the areas of knowledge that could be acquired early is second languages and (4) our world is becoming more international every day, child SLA can encourage the early understanding and appreciation of different cultures, values and the development of positive attitudes towards the speakers of the target language. (p. 42)

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Curtain and Dahlberg's (2004) arguments are very similar to those proposed by Nikolov (2000a). An early start

1. has a positive effect on intellectual growth.
2. enriches and enhances a child's mental development.
3. leaves students with more flexibility in thinking, greater sensitivity to language, and a better ear for listening.
4. improves a child's understanding of his/her native language.
5. gives a child the ability to communicate with peoples/he would otherwise not have the chance to know
6. opens the door to other cultures and helps a child understand and appreciate people from other countries.
7. gives a student a head start in language requirements for college.
8. increases job opportunities in many careers where knowing another language is a real asset. (p. 399)

If raising awareness towards different cultures and accepting cultural differences are considered important aims of FL learning, 'the earlier, the better' idea can gain a new focus. Nikolov (2000a) also emphasizes that early L2 learning 'can encourage the early understanding and appreciation of different cultures, values and the development of positive attitude towards the speakers of the target language' and 'it may encourage the acquisition of other languages' (p. 42).

According to the Action Plan Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity by the Council of Europe (2004), 'language learning in kindergarten and primary school is effective, for it is here that key attitudes towards other languages and cultures are formed, and the foundations for later language learning are laid' (p. 16).

The above arguments for early FL instruction underline my assumption that by applying proper methods in an enjoyable atmosphere, YLs` L2 education can be effective and useful. Besides the age factor, early language learning (ELL) research also explores how ID affect YLs' L2 development (Haenni Hoti, Heitzmann, & Müller, 2009; Mihaljević Djigunović, 2009a; Nikolov 2009b, 2016). In the next section I analyze the gains offered by early start programs with an emphasis on YLs' L2 development.

1.2. L2 development

The development of YLs' oral skills and the complexity of their utterances are in the focus of this section. The amount and nature of L2 exposure are central issues when investigating YLs' L2 development. Ellis (1984) defines SLA according to its context; (1) naturalistic and (2) classroom. Similar differentiation can be seen when Singleton (1995) identifies `naturalistic and instructed learners` (p. 3) concerning the amount and nature of the L2 exposure. Muñoz (2006) also emphasizes the role of the L2 learning environment.

> In a foreign language setting the lack of massive amounts of input intensively distributed does not facilitate implicit learning on the part of the young learners. This deprives them of the possibility of native-like proficiency level that is near native-like as in naturalistic language learning. (p. 155)

She concludes that in a naturalistic learning setting high-quality input has a determinant role in L2 production. In the same way, formal learners need high-quality input as well as numerous opportunities for using the language' (p. 154). After writing about instructed L2 learning environments and citing numerous authors Singleton (1995) concludes that

> pupils who are given early exposure to a second language and are then integrated into classes containing pupils without such experience do not maintain a clear advantage for more than a relatively short period over pupils who begin to learn the language only at secondary level. (p. 2)

Thus, he states that concerning native-like proficiency, `early start in a second language is neither a strictly necessary nor a universally sufficient condition` (p. 4).

Before discussing the benefits of early start I find it important to highlight how YLs learn L2 in instructed learning environments. According to Nikolov (2016), 'the younger the learners are, the more similar the process of their FL development tends to be to the acquisition of their first language(s) and the less able they are to learn and apply language rules consciously' (p. 70). Nikolov highlights that YLs before puberty can be characterized by implicit learning which is based on 'memorizing unanalyzed wholes, chunks, formulaic expressions in context, as well as rules' (p.70). Whereas the ability to rely on explicit, rule-based learning appears and becomes dominant around puberty.

Larson-Hall (2008) finds that although with a modest difference, early start is beneficial even when input is only minimal. Minimal input, in her interpretation, means not more than four hours of instruction per week. Cameron (2001, p.14) refers to Lightbown and Spada (1993) stating that if native-like proficiency is the aim of L2 learning, an early start is beneficial. But if communicative competence is targeted, these benefits are less clear cut. DeKeyser and Larson-Hall (2005) conclude that long-term effects of early start can be observed in the field of pronunciation, while they are less obvious in grammar.

Johnstone (2009) expands that an early start is beneficial in a supportive environment emphasizing that children can acquire the sound system of the FL more easily, while their language anxiety is lower. In her investigation of the advantages of early FL programs, Pinter (2006) highlights children`s sensitivity to the sound system and rhythm of the FL; thus, they enjoy their acquisition of how the new language sounds.

The benefits of this sensitivity are clearly detectable later in the area of pronunciation. Cameron (2001) refers to better outcomes in pronunciation in the long run, but states that it happens in naturalistic contexts only and not in 'school-based learning' (p. 17), meaning foreign language contexts with minimal input and non-native teachers. Szpotowicz (2000), on the other hand, focuses on the importance of accuracy in the production of certain English words taught to Polish children. Her research reveals that the difference in the pronunciation of similarly sounding words in English and Polish were often ignored and, the English words were mispronounced. The above examples clearly show how important the teacher`s role is in an instructed learning environment. Pinter (2006) states that 'primary English teachers need to have adequate proficiency in the language to provide comprehensible input and natural exposure to the target language' (p. 41). Nikolov and Mihaljević Djigunović (2011) emphasize that besides proficiency in L2,

> teachers are expected to be (a) proficient in their pupils' L1 as well as in the L2, (b) familiar with the content and methodology of the general curriculum, and (c) the principles of how children learn in general and languages in particular. (p.106)

Considering L2 lexical development and ages, Singleton (1995) states that the

> age factor operates in relation to second language vocabulary learning in the
> same way as it operates in relation to other aspects of second language learning,
> i.e. older beginners exhibit an initial advantage which is progressively eroded
> as younger beginners catch up with them an eventually overtake them. (p.20)

On the other hand, when Curtain (2000) analyses the test results of early and late starters in FL programs, she reveals a significant difference between the language use of early and late starters in the short run. In her study time of exposure to L2 gains major importance. She administered Foreign Language in Elementary School test which 'includes topic areas typically covered in elementary school FL programmes, using listening and reading items accompanied by pictures, diagrams and charts' (p. 114).

> Analysis one found that early starters (those who started in kindergarten or
> grade one) scored significantly higher than late starters (those who started the
> programme in grade 4 or 5). This finding supports the general hypothesis that
> time has an effect on programme outcomes. (p.96)

In line with the findings longer exposure to L2 results in higher level of proficiency, thus an early start can be beneficial in the case of children's lexical development in L2 also in the short run.

The importance of presenting new vocabulary in meaningful context is highlighted by Ghosn (2013). She finds stories the most effective context for teaching vocabulary when `learning does not necessarily require several repeated encounters but can result even from limited exposure' (p. 92).

Szpotowicz (2000) highlights that the difference between recall and recognition results in her research on vocabulary acquisition of YLs 'revealed a consistent discrepancy between active and passive vocabulary stores' (p. 210). Pinter (2006) emphasizes that while children can recognize vocabulary items without knowing their exact meaning, it does not mean that they can recall them later in a conversation (p. 84). Orosz (2009) concludes in her study on Hungarian young learners' vocabulary growth that 'lower primary students are on the right track, as their vocabulary size level grows

progressively and if they were to continue at this rate, their vocabulary would reach the A2 level in the upper primary school' (p. 193).

Szpotowicz and Lindgren (2011. p. 142) also find in the ELLiE (Early Language Learning in Europe) study that learners' vocabulary and FL complexity showed significant development during the first years of FL exposure, and the average learner approached A1 level in oral and aural skills. Lopriore and Mihaljević Djigunović (2011) investigated the lexical diversity in the oral production of Italian and Croatian YLs and found that Croatian students outperformed their Italian peers. They concluded that 'Croatia's better results can be explained by the children's larger exposure to the FL either through the media or by means of exposure to the Internet, but also by the type of teacher education FL Croatian teachers have been consistently exposed to' (p. 102). The comparative study of Mihaljević Djigunović, Nikolov and Ottó (2008) on the achievement of Hungarian and Croatian 8th graders highlights that although the majority of the Hungarian learners were exposed to English for a longer time than their Croatian counterparts, they could not outperform them. The findings of the research reveal that 'factors usually assumed to be the keys to success in FL learning, i.e. early start, more classes, and small groups, while extremely important, do not guarantee higher achievements' (p. 448). The quality of teaching and the practice in the target language in and out-of-class are considered essential variables in learners' L2 achievement.

When Haenni Hoti, Heinzmann & Müller (2009) analyze Swiss YLs' utterances, they find

> The vast majority of the 3rd graders can use simple greetings and farewells as well as everyday expressions such as thank you. Furthermore, they are able to answer simple questions dealing with familiar topics such as favourite food and drinks or time. A considerable proportion of the children were also able to introduce themselves and answer questions about their person as well as describe family things, animals or people without requiring assistance. (p. 138)

Lopriore and Mihaljević Djigunović (2011) state that during 'the early stages of FLL, young learners are usually able to produce short utterances, a number of individual words, or longer chunks of fixed phrases' (p.83). Cameron (2001) emphasizes the importance of strategy use in connection with vocabulary acquisition. By vocabulary learning strategy she means 'the action that learners take to help themselves understand and remember

vocabulary' (p. 92). She highlights teachers' role in helping children to make use of strategies.

To sum up this section, I conclude that YLs in instructed language environments outperform later starters in the field of pronunciation (Cameron, 2001; DeKeyser & Larson-Hall, 2005; Johnston, 2009) while the benefits of early start are less clear cut considering other areas of L2 development.

In the next section I analyze individual differences in learners' characteristics to reveal their role in SLA.

1.3. Individual differences

In this section I discuss attitudes, motivation, aptitude and anxiety as IDs influencing SLA. According to Gardner's (1985) social psychological interpretation, the most important affective learner characteristics influencing language development are: (1) motivation; (2) attitudes and (3) anxiety. 'Motivation has been widely accepted by both teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the rate and the success of second / foreign language (L2) learning' (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 117). So in the following section I review the literature on FLL attitude and motivation.

1.3.1. Attitudes and motivation

Mihaljević Djigunović (2012a) states that 'although attitudes and motivation are two distinct individual learner factors, they are considered to be closely inter-related and are often investigated together' (p. 57). Following this idea, I review the literature on attitude and motivation in one section. Gardner (1985) identified three important attitudes in his socio-educational model: (1) attitudes to the target language community; (2) attitudes to language learning in general, and (3) attitudes toward the learning situation in particular. He highlights the importance of a twofold classification. Educational classification of attitude is considered with the attitude towards the teacher, the course and learning the language, while social attitude involves the attitude towards the cultural implications of SLA. When analyzing attitude measures' correlation with achievement, he concludes that 'attitudes toward learning French and interest in foreign languages are the most relevant' (p. 50). He highlights, by referring to Clement, Smythe and Gardner's (1978) research, 'that attitudinal/motivational variables are more influential in determining perseverance

in language study' (p. 58). While language attitudes refer to positive or negative feelings about a language and what the learner may connect it with, (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993), Gardner (1985, 2001) defines motivation as a combination of the desire to learn the language, positive attitudes to learning the language, and the effort invested in learning. Kormos, Kiddle and Csizér (2011) state that 'in the field of L2 motivation, attitudes have been identified as emotional precursors of the intention of learning behaviour' (p. 4).

Gardner (1985) differentiates between orientation and motivation stating that

> orientation refers to a class of reasons for learning a second language. Motivation refers to a complex of three characteristics which may or may not be related to any particular orientation. These characteristics are attitudes toward learning the language, desire to learn the language and motivational intensity. (p. 54)

Dörnyei and Skehan (2003) conclude that 'in broad terms, motivation is responsible for why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it' (p. 614).

Mihaljević Djigunović (2009b) reveals that those Croatian learners who had 60% more English classes than their peers were more confident and had better self-concept as L2 learners. Mihaljević Djigunović (2014) finds among Croatian YLs that earlier beginners (age 6/7) 'are more dependent in their L2 development on what goes on in the L2 classroom in the sense that attitudes, motivation and self-concepts are based on the quality of the teacher and the teaching' (p. 438) than later beginners (age 9/10). The latter group is 'generally influenced by out-of-class factors, especially L2 exposure and authentic experiences in using it' (p.438).

Nikolov (1995) reveals that L2-learning motivation highly depends on the learning situation, the teacher and the intrinsically motivating tasks and teaching materials. Changes in language learning motivation and language-related attitude of Hungarian children (age 12) were observed in the 1990's in two phases. Data were collected from more than 8000 students, in 1993 and 1999 about their choice of L2 (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002). Integrativeness played a major role in adolescents' L2 motivation. However, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) state that 'the term 'integrativeness' may not so much be related to any actual, metaphorical, integration to a L2 community as to some more basic identification process within the individual's self-concept' (p. 456). Findings reveal that

English was the most popular language among students in both of the research phases (Nikolov, 2003). Nikolov (1999) highlights that American English was more popular than British English, most probably due to the fact that Pop-culture, American films and products are more attractive to children than British ones. As in the case of Croatian students the findings highlight that out-of-class factors can influence language learning motivation.

To sum up, I conclude that keeping up learners' motivation and positive attitude towards language learning is a key component of success in FL classrooms.

In the next section I discuss YL's motivation to learn L2 focusing on instructed learning environment.

1.3.2. YL's motivation

Ellis (1997) defines motivation as 'attitudes and affective states that influence the degree of effort that learners make to learn an L2. In the 1990's research on motivation gained an educational orientation focusing on 'classroom-specific motives'. Following Nikolov's (1999a) research questions I focus on studies investigating why children think they learn a FL and the factors raising and maintaining motivation. 'The most important questions related to motivation in child FLL are linked with the learning context and how teachers can gain and maintain children's interest in the classroom' (Nikolov, 2002, p.94).

> Children are motivated in FLL if they find classroom activities, tasks and materials interesting and the teacher supportive. …Children will choose to pay attention to, engage and persist in learning task only if they find them worth the trouble (p. 120).

Nikolov's (2002) research reveals four factors considering the reasons for FLL: (1) classroom experience; (2) teacher; (3) external reasons and (4) utilitarian reasons (p. 104). External reasons refer to family influence while utilitarian reasons involve the possible use of the FL in a native environment or abroad. Considering extrinsic motivation, she concludes that 'extrinsic motives in the form of rewards, grades and approval seemed to be very important for young children' (p. 109). She also highlights that if these rewards are easily available they lose their importance and in the long run gaining knowledge becomes a major motivational factor. The same study reveals that

'although the percentage of classroom and teacher related reasons decreased with age, the activities children appreciated were all the intrinsically motivating ones' (p. 120). Carreira (2006) also highlights that Japanese YLs 'had much stronger classroom – and teacher – related motivation than instrumental motivation' (p. 150).

Nikolov's (2001) research on unsuccessful adult learners reveals that in their early years 'negative classroom experiences must have strongly influenced interviewees' motivation and self-perception and have not supported their FL development' (p. 167). Heinzmann (2013) finds about Swiss primary school children's motivational orientations that their intrinsic and lingua franca orientation are considerably higher than the instrumental orientation (p. 92). She concludes that primary school children 'mostly learn English because it allows them to establish ties and interact with people from all over the world and because they enjoy it' (p. 116).

Motivational ups and downs of lower primary school children are reported by Mihaljević Djigunović (2012b) in her research on the linguistic outcomes of early FLL in the ELLiE project. She concludes that

> the high motivation in Grade Two dropped in Grade Three and increased again in Grade Four. We assume that by Grade Four many YLs had experienced a feeling of achievement and this boosted again their motivation for EFL learning. (p. 17)

According to the research findings, Croatian students enjoyed learning L2 during the first grade, but fourth graders complained about the lack of playful activities, the difficulties caused by the introduction of writing and the anxiety due to different forms of assessment. Carreira's (2006) research reveals a similarly steady decline in YLs motivation from grade 3 (8-9 years old) to grade 6 (11-12 years old) concluding that 'teaching method for higher grades should be improved' (p.153). She argues that the decrease of intrinsic motivation by time is inevitable to a certain extent. According to Nikolov (2002) 'as teachers are key stakeholders in shaping learners' motivation, they play the major part in the foreign language education game' (p. 16). Thus, in the following section I review literature on the teachers' role in this game.

1.3.3. Teachers' role and learners' motivation

All analyses of the literature on the principles of teaching YLs of FLs coincide with my daily teaching experiences: teachers play an essential role in children's L2 development (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004; Muñoz, 2014; Nikolov, 2002; Pinter, 2006). The extent to which teachers can motivate their students' FLL, significantly influences the learning process and students' achievements. That is why teachers' role and learners' motivation are discussed in the same section. In this section I focus on methods and practices applied by teachers in FL classrooms.

Lightbown and Spada (1993) state that 'the exclusive focus on meaning-based activities, to the exclusion of form-focused activities, may set a limit on the success of the programs'. Thus, they suggest finding a 'balance of attention to form and meaning' (p.276). When reporting on effective classroom activities Peng and Zhang (2009) suggest that for effective FL teaching 'teachers should provide more communication opportunities for students and encourage them to try to exchange ideas with them and their peers in classroom tasks' (p. 349). After analyzing FL activities Lopriore and Mihaljević Djigunović (2011) conclude that more structured interactive tasks are needed, and teachers need to consider young learners' individual characteristics, out of class FL exposure and parents' support when planning their FL lessons' (p. 102). Mihaljević Djigunović (2009b) concludes that 'YLs seemed to be stimulated by the way the teacher approached them and treated them, and intrinsically motivating classroom activities were reported by learners as the reason why they enjoyed learning the FL' (p. 202). In Lopriore and Mihaljević Djigunović's (2011) description of primary classes, the teacher is a provider of input and active partner in student-teacher interaction.

> In primary classes learners are immersed in an environment where most of the activities are based on exposure to the FL through songs, games or stories and teachers' input, as well as on elicited oral interaction with peers or the classroom teacher through role playing, information gap activities or drama. (p. 84)

Gardner (2006) highlights the importance of teachers' role to involve the students in designing their assessment to increase learning motivation. He concludes

> students are motivated to learn if they participate in developing their learning activities, if they know how their work will be assessed and if they are involved in

assessing it with their peers. Perhaps it is also unnecessary to point out that students' motivation is enhanced by the ability to engage readily with their teacher to receive feedback that supports the next steps in their learning or by being involved in drawing up the criteria against which they will be assessed. (p. 200)

In their investigation of students' relationship with their teachers, Mansfield, Montavo and Miller (2007) find that the classroom environment provided by liked teachers 'promotes student interest and cooperation, encourages them to adopt learning goals, see the value of school to attaining personally valued future goals and to persist when tasks become difficult, all of which improve student achievement' (p.154).

Dörnyei (2014) states that teachers find motivating children the second most challenging task in their work after maintaining discipline in the classroom (p. 523). He elaborates on motivation by applying his previous model on motivational teaching emphasizing its twenty facets.

Creating the basic motivational conditions:

1. Appropriate teacher behaviors
2. A pleasant and supportive atmosphere
3. A cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms

Generating initial motivation:

4. Enhancing the learners' L2-related values and attitudes
5. Increasing the learners' expectancy of success
6. Increasing the learners' goal-orientatedness
7. Making the teaching materials relevant for the learners
8. Creating realistic learner belief

Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation:

9. Promoting motivational attributions
10. Providing motivational feedback
11. Increasing learner satisfaction
12. Offering rewards in a motivating manner

Maintaining and protecting motivation:

13. Making learning stimulating and enjoyable
14. Presenting tasks in a motivating way
15. Setting specific learner goals
16. Protecting the learner's self-esteem
17. Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image
18. Creating learner autonomy
19. Promoting self-motivating strategies
20. Promoting cooperation among the learners (p. 524)

Muñoz (2014) concludes that 'YLs have also shown an early awareness of the conditions that help them learn English' (p. 14). Providing the suitable conditions for L2 learning seems to be essential in maintaining YL's motivation for learning. While investigating FLL motivation Wang (2009) emphasizes teachers' role stating that 'teachers are the ultimate change agents who determine what happens in the classroom' (p. 306). On the other hand, she concludes that teachers need help to transform curriculum ideas into classroom practice. Nikolov (2002) states that 'the most important questions related to motivation in child FLL are linked with the learning context and how teachers gain and maintain children's interest in the classroom' (p. 94). Nikolov (2016) highlights that 'tasks have to be intrinsically motivating so that they are worth doing and repeating' (p. 72). Extrinsic motives, such as feedback on achievement, are also vital as it guarantees that the tasks have clear outcomes. Besides investigating teachers' roles Nikolov (2009a) analyses the methods applied in Hungarian FL classrooms.

> An analysis of classroom activities indicates that the methods teachers apply are eclectic, borrowing from grammar translation method spiced with drills. These methods are not conductive to young learners' language development and may negatively impact their attitudes (p. 106).

In sum, motivation and positive attitude are YL's main drives to learn a FL. In the case of YLs supportive teachers and classroom environment, appropriate methods, effective techniques with interesting tasks play a crucial role in raising and maintaining motivation. To be supportive and motivating teachers, it is essential to know the needs of the students and to be in line with up-to-date methods and technologies.

1.3.4. Anxiety

YLs show lower levels of anxiety while learning L2 if they are exposed to L2 in a supportive environment. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) state that 'many people claim to have a mental block against learning a foreign language, although these same people may be good learners in other situations, strongly motivated, and have a sincere liking for speakers of the target language' (p.124). This phenomenon is defined by the authors as 'specific anxiety reaction' which is connected to FL use. Besides intelligence, language aptitude and motivation, Gardner (1985) highlights situational anxiety as an individual difference directly influencing FL achievement with adult learners. He also states that 'it seems intuitively obvious that individuals with high levels of anxiety should be less successful in learning second languages than more relaxed individuals' (p. 33). According to MacIntyre (1995), 'language learning is a cognitive activity that relies on encoding, storage, and retrieval processes, and anxiety can interfere with each of these by creating a divided attention scenario for anxious students' (p.97). Thus, anxious students need more effort to reach the same level of achievement as their more relaxed peers.

On the other hand, Piniel (2006) highlights that foreign language anxiety

> itself can have contradictory effects on language learning, and as such literature mentions both debilitating and facilitating types of anxiety, where debilitating anxiety poses an obstacle to language learning, whereas facilitating anxiety facilitates or fosters it. (p. 40)

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) highlight three related performance anxieties: 1) communication apprehension; 2) test anxiety; and 3) fear of negative evaluation (p. 127). Chan and Wu (2004) group students' sources of language anxiety into five types. 'They were low proficiency, fear of negative evaluation, competition in games, anxious personality, and pressure from students themselves and parents' (p. 306).

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) find 'foreign language anxiety frequently shows up in testing situations' (p.126). Chan and Wu (2004) also state that 'tests provoked anxiety in most of the students. Most test-anxious students were nervous because of their low proficiency in English' (p. 309). Besides speaking in front of others, three further categories of anxiety-provoking situations are listed: (1) spelling; (2) incomprehensible input and (3) speaking to native English speakers. In her overview Mihaljević Djigunović

(2004) concludes that 'it seems that anxiety research should, in a sense, focus beyond anxiety in order to get a deeper and more informative look into this important individual variable in second language acquisition' (p. 209). Mihaljević Djigunović (2006) examines trait anxiety, communication apprehension, language use anxiety, willingness to communicate, second language achievement, and self-assessment (SA)of L2 skill among university students. Her findings confirm that individuals with high language use anxiety will also have high communication apprehension. Another finding of her study reveals that higher achievers show higher level of language use anxiety most probably due to their more critical view about their own proficiency. Language learners and users are objective assessors of their own language skills.

The above reviewed literature concerns learning related anxiety in general not focusing on YLs. The effect of anxiety on YL's FLL seems to be a scarcely investigated area due to the misbelief that it does not occur in the case of children (Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011). However, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) emphasize that 'comprehension would suffer among anxious students because of the short-term memory loss attributable to anxiety. Production would suffer as well because anxiety can intrude upon the long-term memory retrieval process' (p. 530). Nikolov (2002) highlights that high level of anxiety is associated with testing among Hungarian students as testing is infrequent and the final result of the term is determined by them (p. 147). Mihaljević Djigunović (2009a) refers to her study (2002) in which she finds similar results among Croatian students who claimed that speaking in front of the class and tests were the most anxiety provoking situations. Mihaljević Djigunović highlights three areas where a negative correlation can be observed with anxiety: (1) motivation; (2) risk-taking and (3) willingness to communicate.

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) emphasize the importance of teachers' role in decreasing anxiety stating that 'foreign language anxiety can probably be alleviated, at least to an extent, by a supportive teacher who will acknowledge students' feelings of isolation and helplessness and offer concrete suggestions for attaining foreign language confidence' (p.132).

Mihaljević Djigunović (2009a) finds that anxiety caused by classroom practices does not decrease with proficiency, thus, 'the FL teacher can play a crucial role in counteracting the effects of anxiety' (p. 210).

To sum up, I conclude that anxiety occurring in the language classroom is an important affective factor influencing FLL and teachers have a key role to decrease it. In the next section I discuss YL's strategy use.

1.3.5. Strategy use

For the investigation of YLs strategy use it is essential to define what strategy means in FL learning contexts. Tarone (1980) divides strategies of language use into two kinds; (1) communication strategy (CS) and (2) production strategy (PS). CS is 'a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared' (p.419), while PS is 'an attempt to use one's linguistic system efficiently and clearly, with a minimum of effort' (p. 419). In connection with FL acquisition she defines language learning strategy (LLS) as 'an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language (p. 419).

Yule and Tarone (1997) divide CS into three categories; (1) achievement or compensatory strategy; (2) reduction strategy and (3) interactive strategy. In Oxford's (1990) interpretation, learning strategies are divided into (1) direct and (2) indirect strategies. These two strategies are further divided into three sub-categories. Direct strategies are: (1) memory; (2) cognitive and (3) compensation, while the indirect ones are: (1) metacognitive; (2) affective and (3) social.

Memory strategies:
- creating mental linkage
- Applying images and sounds
- Reviewing well
- Employing action

Cognitive strategies:
- Practicing
- Receiving and sending messages
- Analyzing and reasoning
- Creating structure for input and output

Compensation strategies:
- Guessing intelligently

- Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing

Metacognitive strategies:
- Centering your learning
- Arranging and planning your learning
- Evaluating your learning

Affective strategies
- Lowering your anxiety
- Encouraging yourself
- Taking your emotional temperature

Social strategies:
- Asking questions
- Cooperating with others
- Emphasizing with others (p.16)

According to Nikolov (1999b), 'learning strategies reflect what happens in cases of instructed SLA' and 'on the other hand, research on communication strategies does not take acquisition into consideration, but aims to find out how learners manage to solve their problems in certain situations' (p. 226). Nikolov (2002) adopts previous categories; (1) learning strategies and (2) communication strategies. 'In learning strategies the learner makes attempts to establish competence in the target language, whereas in a CS the difficulty of the moment is to be solved' (p. 129). Szulc-Kurpaska (2000) concludes that CS are mainly used when an appropriate lexical item is missing or cannot be retrieved' (p. 347). She highlights that Polish 11-year-old students after four years of intensive L2 exposure mostly applied 'simple naming strategies and they did not develop the description of the relevant features of the referents' (p. 357). However, about one-third of the participants in her study expressed themselves at the sentence level. Haenni Hoti, Heizmann and Müller (2009) reveal that Swiss third graders tend to use interaction strategies if they have difficulties with communication, whereas they do not apply non-verbal strategies. Peng and Zhang (2009) find that Chinese fifth graders used strategies mostly in their mother tongue, rarely in English.

Mihaljević Djigunović (2001) reveals that 6-9-year-old-children applied conscious teaching strategies when they were asked how they would teach their dolls English words. Mihaljević Djigunović assumes that the teaching strategies reflect children's learning strategies when they learn new vocabulary items. Turányi (2011), in her replication study on Hungarian first graders' vocabulary learning practices, also finds that children are conscious about the strategies they use while learning new words. The study reveals that there is an overlap between the techniques teachers apply to teach vocabulary and the method children would use for teaching.

Nikolov (2002) emphasizes that the use of metacognitive strategies must be taught because children cannot organize their learning by themselves. Involving children in decision making about their learning can result in the development of many of these strategies. Nikolov (2006) compiled a list of test-taking strategies applied by Hungarian sixth graders while they were working on writing and reading tasks.

> Metacognitive strategies: (1) changing sequence of tasks; (2) checking example; (3) checking rubrics (4) checking answers; (5) crossing down item; (6) crossing example; (7) excluding options; (8) going item by item; (9) planning sequence of tasks; (10) reviewing booklet; (11) reviewing task; (12) self-correction; (13) skipping example; (14) skipping item; (15) skipping rubrics and (16) starting with easy item. Social and affective strategies: (1) applying for help; (2) comment on task, layout, booklet; (3) encouraging self; (4) referring to self and (5) self-evaluation. Cognitive strategies: (1) analyzing contrastively; (2) applying rule; (3) guessing; (4) matching words or structures; (5) phonetic reading; (4) picking unknown vocabulary item; (5) reading out text in English; (6) reading text in English quietly; (7) relying on background knowledge; (8) relying on cognates; (9) Scanning; (10) Skimming for general understanding and (11) translation to Hungarian. (p. 16)

Kolb (2007) finds that 'primary school learners consciously perceive their learning process and hold varied beliefs about the nature of language learning' (p. 237). She suggests that as these beliefs have an impact on students' classroom behavior, knowing and reacting to them appropriately can be essential for effective FL teaching. Peng and Zhang (2009) suggest that 'teachers themselves should apply L2-based strategies more

often in class to teach their students by example' (p. 349). Nikolov (2011) emphasizes that in early language programs the development of strategies should have high priority to support YLs to become independent learners.

This section intended to highlight the importance of YLs' conscious strategy use to overcome language-related difficulties during SLA and to use L2 effectively and the role we, teachers can play to establish these strategies.

1.3.6. Socio-economic status and parents' role

Gardner (1968) highlights the important influence of parents' attitudes to their children's SLA. He distinguishes two distinct roles of parents: active and passive roles. By the former he means a 'role whereby the parent actively and consciously encourages the student to learn the language. In the active role, the parent monitors the child's language-learning performance, and to the extent that he plays this role he attempts to promote success' (p. 141). The passive role considers 'the attitudes of the parent toward the community whose language the child is learning' (p. 141). Although the latter one is a more subtle role, it can influence the children's motivation for a FL to a greater extent than direct feedback and help in the learning process itself. Mihaljević Djigunović (2009b) reveals that when parents treat English as a special subject the 'initial success was secured for all children' (p 84).

Parents' educational level, their socio-economic status (SES), influences the choice of language their children learn. According to Nikolov's research on Hungarian primary school children (2009a), 'the higher the learners' SES, the more probable it is that they study English, and vice versa: more of the less educated parents' children study German than English' (p. 97).

Csapó (2001) highlights that students' achievement and progress at school is not only influenced by what they are exposed to at school but highly related to their families' SES. In Csapó's study SES is indicated by the parents' level of education. Nikolov (2009a) concludes about the same population of Hungarian students studying English and German that 'the higher the educational level of the parent, the higher the figures are for both languages for achievements on the proficiency tests and school grades' (p.98). Mattheoudakis and Alexiou (2009) highlight that in the case of Greek young learners 'differences in families' SES impact significantly young learners' level and progress of

learning as learners of a higher SES seem to carry a far richer cultural capital and progress faster in language than learners who do not share the same advantage' (p. 247). By cultural capital they mean 'specialized knowledge which is not taught in schools, such as knowledge of high culture, and educational credentials' (p.228).

Goto Butler's (2013) study on the behavior of Chinese primary school children reveals that

> both the parental indirect behaviors (i.e., the home literacy and language environment and indirect modeling) and parental direct behaviors (i.e., direct assistance with their child's studying and learning of English) were already significantly positively correlated with SES. (p. 16)

She states that 'Chinese parents regardless of their SES backgrounds and their children's grade levels, strongly believed that one's success in acquiring English should be largely attributed to one's efforts as opposed to innate talents or other factors' (p. 16). According to her research, lower SES parents' expectations towards their children's FL studies decrease by the time they finish their primary studies because lower SES parents see fewer opportunities for their children. On the other hand, higher SES parents can keep encouraging their children to learn the FL as they can provide their children future prospects. Thus, their children do not lose motivation as opposed to their lower SES peers.

There is research showing less clear results, such as Mihaljević Djigunović and Krevelj's (2011) study. They reveal that 'it is possible that differences in parents' education are not relevant at the beginners' levels of early L2 learning in the Croatian context' (p. 262). They do not find a significant relationship between parents' SES and their children's lexical diversity. Mihaljević Djigunović (2012b) concludes about Croatian young learners that 'the socio-economic status, as measured by mother's and father's education level, also interacted with linguistic outcomes. Although correlation coefficients were not very high, they were significant in both Grade Two and Grade Four (p. 16).

To sum up, it can be concluded that there is positive correlation between parents' SES and their children's achievement in SLA.

1.4. Conclusion

Teaching YLs requires the knowledge of their needs and individual characteristics. Negotiating with the learners about learning can help teachers to get this knowledge. As the literature suggests, providing motivating, supportive and anxiety-free classroom environment helps them do their best. Positive feedback and age-appropriate methods and activities are essential parts of the learning and teaching process, as these help keep up FLL motivation and decrease anxiety. Teaching and developing LLSs are also important to help students become independent learners. As parents' SES influences YLs achievement and FLL motivation, language teachers must pay special attention to those learners who live in less favorable circumstances and provide them extra care.

CHAPTER 2

The assessment of YLs

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter first I intend to review the relevant literature on the different types of assessment of language learners with special emphasis on dynamic and diagnostic assessment of YLs. As YLs' L2 development differs to a great extent from that of adults', their assessment requires special testing techniques and tests. Children's characteristics must be taken into consideration when task types for assessment are designed

2.2. Definition and aims of assessment

Research on the effectiveness of early programs must involve age-appropriate tasks for assessment. As evaluation, assessment and testing are often used terms in this field, at this point it is essential to clarify the terminology used in connection with assessment. In Cameron's (2001) interpretation 'assessment is concerned with pupil's learning or performance' and can offer information for further evaluation of the whole process of teaching (p. 222). Evaluation is thus a broader term than assessment involving the analysis of relevant information on courses, programs etc. Testing is a form of 'assessment measuring learning through performance' (Cameron, 2001, p. 222). According to Bachman (1990), language tests can not only serve as sources of information for decision making on language programs, but they can be indicators of abilities and attributes considering language acquisition. Thus, placement tests measure language abilities in order to group learners at the same level of language ability, whereas achievement and attainment tests give information about the progress of learners at the end of a teaching unit (pp. 70-71).

McKay (2006) emphasizes that assessment aims to measure those abilities of learners that are needed to be successful users of the target language. The pedagogic purpose of assessment is to promote learning, while its administrative purpose is to provide information about the performance of children and school (p. 21). Both Bachman (1990)

and Pinter (2006) argue that learners' assessment can provide valuable data for analysis to gain useful information about the students' development.

2.2.1. Formative and summative assessment

Cameron (2001) suggests that assessment should 'serve teaching' by giving feedback on the learning process thus showing the direction towards more effective teaching (p. 215). That is why this kind of assessment is also called diagnostic assessment. Cameron (2001) classified assessment according to its use and purpose. She compares formative and summative assessment. The former offers continuous feedback during the teaching process, while the latter assesses progress at the end of certain period of learning (p. 60). According to Hughes (2003, p. 5), formative assessment offers a possibility to the teacher to observe their students' development, to perceive to what extent they could learnt what has been taught to them. He also emphasizes that the information gained from formative assessment can help teachers to plan their teaching and to give feedback to the students. As opposed to formative assessment, 'summative assessment is used at, say, the end of the term, semester or year in order to measure what has been achieved both by groups and by individuals' (Hughes, 2007, p. 5).

Gardner (2006) highlights the importance of the emergence of the 'assessment for learning' (AfL) concept. He states that 'assessment for learning comprises the same time-honoured practices as formative assessment' (p. 2); however, the term AfL indicates the essence of the concept more directly. Although he uses the two terms interchangeably, he applies the definition of the Assessment Reform Group (ARG) to avoid ambiguity. AfL is 'the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers, to identify where the learners are in the learning, where they need to go and how best to get there' (Broadfoot et al., 2002, pp. 2–3.). The aim of ARG, a group of voluntary researchers, was to study the implications of assessment policy and practice, as well as reviewing research and disseminating findings through conferences, seminars and publications between 1989-2010.

As the focus of my dissertation is the analysis of the effectiveness of YLs' assessment, in the next section I will elaborate on diagnostic assessment which is a form of formative assessment highlighting language learners' strength and weaknesses (McKay, 2006, p.22).

2.2.2. Classroom and dynamic assessment

According to McKay (2006), classroom assessment is a kind of assessment which is compiled and carried out by the teacher who teaches the learners. It consists of three phases: (1) design; (2) operationalization and (3) administration. After determining the construct to be assessed, the teacher prepares the assessment tasks and later carries out the assessment. Its purpose can be initial or on-going diagnosis of learners' development and scaffolding of learning. In order to make assessment effective, tests must be age appropriate and based on the children`s experience of the world. She emphasizes that "classroom assessment is not a diversion from the 'real' business of teaching and learning, but the foundation for successful teaching and learning" (McKay, 2006, p. 145).

Three features are highlighted by Sternberg and Grigorenko when they compare static and dynamic assessment: the latter (1) investigates the developmental processes; (2) gives either explicit or implicit feedback, and (3) the relationship of the examiner-examinee is changed into a two-way interactive connection (2002, p.145).

The emergence of dynamic assessment seems to bring a paradigm shift form assessment of learning to AfL (Black & William, 1998), integrating learning and teaching (Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2011, p.110). Rixon (2016) highlights that 'AfL provides a platform for the learners to develop an awareness on the goals of their own learning, how close they are to achieving them and the steps that they as individuals can best take to come closer to those goals' (p. 26). The principles of AfL is summarized by the ARG as follows:

Assessment for learning:
1. is part of effective planning
2. focuses on how students learn
3. is central to classroom practice
4. is a key professional skill
5. has an emotional impact
6. affects learner motivation
7. promotes commitment to learning goals and assessment criteria
8. helps learners know how to improve
9. encourages self-assessment
10. recognizes all achievements. (Broadfoot et al., 2002).

Pedder and James (2012) finds AfL both exciting and challenging as

> it requires teachers and students to change the way they think about their
> classroom roles and the norms that influence their behavior…. Thus, students are
> not merely the objects to their teacher's behavior, they are animators of their own
> effective teaching and learning process. (p. 38)

The literature presented in the section demonstrates how dynamic approaches allow language teachers to increase students' learning potential.

2.2.3. Diagnostic assessment

Diagnostic assessment aims to reveal what learners can do, or cannot do (Bachman, 1990; Cameron, 2006; McKay, (2006). Alderson (2005, pp. 11-12) identifies 19 features of diagnostic tests and he emphasizes that further research is needed to clarify some contradictions. These features are as the follows:

1. Diagnostic tests are designed to identify strengths and weaknesses in a learner's knowledge and use of language.
2. Diagnostic tests are more likely to focus on weaknesses than on strengths.
3. Diagnostic tests should lead to remediation in further instruction.
4. Diagnostic tests should enable a detailed analysis and report of responses to items or tasks.
5. Diagnostic tests thus give detailed feedback which can be acted upon.
6. Diagnostic tests provide immediate results, or results as little delayed as possible after test-taking.
7. Diagnostic tests are typically low-stakes or no-stakes.
8. Because diagnostic tests are not high-stakes they can be expected to involve little anxiety or other affective barriers to optimum performance.
9. Diagnostic tests are based on content which has been covered in instruction, or which will be covered shortly.
10. Diagnostic tests are based on some theory of language development, preferably a detailed theory rather than a global theory.
11. Thus diagnostic tests need to be informed by SLA research, or more broadly by applied linguistic theory as well as research.
12. Diagnostic tests are likely to be less authentic than proficiency or other tests.

13. Diagnostic tests are more likely to be discrete-point than integrative, or more focused on specific elements than on global abilities.

14. Diagnostic tests are more likely to focus on language than on language skills.

15. Diagnostic tests are more likely to focus on low-level language skills (like phoneme discrimination in listening tests) than higher-order skills which are more integrated.

16. Diagnostic tests of vocabulary knowledge and use are less likely to be useful than diagnostic test of grammatical knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge in context.

17. Tests of detailed grammatical knowledge and use are difficult to construct because of the need to cover a range of contexts and to meet the demands of reliability.

18. Diagnostic tests of language use skills like speaking, listening, reading and writing are (said to be) easier to construct than tests of language knowledge and use. Therefore, the results of such tests may be interpretable for remediation or instruction.

19. Diagnostic testing is likely to be enhanced by being computer-based. (Alderson, 2005, pp.11-12)

Nikolov and Szabó (2011) emphasize that although Alderson (2005) summarizes the main features of diagnostic assessment, he does not take into account YLs' characteristics. Thus, they pay special attention to this topic, and I follow their train of thought and focus on YLs and their assessment in the next section. They also highlight that diagnostic assessment is the only form of assessment which aims to influence the learning process in a positive way. Thus, as an encouraging method it is highly relevant in the case of teaching YLs. Nikolov (2016) summarizes those points which should be considered when diagnostic assessment tasks are implemented in classroom practice.

1. Assessment should focus on listening comprehension and speaking skills in the case of YLs; reading comprehension and writing should be introduced gradually when they are ready for them.

2. Feedback and evaluation must always come right after students' performance. It should be individualized and motivating for further learning.

3. Diagnostic assessment should be regular, it should tap into small developmental steps.

4. Diagnostic assessment should provide clear feedback so that young learners can feel that they are making progress and achieving what they are expected to. (Nikolov, 2016, pp. 73-74)

The teacher's role, knowledge and skill, thus become crucial in the assessment process (McKay 2006; Nikolov & Szabó, 2012a). In this dynamic process, as Edelenbos and Kubanek-German (2004) highlight, teachers must have diagnostic competence to be able to assess YLs. Diagnostic competence "is an attribute of teachers who aim to improve the quality of FL growth of their pupils" (Edelenbos & Kubanek-German, 2004, p.277).

As for YLs' assessment, Nikolov and Mihaljević Djigunović (2011) highlight that

Teachers and test developers must bear in mind that YLs are different from older ones not only in their background knowledge of the world and other factors discussed in previous sections, but assessment may impact attitudes, motivation and anxiety in more important ways than in the case of older learners. Therefore, besides considering assessment of learning, a focus on assessment for learning is of crucial importance. (pp. 109-110)

When Hild and Nikolov (2011) explore the assessment practices of Hungarian teachers at primary schools, they state that

(1) teachers find it difficult to apply categories we assume they are familiar with to their chosen classroom tasks and practice

(2) they apply loose and fuzzy terms for assessing learners' performances instead of clear criteria

(3) they are focused on errors and accuracy rather than fluency and vocabulary, and what students cannot do, as opposed to what they can

(4) feedback is often provided in the form of rewards for top performance only and no reward for less good performance indicating that only top achievers get feedback. (p. 59)

In this section I intended to argue why diagnostic assessment is a suitable form of assessment for YLs. By analyzing their students' progress teachers can develop and tailor the syllabus to their students' needs. This can result in development, success and the maintenance of motivation which is essential in the case of YLs. There are, however,

certain difficulties YLs' assessors have to face, such as the fact that "low proficiency levels need to be defined and described along a continuum in small steps so that children's relatively slow development can be documented" (Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2011, p. 109). YL's L2 learning and its assessment require the consideration of children's unique cognitive, physical, social and psychological development (McKay, 2006). Thus, she highlights the use of personalized assessment tasks in the case of YLs where the topic can be related to the learners' life and interest.

To sum up, I conclude that the use diagnostic tests can influence language learning in a positive way if they are applied by proficient teachers.

2.3. The construct of YLs' English proficiency

Before overviewing the literature about assessment task types it is essential to define the construct assessment tasks intend to assess. As Nikolov and Szabó (2012a) summarize:

> Test developers must bear in mind that YLs are different from older ones not only in their interests and background knowledge of the world, level of literacy and other aspects, but assessment may impact children's attitudes, motivation and anxiety in different ways than in the case of older learners. In addition to these points, assessment should also be in line with how children develop not only in the target language but also in their first language. (pp. 348-349)

Assessing YLs' proficiency requires not only the knowledge of the characteristics of YLs but the mechanisms of language learning as well. The role of the curriculum in YLs' language learning is emphasized by McKay (2006) stating that 'if the established curriculum emphasizes the learning of grammar and vocabulary in isolation, then it will be difficult if not impossible for teachers and assessors to assess children's language use ability' (p. 48). She also finds it important to understand children's language use ability to be able to assess it. In the early 70's Hymes (1971) emphasized learners' ability to use their language knowledge in communicative situations in his definition of proficiency. Canal and Swain (1980) pointed out the importance of communicative testing differentiating between competence and performance.

> ... testing must be devoted not only to what the learner knows about the second language and about how to use it (competence) but also to what extent the

learner is ably to actually demonstrate this knowledge in a meaningful communicative situation (performance). (p.344)

The communicative language ability (CLA) as described by Bachman (1990) is the combination of 'both knowledge, or competence, and the capacity for implementing, or executing that competence in appropriate, contextualized communicative language use' (p. 84). Borrowing Bachman and Palmer's (1996) framework of language ability, McKay (2006) highlights that language knowledge is a component of language ability involving (1) grammatical knowledge and (2) pragmatic knowledge. Although language knowledge is vital, it is not enough for language use. Further analyzing Bachman and Palmer's construct, she highlights the importance of the individual characteristics of the learners and their background knowledge about certain topics they are engaged with while leaning a FL. Strategic competence as the part of language ability is made up of metacognitive components responsible for goal setting, assessing and planning (p. 58).

Inbar-Lourie and Shohamy (2009) suggest in their proposed construct that assessment tasks should assess meaningful language use embedded within a relevant content (p. 93). The National Core Curriculum (NCC) (2007) also emphasizes the importance of meaningful communication in FL teaching.

> The skills necessary for communication in foreign languages include the ability to understand oral messages, to initiate, conduct and conclude conversations, and to read, comprehend and create texts in accordance with individual needs. One should also be able to use aids adequately and, as part of lifelong learning, to acquire a foreign language through a non-formal learning path. (p. 8)

Language proficiency is assessed in the four language skills: (1) listening; (2) speaking; (3) reading and (4) writing. As the focus of my dissertation is the assessment of 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders' (age 7-10) oral skills in English, I review the 'can do statements' compiled by Nikolov (2016) concerning listening comprehension, speaking and interaction at A1 (beginner) level. Students

- can follow simple instructions in English in familiar contexts and can respond through total physical response, using body language, facial expression, or one-word answers in English.

- can participate in activities and tasks by following classroom instructions in English.
- can participate in classroom activities and tasks individually, in pairs and in groups.
- can comprehend the meaning of frequently used words, expressions, requests and questions in English.
- can comprehend the meaning of frequently used words, expressions, requests and questions in English.
- can guess the meaning of familiar or new English words from short, simple definitions/explanations in Hungarian or by pointing.
- can guess the meaning of familiar or new English words from short, simple definitions/explanations in Hungarian or by pointing.
- can guess the meaning of familiar or new English words from short, simple definitions/explanations in Hungarian or by pointing.
- can follow the gist of short stories and tales in English with the help of illustrations.
- can follow picture descriptions in English.
- can participate in 4–5 round games with peers.
- can respond to questions in English by using body language, speaking in Hungarian or giving a one-word answer in English.
- can join discourse in English by using body language or Hungarian or single words in English.
- can use greetings, say thank you, agree and disagree in English (yes/no).
- can say 4–5 rhymes, can sing 4–5 songs so that what is said or sung is comprehensible.
- can repeat recurring words and expressions (chunks) in familiar stories/tales individually or with peers. (p.78)

McKay (2006) elaborates on three fields of oral language to be assessed in the classroom: (1) pronunciation; (2) vocabulary and (3) grammar. She states that 'pronunciation can be best assessed in the context of language use' (p.190). Intelligibility – whether children can be understood by the others when they say something-should be the main principle in the assessment of pronunciation. Vocabulary can be assessed through the oral language use

or literacy tasks constantly and informally during the learning process (p. 191). In connection with the assessment of grammar, McKay emphasizes that YLs may have very little conscious awareness of the grammar in their language use. They often employ formulaic expressions or chunks.

As the assessment tasks I applied in my research were mainly completed in pair-work in English, children's listening comprehension skill was also highly activated. In the next section I discuss what kind of tasks are appropriate for the diagnostic assessment of YLs.

2.4. Assessment tasks and techniques

When designing or choosing assessment tasks the way learners were taught must be taken into consideration. If successful communication is the aim of teaching and learning, it must be reflected in the tasks used for assessment. Bachman (1990) defines the characteristics of assessment tasks, although not focusing on YLs. He emphasizes the importance of valid and fair assessment: tasks measure what they are designed to measure while they provide meaningful information about the learners' performance. Effectiveness of the assessment, in his interpretation, refers to usefulness of the information given to the teachers and feedback to the learners as well about their progress. Positive feedback has to be an essential part of the procedure. In the case of YLs' assessment tasks have to suit their characteristics, their age, interest and motivation. They also have to be intellectually challenging. Cameron (2001) emphasizes that besides understanding the learning process teachers must take into consideration the socio-cultural environment they work in so that they can effectively communicate the results to parents. She argues for the positive effects of assessment:

- The process and outcomes of assessment can motivate learners
- An assessment activity can provide a helpful model of language use
- An assessment activity, and feedback from it, can support further learning
- The outcomes of assessment can help teachers plan more effective lessons
- The outcomes of assessment can inform the evaluation and improvement of courses and programs. (p. 236)

Pinter (2006) opts for 'child-friendly methods' of assessment which contain activities used by the children in their everyday life. She suggests the following techniques: (1)

observation; (2) self-assessment (SA); (3) portfolio and (4) project work. As for testing environment, Bachman (1990) lists four facets to be considered: (1) familiarity of the place and equipment; (2) the personnel involved in the test; (3) the time of testing and (4) the physical conditions (p. 118). If these facets are familiar to the learners, they tend to perform better. McKay (2006) also emphasizes that the assessment procedure has to take place in a calm and quiet environment, where learner's attention is directed to the assessor.

Sadler (1989) argues that SA is a very important component of classroom assessment because students can only achieve their goal if they recognize it and can assess what they need to do to achieve it. As alternative assessment options Brown (2001) highlights the importance of self- and peer-assessment (PA). They directly involve the students, encourage autonomy, increase motivation due to self-involvement (p.415). For SA and PA of oral production he suggests the following ways:

1. student self-checklist
2. offering and receiving a holistic rating of an oral presentation
3. listening to tape-recorded oral production to detect pronunciation and grammar errors
4. in natural conversation, asking others for confirmation checks
5. setting goals for creating opportunities to speak. (pp. 415-416)

Pinter (2006) states that if SA is applied 'children are asked to think about their own performance and achievements on a regular basis' (p.136). She emphasizes that gradual training is necessary to prepare children to assess themselves. Butler (2016) states that 'young learners are capable of monitoring their knowledge when they are provided with the sufficient training' (p. 305). In her interpretation SA is 'recursive process' that aims to help children to become autonomous learners (p.305). She suggests implementing PA before SA to help children understand the assessment criteria better. Assessment needs to be consistent with the instruction and tasks for assessment must be chosen carefully (p.303). Hung, Samuelson and Chang (2016) reveal that

> the incorporation of PA and SA helped the teacher to understand the students' learning and made the assessment more comprehensive than teacher assessment alone or either one of the student assessment by itself. (p.335)

By applying PA and SA 'students have to change from behaving as passive recipients of the knowledge offered to becoming active learners who could take responsibility for their own learning' (Black & Wiliam, 2012, p.21.).

Brown (2001) highlights the use of portfolios as a tool for the assessment of oral production stating that portfolios can contain 'video- or audiotape recording of the student's oral production' (p. 418). Pinter (2006) praises portfolios as they show 'concrete evidence of what a learner can do'. As portfolios show what students are good at, they become motivated to 'develop ownership of the learning process' (p. 137). Thus, learner independence can develop. McKay (2006) highlights that compiling portfolios is time-consuming but they can be valuable tools of assessment.

Observation as a central tool of assessment is emphasized by Pinter (2006) and McKay (2006). Pinter reveals that observation is a 'non-intrusive' technique as children are often not aware that they are assessed (p.134). McKay highlights that 'observation of oral language in the classroom occurs from moment to moment in all teaching activities' (p.196).

McKay (2006) borrows Bachman and Palmer's (1996) concept of 'usefulness' for analyzing assessment tasks. The assessment procedure is useful if it meets the following requirements: (1) reliability of the results; (2) construct validity; (3) task authenticity; (4) task interactivity; (5) being practical and (6) having positive impact (p. 113). By reliability she means that the child would achieve the same result with a different teacher or on the next day. Construct validity refers to the meaningfulness and appropriateness of the information teachers can gain based on the assessment. Task authenticity guarantees that the assessment tasks use the language that was used by the children in class, whereas interactivity relates to the extent to which children are involved in doing assessment tasks. These tasks are practical if there are appropriate resources for the tasks to work with them. Finally, she highlights that the assessment procedure must have a positive washback on the children, their teacher and society as well.

Curtain (2009) calls relevant tasks of assessment, 'performance' tasks in her article, tasks, which focus on what students are capable of doing with the language (p. 60). They require students to use their language competences in a meaningful context to accomplish the task. Accordingly, the exploitation of authentic materials and situations is central in

testing young learners. Furthermore, tasks should allow students to feel successful by doing them and feel that they are capable of carrying out the activities they are provided with without major difficulties. It is equally important to give learners tasks that grant them the most effective learning opportunities (McKay, 2006, p. 98). When performance assessment is carried out, learners are given the opportunity to use the language for a real purpose in realistic, simulated real life situations. "In language use tasks thus children's language participation involves a degree of spontaneity and creativity. They make their own meaning, producing meaning and comprehending meaning, according to the purpose and requirements of the situation" (McKay, 2006, pp. 100-101). As opposed to language use oriented tasks, limited production tasks do not involve children in creative and spontaneous language use; thus, they lack authenticity as they expect only a word or a sentence as a response. That is why they are appropriate for YLs. Authenticity and real life situation in this context mean the authenticity of the language classroom. McKay finds selected response tasks suitable for children, when they have to choose responses from input.

Tasks should be playful, rich in visual and tactile stimuli and it is also crucial to keep in mind that children have a natural thirst for narratives. The inclusion of tasks related to stories in the syllabus can be especially constructive, as stories call for learners' creativity, they broaden their perspectives and because of their narrative structure, they also function as suitable teaching materials (Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2009, p. 47).

Nikolov (2016) summarizes of the characteristics of effective tasks for the diagnostic assessment of YLs.

1. All tasks used for the assessment should be familiar to learners.
2. Tasks should be appropriate not only for assessment but also for learning.
3. The setting where the assessment is conducted should also be familiar to the children.
4. Children should be able to understand what they can and cannot do well.
5. An emphasis on positive outcomes and encouragement are crucial.
6. It is important to bear in mind how performing in front of others may induce anxiety in children.
7. Tasks should focus on meaning (not on form).
8. Tasks should allow young learners to communicate with their peers and their teachers (pp. 73-74).

McKay (2006) states that the scope of oral language assessment should always be 'derived from the curriculum, from the individual teacher's teaching objectives or from the teacher's theory of language ability' (p. 184). In the case of YLs she suggests that oral assessment tasks should maintain the interest of the children by applying colorful and interesting pictures and objects or puppets. They should contain a doing component and one-to-one interaction with another person. Facial expressions and gestures can serve as conversational support during the task. The expectation of applying communication strategies like taking turns or interrupting politely can influence task difficulty to a great extent. The cognitive requirement of the oral tasks must be age-appropriate. Social, cultural and emotional factors can also make oral tasks difficult for some children (p. 187). Table 1 summarizes oral language tasks suggested by McKay (2006).

Table 1
Oral language tasks for assessment by McKay (2006)

Task type	Description	What is assessed?
News Telling	Children tell their peers what they have done recently	How they can convey meaning to the audience with adequate details, in an appropriate sentence.
Storytelling	Children tell a story about a sequence of pictures.	Children's ability to tell a story accompanied with illustration.
Picture talks	Children describe a picture	Children's ability to describe a picture.
Categorization task	Children choose a set of four card and find patterns	Children descriptive language Language of comparisons Abstract explanation Academic talk
Oral presentation	Children talk about their own experience without preparation. Children talk about a project prepared earlier	It depends on the purpose of the assessment

Nikolov (2016) gives a more detailed list of speaking tasks appropriate for diagnostic assessment.

1. Look at this picture and answer my questions.
2. Tell a rhyme and sing a song.
3. Here are some picture cards facing down. Guess what's on them. Ask questions.
4. Look at this picture. I'm thinking of one of the ...s. Ask me questions and guess what I'm thinking of.
5. Look at these two pictures. One is mine, the other is yours. they are not the same. There are X differences. Let's find them.
6. Here are two pictures (facing down). One is mine, the other is yours. they are not the same. there are X differences. Let's find them.
7. Look at this picture (with several items like in a picture dictionary). tell me five things you like to eat and five you don't.
8. Short role play in pairs.
9. Ask and answer personal/interview questions in pairs.
10. This is a board game played by 2-4 learners. they use two dice and a list of (11 or 36) questions (personal or quiz). Questions should be written one by one on numbered cards. Throw two dice and add up or multiply numbers on the top. person throwing the dice must answer the question of that number on the list.
11. Think about a famous person. introduce the person by telling five important things about them. the other person should guess who it was.
12. Student choose one picture (from picture dictionary) of a choice of, for example, six. they are asked questions about it.
13. There are a list of 99 questions and slips of numbers with 1-99 on them. Students take turns picking numbers from slips facing down. read the question corresponding to the number on the list and they answer. It could be also used with an adult interlocutor.
14. Describing pictures to one another.
15. Tell a story shown in pictures. (p.85)

In this section I intended to present that engaging and challenging assessment tasks in familiar environment motivate students to show their best in L2. In the next section I review studies on the assessment of YL's oral performance.

2.5. International projects on the assessment of YLs' performance

Although Mihaljević Djigunović (2016) states that 'assessment of the speaking skill is not easy to carry out on larger samples, hence many studies do not include it' (p.245), the aim of this subchapter is to offer insights into international studies on the assessment of YLs' performance with emphasis on findings concerning YLs' oral performance.

The Early Language Learning in Europe (ELLiE) project was a transnational, longitudinal study to examine what level of proficiency YLs of English can achieve in different European countries. Changes in motivation, attitude and language progress were observed. A large number of cases studies were conducted with the same methods to get a deeper understanding of the learning process. Enever (2011) states that 'designing suitable speaking tasks for young children, taking their first steps in learning a new language at school, is widely acknowledged as a complex task' (p. 17.) Finally, four task types were applied: (1) vocabulary retrieval; (2) controlled role play; (3) short (and later more complex) questions about themselves and (4) a question and answer game to guess information about a picture (p. 17).

Szpotovic and Lindgren (2011) summarizes the findings of ELLiE:

- The average ELLiE learners have approached A1 level in their oral and aural skills.
- Learners' vocabulary and FL complexity show significant improvement during the first years of FL instruction.
- In general, learners' levels of competencies develop similarly in the three skills (speaking, listening and reading) in the fourth year of FL instruction, but there are examples of learners who are strong in one or two skills and weaker in others.
- A variety of factors affect young learners FL achievement including motivation, teachers, parents and exposure. These present a challenge for FL teachers and a need for adequate and continuous professional development. (p.142)

They also emphasize that teachers have an essential role in the learning process thus, 'adequate and continuous professional-development' is necessary (p.142).

Hoti, Heinzmann and Müller (2009) designed and conducted speaking tests for Swiss 3rd graders containing personal questions, picture descriptions and role plays. They highlight

attitude as a significant factor in speaking performance and find that motivation and self-concept are insignificant.

Benigno and de Jong (2016) present the initial phase of a project, called 'Global Scale of English Learning Objectives for Young Leaners'. It aims to create CEFR-based descriptors ranging from below A1 to high B1 level for YLs aged between 6-14. Learning objectives were collected with the aim of 'describing early stages of developing ELT competencies' (p. 53). The following basic principles were followed during the rating process

- Each descriptor needs to have a functional focus.
- Learning objectives need to refer to gradable 'families' of tasks.
- Learning objectives should use qualifiers such as 'short', 'simple', etc. in a sparing and consistent way as defined in an accompanying glossary.
- Learning objectives must have a single focus so as to avoid multiple tasks which might each require different performance levels. (p.56)

A set of 120 learning objectives is planned to be implemented and used as base for teaching and testing materials (p. 60).

Mihaljević Djigunović (2016) focuses on the role of motivation and self-concept in oral production of Croatian learners, aged 11-14. She reveals that 'L2 self-concept is more strongly associated with the quality of oral performance during earlier years than later, and that the accuracy dimension of oral production is the first to show non-significant relationship between the two variables' (p. 257).

Nikolov (2016) introduces the results of a project in the Hungarian context. The aim of the project was to develop age-appropriate diagnostic tests for learners of English (age 6/12). The AfL approach was applied during the project. 'Can do statement', text types and task types were compiled prior to the development and piloting of 200 new diagnostic tests. The tests were made available for teachers for classroom use: this is how I was able to apply them in my classroom assessment project discussed in this work.

The studies introduced in this section reveal that teachers, motivation and attitude play essential roles in the assessment process. Tasks designed in line with the main principle of assessing YLs' described in previous sections can offer useful feedback to the students

and their teachers. As the speaking tasks of the Hungarian diagnostic test development project are applied in my research they are described in chapter 3 in details.

2.6. Criterion-referenced tests

As criterion-referenced tests (CRT) are applied in my research to reveal what students know at different levels of their L2 learning, I find it important to define them.

Hughes (2003) states that when CRTS are used 'students are encouraged to measure their progress in relation to meaningful criteria' (p.21). This means that criterion-referenced tests 'should reveal what competencies an individual student does and does not possess, not how he or she compares with norms or peers' as in the case of norm-referenced assessment (Hopkins et al., 1990, p.184). Hughes (2003) highlights positive features of CRTs stating that 'they set meaningful standards in terms of what people can do, which do not change with different groups of candidates and they motivate students to attain those standards' (p. 21). Thus, they compete with themselves instead of their peers (McNamara, 2010).

2.7. Conclusion

I conclude that diagnostic assessment is the most suitable form to assess YLs' development. It can give feedback about the learning process to both the students and the teacher. It should involve age-appropriate and motivating tasks built on the content of the syllabus. Assessment is carried out by the teacher who can give immediate feedback and decrease the learners' anxiety. Teachers have to keep in mind that applying diagnostic assessment with precisely chosen tasks can motivate children's FLL, help teachers to plan more effective syllabuses and lessons and give feedback on how teaching works.

CHAPTER 3

Background to the empirical studies on the assessment of YLs' speaking skills

3.1. Introduction

The first two chapters presented theories and analyzed empirical research on YLs' FL acquisition. In this chapter I provide an overview of the empirical study I conducted to reveal how effectively diagnostic assessment can be integrated into a primary school FL curriculum. First, I present the context of the research, the research questions and the characteristics of participants. Then, I discuss the research methods I applied.

3.2. National Core Curriculum

In Hungary the NCC (2007) regulates the educational system. The NCC had three versions: its first one was compiled in 1995, and it was implemented in 1998. It provided the basis of requirements which were expected in the first ten years of education and the schools could come up with their own educational programs (Vass, 2008, p. 2). The second NCC was accepted in 2003, and presented changes both in structure and content. Besides becoming shorter and more clear-cut, it emphasized developmental goals and competency-based learning (Vass, 2008, p. 3).

The 2007 version of NCC is in accordance with recent European trends as it focuses on the key competences for lifelong learning: (1) communication in the mother tongue, (2) communication in FLs, (3) mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, (4) digital competence, (5) learning to learn, (6) social and civic competences, (7) sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and (8) cultural awareness and expression (Vass, 2008, p. 4). Key competences are defined as competences every individual needs for successful personal life, active citizenship, successful integration into society, and work (NCC 2007, p. 8). Communication in FLs is a key competence the NCC lists right after communication in the mother tongue. Communication in a FL supposes the knowledge of vocabulary, functional grammar, types of oral and linguistic styles. It describes communication in FLs as a competence that besides expressing and understanding ideas in a FL also requires familiarity with other cultures and the ability to

mediate between them. Positive attitudes involve respecting cultural diversity and interest and curiosity towards communication between languages and cultures (NCC 2007, p. 9). Although considerable changes can be observed in the different versions of the NCC, Medgyes and Nikolov (2010) highlighted that "it is no exaggeration to assert that the majority of foreign language teachers in Hungary have paid little heed to the unreasonable demands presented by the different versions of the NCC: they teach today as they always did" (p. 273).

Many primary schools tend to offer foreign language programs from the first grade, although FL education is compulsory from the fourth grade (NCC, 2007, p. 38). Thus, there is no official recommendation for either the content of curricula or the assessment for the first three grades. As a practicing teacher I find it essential to fill this gap, so the focus of my research is the applicability of diagnostic tests in the EFL curriculum and everyday teaching practice.

3.3. Context

My study was conducted at Új Budai Alma Mater Primary School. This is a small art school teaching 160 students in grades 1 to 8. The institution is run by a limited liability company. The majority of the students have extra music or drawing lessons in the afternoons. This is a private school which means that in contrast with state-run Hungarian primary schools, parents pay a monthly tuition fee to the company which is responsible for providing the necessary circumstances for education at school. Decisions about the curriculum, classroom practices and school projects are made by the teachers bearing in mind the Hungarian NCC.

Each grade consists of one class, except for grade one in 2013 which had two classes due to the growing number of children wishing to enter our school. In 2014 due to the lack of rooms in the school building only one first grade class was launched. There is also a mixed-age kindergarten group affiliated with the school. The school is located in the outskirts of Budapest, the capital city of Hungary.

As a part of quality assurance, in May 2014, the school management carried out a survey among teachers, students and parents about their opinion and expectations considering different aspects of school life, qualify of education, professional preparedness of the teachers, extra-curricular activities and the effectiveness of teachers' work. The questions

were asked in Hungarian and parents were expected to choose from a six-item Likert scale: (1) totally agree; (2) agree (3) partially agree; (4) disagree; (5) totally disagree and (6) I don't know. There were open-ended questions as well. One questionnaire was expected to be filled out by every family. As in many cases more than one child comes from the same family, the number of the families and the number of the students were different. A total of 82 families completed the forms out of 114. The results of the survey were presented at a workshop organized for the teachers in order to work on further improvements in the school's life.

Although parents were not directly asked about their preferences when choosing this school instead of a state-run school, their replies and comments reveal a lot of information. They believe that due to the low number of students extra care is given to their children. In their interpretation extra care means the possibility to communicate regularly with the teachers about emerging problems, the variety of teaching practices applied to meet the individual needs of their children and teachers' supportive attitudes. To gain a more detailed picture about these families and their ideas concerning their children's education, in the next paragraphs I will highlight some further results of this unpublished survey.

Nineteen per cent of the families stated that providing children with solid knowledge was the most important task of the school. Four per cent highlighted the importance of raising motivation and maintaining thirst for knowledge in their answer to the same question. Sixty-seven per cent gave additional answers to the options offered in the questionnaire. They stated that helping children lagging behind, building community, and health-conscious attitudes, teaching social skills and tolerance, and offering several possibilities for sports were among the main tasks of the school. Eighty-three per cent of the families claimed that they were satisfied with the level of the education at school. Eighty per cent were positive about the extracurricular activities, whereas 73% were pleased with the parent-friendly services offered and the integration of professional innovations. Communication with parents and the management of the school were also ranked high. Families were the least satisfied with sports events.

The majority of our students' families live in the neighboring commuter towns in detached houses in leafy areas. Although data have not been collected about the financial background and the income of the families, teachers can gain an insight into the students'

circumstances when they visit them in their homes. Every head-teacher visits their students at home when they start working together. The aim of these visits is to meet the families in less formal circumstances and thus to create an opportunity for the families and the teachers to get to know each other at the beginning of the academic year. The information collected during these occasions is often shared with other teachers so as to make children's behavior easier to understand in any cases. For example, the head-teacher may realize during these visits that the parents live separately. All in all, according to head-teachers' summaries, all the families live in very good circumstances; they have minimum one car, children have a room of their own, they spend their holidays abroad both in the summer and in the winter. Parents can afford to pay a tuition fee of 972.000 HUF (€ 3,100) per academic year. Breakfast, lunch, an afternoon snack, music lessons and extracurricular activities after the lessons are included in the fee. The minimum monthly income in Hungary in 2014 was € 338.

3.4. *Assessment practices at school*

At this point it is important to introduce the assessment practices at the school. They are regulated by the school's Educational Program following the recommendations of the NCC. The aim of assessment on the English lessons is to give realistic and positive feedback to the students and their parents about the children's L2 development. When I assess my students I intend to map what the children already know and in what areas they can develop further. Students are assessed in both group work and individual work format. When they work on a task in a group, they are asked to give feedback about their and their peers' contribution to the task. Contributions are assessed in an encouraging manner by giving good marks (5). If a student cannot contribute to the groups' work, we try to find out the reasons and offer another chance to show what they know. During the lessons children can collect red points for active participation, and good, interesting or innovative task solutions as well. The feedback on individual work is also discussed by the student and me. In the first four grades children receive their school records, a detailed description of their achievement in all the subjects in January and in June. In accordance with the school curriculum students are expected to meet the following requirements. These requirements were compiled by the school's English teachers applying Nikolov, Lugossy and Bors' (2008) recommendations. As reading and writing are introduced in third grade, these skills are not assessed during the first two years of FLL.

The items of the lists indicate the steps of development year by year. Students' assessment thus, is based on these requirements.

In Grade 1 students can

- understand classroom instructions and react to them with body language or using either Hungarian or English
- understand learnt words, expressions and questions.
- follow a story illustrated with pictures.
- guess the meaning of English words with the help of a short explanation
- follow the steps of lessons
- join in English discourse with body language or using either Hungarian or English
- recite 4-5 English rhymes and take part in 4-5 English games
- They are familiar with 1-2 British holidays and customs.

In Grade 2 students can

- answer English questions with body language or using either Hungarian or 1-2 English words.
- ask short questions in English
- recite 5-10 rhymes, sing songs and take part in games.
- They are familiar with 3-4 British holidays and customs.

In Grade 3 students can

- understand the vocabulary related to different topics.
- follow the lessons and ask for clarification.
- understand songs, rhymes and tales with visual aid.
- understand their peers' role in role play.
- figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions from their context.
- answer questions in a few words.
- ask short questions.
- tell 1-2 tales with the help of questions or visual aids.
- act out conversations with their teacher or peers with using Hungarian words a few times.

- recognize and understand the written form of familiar words.
- can read the written form of familiar English words.
- can copy familiar words and fill missing letters of familiar words.

In Grade 4 students can

- understand the vocabulary related to different topics.
- follow the lessons and ask for help if necessary.
- understand their peers' role in role play and react appropriately.
- understand the essence of short written texts.
- read a familiar story book.
- read 4-5 story books to themselves.
- copy familiar words and write them down after dictation with some help.
- understand their peers' role in a role play and react to them properly.
- spell familiar words (pp. 7-8).

As strategy use is very important in L2 learning, it is also taught and evaluated. First graders are expected to figure out the meaning of English words with the help of their teacher and to take part in activities with their peers during the English lessons. Second graders are supposed to find out the meanings of English words from context and to indicate if they do or do not understand something. Third graders are supposed to be able to ask for help, ask questions and find out meaning by applying their background knowledge and using visual aids to construct meaning. Fourth graders are expected to be able to help their peers and to check their work.

From the end of second grade they also get marks. Although the best mark is 5 and the worst is 1, during the first four years it is very rare that students get worse marks than 5 or 4. Students also get written feedback from their teachers in November and April. These texts contain positive feedback and recommendations for further development. The recommendations are based on feedback on weaknesses given during and after the English lessons.

3.5. Streaming of students

FL learning is ranked as number one on the parents' priority list; thus, they have high expectations concerning the effectiveness of FL teaching at school. English as a FL is

taught from the first grade. The classes are divided into groups for English lesson if there are more than 16 students in a class. Those children who have some experiences with learning or using English are streamed with the help of a placement test administered by the English teachers of the school when they start their studies. They are asked to talk about colorful pictures chosen by the English teachers. They are expected to be able to answer some questions asked by their teacher (see Appendix B). Those students who cannot understand the questions, join the beginner group. Those ones who understand the questions and answer some of them with a few words, go to the second group. Whereas, those students who can answer most of the questions with longer sentences, become the members of the third group.

As many of the students attended bilingual kindergartens prior to entering our school, or their parents' L1 is English or they took part in very early language programs, they often start the school with a considerable amount of English knowledge. They can express themselves fluently, they can ask for help and explain the intended meaning if they cannot recall a word in English. They can ask for clarification if they have problems with understanding. On the other hand, they often face difficulties in Hungarian reading and writing lessons.

As I am the head of the group of teachers dealing with SEN, if the teachers find any signs of learning or behavior difficulties they inform me about the problems. In these cases, me and the other SEN teachers observe the students during the lessons as a part of the diagnostic process. According to my classroom observations, in those classes where the teachers indicated learning difficulties with their students between September, 2013 and November, 2013 I found that the most problematic areas of Hungarian reading and writing were: (1) syllabification (the basis of the reading acquisition in Hungarian); (2) phonemic awareness and (3) reading digraphs as [ty] and [ny]. These are often the symptoms of language learning related difficulties in Hungarian. Thus, these children's Hungarian language development was also precisely diagnosed to reveal how they can be helped effectively. Their listening comprehension, speech perception, reading accuracy and speed, articulation and vocabulary were examined. These further examinations did not indicate learning difficulties. In April, 2014 the PLS-4 (Preschool Language Scale, 4th edition, Zimmerman, Steiner & Pond, 1992) was administered by a speech language therapist, Laura Newell, who was qualified in applying the test, to 7 students in English,

to identify their current comprehension and expressive language skills to profile their need for further curriculum development. This test includes tasks that assess language abilities in the areas of integrative language skills, pre-literacy skills, semantics, morphology and syntax. The results of this investigation were presented by Angéla Imre, Laura Newell and Zsófia Turányi at the 16th Summer School in Psycholinguistics in Hungary in 2014. The Preschool Language Scale revealed that the nine bilingual first graders were good at: (1) time sequence concepts (telling a story with an introduction, sequence of action and a conclusion); (2) phonological awareness (identifying initial sounds and understanding rhyming words); (3) phonological skills (segmenting words) and (4) integrative language skills (answering why questions, naming described objects and categories and describing similarities with emphasis on oral fluency. The FL syllabus of this group of children was designed by keeping these results in mind. I was aware that I could build on this knowledge when I chose the stories (authentic materials for children we use during the FL lessons) and prepared the accompanying tasks and activities.

Diagnoses concerning learning and behavior disorders and disabilities are made by expert committees (Committee for Examining Learning Abilities) employing psychologists, psychiatrists, speech therapists and developmental teachers. Children with severe learning and behavior problems go through a complex examination and receive a diagnosis and a recommendation for treatment.

In cases when the difficulties justify it, children can be exempted from the evaluation of certain areas such as spelling, penmanship in L1 or writing in L2. These exemptions can last for one, two or even more years in accordance with the child's development. As FLL is only compulsory from Grade 4, during the first three years the school's developmental team can make a decision about the children's exemption from learning English with the parents' consent. The developmental team exempts children if the teachers realize that FL learning becomes so difficult for the children that they may lose their interest in FLL. If due to the developmental courses their diagnosis improves, children can start learning L2 in Grade 4. If the difficulties are still present and the exemption is still justified, the school can ask the Committee for Examining Learning Abilities to decide about the expansion of the exemption.

This section aimed to introduce how assessment practices are used to reveal students' individual needs to design their syllabus and to follow all learners' development.

3.6. Research questions in 3 studies

The literature I overviewed in chapter 1 showed that applying age-appropriate methodology in a child-friendly school environment can result in effective FL teaching and English development, and it can raise and maintain children's motivation to learn about foreign cultures. The literature also suggests that appropriate feedback based on well-designed assessment tasks can influence children's language development in their L2. In line with these findings, I have formulated eight research questions to explore how diagnostic oral assessment can be integrated into young learners' language development in English.

RQ1   How do diagnostic tests on speaking offer the teacher opportunities to scaffold children's development in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?

RQ2   How do the diagnostic tests work?

RQ3   To what extent can the tests give useful feedback to the teacher about the student's development?

RQ4   How do children's L2 proficiency and strategy use change over one year?

RQ5   How do the diagnostic tests contribute to cooperation in pairs and small groups?

RQ6   What beliefs emerge while children take the tests?

RQ7   How do children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence change over one year?

RQ8   How do the diagnostic tests work with a student with ASD?

3.7. Participants: YLs in 3 groups

Three groups were involved in my study; class 2, class 3 and class 4. There were nine students in class 2, eleven students in class 3 and eight students in class 4. I taught English in class 2 and 3 since they entered the school in September, 2011 and in September, 2012. I started teaching class 4 in September, 2013. Table 2 contains the codes of each student I use to identify them, their gender, the number of years they spent learning English and their EFL learning prior to entering the primary school. As for the codes, B201 means that

this student is a boy (B) from class 2, whereas G301 is a girl (G) from class 3 in the 2013/2014 academic year. The last two numbers indicate a randomly generated number code of the children.

If there are more than 15 students in a class, the students are divided into two groups in the English lesson; thus, I taught English to nine students in Class 2. B206 and G207 lived in a foreign country for 3 years and used only English at the local kindergarten. B201 and B205 took part in kindergarten FL programs where English was used on a daily basis. G209 had English lessons twice a week during the preparatory year in our school's kindergarten.

Class 3 consisted of 13 students. Two autistic children from class 3 were not participants of my study as they did not learn English because code switches between the two languages caused high level of frustration in one case and total loss of attention in the other caseB306, B307 and G308 had two English lessons per week, prior to grade 1, as they attended the preparatory year of our school. S305 went to an English speaking kindergarten where children and kindergarten teachers mainly used English during the day. G310 joined the class in grade 2 and had gone to an American primary school in Budapest for one year.

B306 was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. This often meant the rejection of code switches between L1 and L2, but in his case, only tasks involving music caused high level of frustration and rejection. Despite the diagnosis, this student took part in the English lessons. Chapter 6 is devoted to his case study.

Table 2
The identification codes, the gender and the years spent learning English of the 28 participants

Code	Gender	Total number of years spent learning EFL in June, 2o14	EFL learning prior to primary school in years		
			Abroad	Kindergarten with daily English lessons	Kindergarten with English lessons twice a week
Grade 2					
B201	M	4		2	
G202	F	2			
G203	F	2			
B204	M	2			
B205	M	4		3	
B206	M	5	3		
G207	F	5	3		
B208	M	2			
G209	F	3			1
Grade 3					
G301	F	3			
B302	M	3			
G303	F	3			
B304	M	3			
B305	M	5		2	
B306	M	4			1
B307	M	4			1
G308	F	4			1
B 309	M	3			
G310	F	3		1	
G311	F	3			
Grade 4					
B401	M	4			
G402	F	4			
G403	F	4			
B404	M	4			
G405	F	4			
B406	M	4			
B407	M	4			
B408	M	4			

My group in class 4 consisted of eight students. Class 4 consisted of 18 students. Although two more children were enrolled in the class, they did not come to the lessons. One of them studied abroad and passed exams at the end of each term, and the other one was schooled at home due to his severe depression. The class was divided into two groups according to their proficiency when they started grade 1. Eight students, who had studied

English prior to primary school, were taught by one of the other two English teachers of the school. We had been working together for just a few weeks when I involved them in my study in October, 2013. B401 was exempted from FL learning by the Committee for Examining Learning Abilities, as his language development in L1 was delayed and his autism foreshadowed difficulties with L2 learning. In spite of his exemption, he joined in the English lessons because with the help of his psychologist we could handle the situations causing frustration.

3.8. The teacher and researcher

As I was the participants' English teacher when I conducted the research, I became a participant myself. As a teacher researcher I played multiple roles. I facilitated the children's L2 development, and I also examined their development and the effectiveness of the assessment methods I applied. These two roles complemented each other during the research: (1) as a teacher I could use the results in my teaching practice; (2) as a researcher I could benefit from my background knowledge of the participants and the context, and I could handle certain situations with ease. As I designed the courses and the course materials, I could observe how I could integrate the diagnostic tests in the course materials.

3.9. Data collection instrument

My dissertation follows the tradition of mixed-method research in the sense that I elicited both quantitative and qualitative data. Applying Dörnyei's definition: mixed method studies 'integrate the two approaches [i.e. quantitative and qualitative] at one or more stages of the research process' (2007, p. 163) with the aim of achieving 'a fuller understanding of a target phenomenon' (p. 164). According to Cresswell, due to 'the development and perceived legitimacy of both qualitative and quantitative research in the social and human sciences, mixed method research, employing the data collection associated with both forms of data, is expanding' (2003, p. 208).

Qualitative instruments were applied to reveal students' complex views and beliefs about the diagnostic tests and the way they learn English. Their feelings about FLL were also investigated with the help of think-aloud protocol and group interviews. While these affective variables were explored, I applied the diagnostic assessment tests as quantitative instruments to gain knowledge about students' L2 development.

'In order to ensure research validity qualitative researchers often apply triangulation, which is 'the use of multiple, independent methods of obtaining data in a single investigation in order to arrive at the same research findings' (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 181). Table 3 shows how I applied the method of triangulation; I used multiple sources to gather information with the purpose of ensuring the trustworthiness of the research. The oral performance of the children was complemented with my diary notes based on classroom observations. Students' spontaneous comments were recorded as well.

It is important to emphasize that confidentiality was guaranteed in the research. Only the researcher had access to the raw data. As for the students' test results, comments and the interviews, students are cited under codes in the analysis and in the results section of the dissertation. This way anonymity was ensured. Table 3 provides a systematic overview of data sources and methods of analysis used in my research.

Table 3
Research questions, data sources and methods of analysis

Research questions	Data source	Method of analysis
RQ1 How do diagnostic tests on speaking offer the teacher opportunities to scaffold children's development in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?	• Teacher's notes • Children's spontaneous comments	• Qualitative content analysis
RQ2 How do the diagnostic tests work?	• Field notes • Transcript of oral performances on tasks • Evaluation sheet in the test booklets	• Qualitative content analysis • Descriptive statistical analysis
RQ3 To what extent can the tests give useful feedback to the teacher about the student's development?	• Teacher's diary notes based on classroom observations	• Qualitative content analysis
RQ4 How do children's L2 proficiency and strategy use change over one year?	• Diagnostic tests (Nikolov, 2016) • Observation	• Descriptive statistical analysis • Qualitative content analysis
RQ5 How do the diagnostic tests contribute to cooperation in pairs and small groups?	• Children's comments • Observation	• Qualitative content analysis

RQ6 What beliefs emerge while children take the tests?	• Children's notes and comments • Stimulated recall interview	• Qualitative content analysis
RQ7 How do children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence change over one year?	• Group interview	• Qualitative content analysis
RQ8 How do the diagnostic tests work with a student with ASD?	• Teacher's diary notes • Student's comments • Evaluation sheet in the test booklets	• Qualitative case study

3.10. Procedure

Data collection started in the autumn of 2013 and covered a period of one academic year. It involved three assessment periods, when diagnostic tests were administered and two phases at the beginning and at the end of the academic year, when the possible changes in children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence were systematically observed. Quantitative data was gained from the diagnostic tests about children's L2 proficiency change over the academic year, and about their beliefs on how familiar, popular and difficult the tests were.

The main body of the qualitative data was provided by the two semi-structured interviews with the students, which was supplemented by my diary notes, children's comments during test taking and stimulated recall interviews with them. In addition to these, I kept records on the students' progress in general, and the development of their communicative skills in particular. I regularly evaluated learners' effort and performance, whereas students were asked to assess their progress at the end of each term.

In the next section I give a description of the data collection instruments. I divide my research into three studies to make it easier to follow the course of the data collection and the administration of different data collection instruments. Study 1 investigated the use of the diagnostic speaking tests with the three groups of students over a year. Study 2 examined how children's attitude, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence changed over a year. Study 3 was a case study on how the diagnostic tests worked with a student with ASD.

3.10.1 Study 1: A study on the use of diagnostic tests in three YLs' groups: statistical data analysis on FL development over a year

I used the diagnostic speaking tests three times during the academic year of 2013/2014: (1) in October; (2) in January and (3) in May. The tests were designed and piloted at the Center for Research on Learning and Instruction, University of Szeged, with the support of The Social Renewal Operational Program (TÁMOP–3.1.9- 08/01- 2009- 0001) (Nikolov, 2011; Nikolov & Szabó, 2011, 2012a, 2012b; Szabó & Nikolov 2013). The diagnostic oral tests are validated for the age groups where I administered them to.

I gained both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was elicited from scoring the achievements of the students' on the tests, whereas my diary notes, classroom observations and the children's comments during test taking and the interviews provided qualitative data. My diary contained my notes about (1) the students' participation and development and (2) the results and difficulties of administering the tests.

After completing the tests, children evaluated how difficult, familiar and popular the tests were on an evaluation sheet belonging to the test booklets. The tests were administered in a familiar place, in their classroom to guarantee friendly and familiar atmosphere. Students` anonymity was ensured by applying pseudonyms. Parents` consent about their children's participation was obtained prior to the first phase of the research (see Appendix A).

Group interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed. I took diary notes about the students' development and collected their comments about the test during the lessons. Quantitative data was analyzed descriptive statistical analysis and was compared to the qualitative data on how children reflected on the tests before, during and after taking them.

3.10.2 Study 2: A study on how children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence changed over a year

As qualitative data allows researchers to better identify the nature of the phenomena they investigate (Cresswell, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007; Duff, 2008; Mackey & Gass, 2005), as a first step, I conducted a semi-structured group interview with the three groups of students in September, 2013. I aimed to get a view on students' feelings and beliefs connected to learning English to be able to determine what factors influence their performances and to

be able to adopt classroom practices which better serve their needs. The group interview was repeated in May, 2014 to reveal changes in feelings and beliefs. The interview was a semi-structured one to let further issues emerge (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 136).

The thick description given in this study offers a better understanding of my students' perspectives. The interviews were conducted in Hungarian to allow students to express their feelings and ideas freely without the limitation of L2 proficiency. The conversations lasted for 45 minutes. The questions of the interview (see Appendix B) were piloted with two second graders from a different group to see whether the questions are unambiguous and appropriate for eliciting meaningful answers. Minor changes in wording were necessary after the pilot interviews.

As students after entering the school are constantly encouraged to reveal their opinion honestly in connection with issues which they are interested in, I was not concerned that my students would not dare make negative remarks in connection with learning English or English lessons. The interviews were discussions in all the cases in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Their answers underlined my assumptions, I did not question the truthfulness of their answers. Thus, the so-called halo effect, when the participants give answers they think the researcher wants to hear from them (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 174) was reduced.

Mackey and Gass (2005) highlight other further drawbacks of interviews such as 'selective recall, self-delusion, perceptual distortions, memory loss (p. 174). To reduce these effects, I took notes about their comments in connection with the same issues during the lessons.

I analyzed the data gained from the interviews by employing the constant comparative method, accepting Maykut and Morehouse's (1994) concept: 'the task of the researcher is to find patterns within those words and to present those patterns for others to inspect while at the same time staying as close to the construction of the world as the participants originally experienced it (p. 18)'. In order to find emerging patterns. I established initial categories by reviewing the transcribed data. Then, I asked a fellow researcher to do the same, to check if her understanding of the findings was similar to that of mine.

3.10.3 Study 3: A case-study on how the diagnostic tests worked with a student with ASD

Dörnyei (2007) highlights that 'case study approach has been productive and highly influential in applied linguistics' as 'it offers rich and in-depth insights that no other method can yield' (pp. 154 -155). While carrying out Study 1 and Study 2 I felt the need of an in-depth understanding of Daniel's (pseudo-name) behavior and his motivation to learn English. Thus, besides my professional and personal curiosity, the aim of my case study was to gain further insights into the use of diagnostic tests with a student with Autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Borrowing Dörnyei's (2007) image about "uncharted territories" (p. 155) which can be effectively explored in case studies, I found FLL and FL assessment of children with ASD such an uncharted, under-researched field worth investigating. As Duff (2008) claims that exceptional cases 'tend to challenge widely held assumptions about behavior' (p. 70), I chose an atypical case to demonstrate that although the general belief about children with ASD suggests that FLL is almost impossible for them in a classroom environment, it is not always the case.

As Daniel, the participant of my case study, regularly asked me to talk about the diagnostic tests and his development in one-to-one situations, I had a huge array of data in connection with his beliefs about FLL and the assessment procedure. For the purpose of triangulation data was collected from my diary notes, the student's comments and evaluation sheets on the diagnostic tests.

3.11. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to describe the background to the three empirical studies. The participants, the setting, the research questions and the research method were introduced in details with special emphasis on the various instruments I applied in the three studies. In the next three chapters I will present and discuss the findings of the studies by arranging them around the main research questions of the dissertation.

CHAPTER 4

A study on the use of diagnostic tests in three YLs' groups: statistical data analysis on FL development over a year

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the L2 proficiency and strategy use of three groups of my students during an academic year (RQ4). This is a quantitative study: data collection procedures resulted in numerical data which were analyzed by statistical methods (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005). The study also aimed to reveal how the applied diagnostic tests worked and to what extent they gave useful feedback about students' development for me as their teacher so that I can scaffold their learning (RQ3). The research also investigates how the diagnostic tests contribute to cooperation in pairs and small groups (RQ5). There are three subchapters presenting students' development in three different classes. Each subchapter analyses the findings that allows for deeper understanding of L2 development (RQ1 and RQ2).

4.2. Method

4.2.1. Research questions

The main aim of the statistical analysis of the quantitative data was to investigate the L2 development of the participants during an academic year. The data gained from the students' assessment and the diary kept by the teacher about the process of assessment reveal the extent to which the tests are useful tools for following young learners' development. Therefore, the following research questions are answered in this chapter:

RQ1 How do diagnostic tests on speaking offer the teacher opportunities to scaffold children's development in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?

RQ2 How do diagnostic tests work?

RQ3 To what extent can the tests give useful feedback to the teacher about the students' development?

RQ4 How do children's L2 proficiency and strategy use change over a year?

RQ5 How do the diagnostic tests contribute to cooperation in pairs and small groups?

4.2.2. Learning difficulties

The participants of this study are introduced in detail in section 3.5. I find it relevant to refer to some individual differences in connection with some students' performance during the assessment.

Although language acquisition of children with Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is not the focus of my dissertation, as some participants live with these disorders, I discuss difficulties which have occurred during FLL due to these syndromes in my practice as a language teacher and psycho-pedagogue. In the case of autism, difficulties are caused by the lack of abstract thinking, the children's inability to put themselves into imaginary situations (Balázs, 2000). Autistic children often need a well-defined and logical explanation on the usefulness of certain tasks. They often ask why it is useful to learn English and in what situations they can apply this knowledge. It is frustrating for them to imagine that in certain situations people do not understand their L1. Code-switches between L1 and L2 often cause uncertainty and frustration. Word by word translation is a generally applied practice by autistic children and it is hard for them to accept that certain words can have different meanings; the use of synonyms is also problematic in their L1. Drawing and listening to music during the L2 lessons are also often rejected by autistic children (Balázs, 2000). Two participants in my groups are diagnosed autism disorder: B305 and B401.

Three students, G309, B303 and B303 have attention deficits; they find it difficult to concentrate on tasks both at school and outside it. They often stand up during the lessons, and they cannot wait for their turns in games and conversations. They speak very fast and often have difficulties with recalling words in L1 and L2. They usually finish their work earlier than their peers. Cooperation with their classmates is one of the challenges at school according to their recalls. G309 talked about this phenomenon after one of our lessons: "students do not like working with me, because I am faster and I cannot write neatly and I talk too much. They never choose me to be a partner in pair-work." During the lessons they need extra help to keep their attention focused on task. If they have the opportunity to take part in some kind of physical activity, they can concentrate more effectively. That is why I usually ask them to be my assistants in the lessons. They are eager to hand out the task sheets, open the window, clean the black board or switch on and off the computer and the projector.

Organizing an appropriate classroom environment matching their individual needs requires special attention from teachers. Applying an effective assessment tool is also of vital importance. That is the reason why the analyses of their achievement is also focused on in this chapter.

4.2.3. Data collection instruments

Diagnostic speaking tests designed and piloted at the Center for Research on Learning and Instruction, University of Szeged (Nikolov, 2011; Nikolov & Szabó, 2011, 2012a, 2012b; Szabó & Nikolov 2013) were applied three times during the 2013/2014 academic year. Listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks were arranged in 21 booklets, but I applied only speaking tasks in my research as I found it an under researched field. The booklets had a teachers' book including a detailed description of how to use the tests in the classroom and evaluation criteria for assessing the speaking tasks. During the assessment students were given scores, thus the assessment resulted in numerical data. Descriptive statistics was employed to summarize data on the development of speaking skills. After finishing tasks in English, students were asked to evaluate each test on a 4–1 scale along three main criteria: difficulty (easy – difficult); familiarity (familiar – unfamiliar); likability (liked – disliked) (Nikolov, 2011; Nikolov & Szabó, 2011). These results were also analyzed to tackle changes in students' ideas about and attitudes towards the tasks. Assessment tasks were evaluated according to the teachers' booklet provided with the tests.

4.2.4. Procedure

The students completed three of the speaking tasks on three occasions during their English classes in October in 2013 and January and May in 2014. I explained the purpose of the diagnostic tasks to the students in Hungarian. On the one hand, I needed an assessment tool with which I could get a detailed picture about my students' English proficiency, their strengths and weaknesses and how they developed. On the other, I wanted to try the test booklets and share my experiences with other teachers. I asked learners to give the best of their knowledge. I also made it clear to them that the test results would help us find their strengths and the fields where they needed more practice. Students were aware that the test results would count in their half-term and end-term

records. They also knew that we would discuss the grades together and they had the opportunity to improve their grades any time.

The same tasks were done by the three groups. The tasks were carried out in pairs and as individual work. Each test booklet contains four tasks assessing speaking skills: (1) quiz questions; (2) spot-the-differences; (3) story telling based on pictures and (4) picture description. As suggested in the teachers' book, before working on the tasks, students listened to the instructions and they were asked to explain what they had to do in Hungarian. The tasks also included examples to ensure understanding. A detailed description of each task and their assessment is introduced in the next sections.

4.3. Results and Discussion

4.3.1 Second-graders' achievements on 3 oral tests

This section presents the second graders' achievements on different task types. First, I introduce the tasks and then I analyze what scores students achieved. Students' oral performances are examined along five aspects: (1) appropriateness in the context; (2) to what extent students can negotiate meaning; (3) students' strategy use; (4) students' cooperation and (5) error types following Dulay, Burt and Krashen's (1982) terminology. Each concept is elaborated on after the extracts to give a complex description about the utterances.

4.3.1.1. Spot-the-difference task

The teachers' booklet described the task as follows:

> Work in pairs. Look at picture A and picture B. Student 1: Point to something in picture A and say what you can see. Student 2: find what Student 1 is pointing to and talking about in picture B. Say if it is the same (yes) or different (no). Then take turns. For example: Student 1 starts, "There are two bushes." Student B says, "No, there is one bush." Then it's B's turn to say something about picture B. Circle the differences you find.

The pictures used in the tasks can be seen in Appendix C-D. The teacher's booklet contains a detailed explanation of the scoring system. The teacher scores the task while the students work in pairs. Three turns are scored for each student. Points can be given according to the description provided in Table 4. The spot-the-difference tasks in October

and January were scored according to the first system, whereas in May they were scored according to the second system described in Table 5. Thus, the maximum score in October and January was nine points, and it was eighteen in May. The source of the scoring system is given in the teachers' booklet belonging to the tests.

The third column of Table 4 contains some examples of how I applied the rubrics in October and January. 0 point was given only in case, when B201 reacted with 'yes' and 'no' to his partner. I gave 1 point if relevant words were used but the utterances contained grammar mistakes. 2 points were given for relevant words and the proper use of verbs, whereas, those students received 3 points who applied relevant words with 0 or 1 mistake. They did not lose any points on pronunciation as it was intelligible (McKay, 2006).

Table 4
Assessment rubrics for the spot-the-difference task in October and January with examples

3 points	an appropriate and relevant statement with 0-1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation.	'In this picture is a fishing rod.' 'Here is a goat and a dog.' 'There is a cow, the cow is eating.'
2 points	an appropriate and relevant statement with 2-3 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'In this picture is a fishing rod.' 'Here is a goat and a dog.'
1 point	an appropriate and relevant statement of one or two words with 1-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'Fish in river.' 'No cloud and no cow.' 'No bus driver.'
0 point	says nothing or text is not relevant or in Hungarian	Not given

Table 5
Assessment rubrics for the spot-the-difference task in May

6 or 5 points	an appropriate and relevant statement + question. 0-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation.	'I can see a restaurant, three quests and a waiter. How many guests do you have?' 'There is only one window in my picture and one door. Is there a door in your picture?'
4 points	an appropriate and relevant statement + question. 3-4 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'No, there is no dog. You have a dog?' 'Has the man long hair?'
3 points	either an appropriate and relevant statement or a question. 1-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'They not drinking. And you?' 'Two girls happy. They eats."
2 or 1 point	either an appropriate and relevant statement or a question. 3-4 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	Not given
0 point	text is not relevant or more than 5 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation	Not given

Table 6 indicates the scores students received for the spot-the-difference tasks on the three test performances. The points are expressed in percentage values to make it easier to compare and contrast their achievement instead of raw scores on the three tasks. The maximum scores are different in the first seven booklets from the other fourteen ones. The latter ones require more precise L2 use with longer utterances and offer a more elaborate system of scores along a wider scale.

Table 6
The scores on the spot-the-difference tasks in grade 2

	October Appendix C	January Appendix D	May Appendix E
B 201	0%	89%	89%
G 202	78%	89%	100%
G 203	56%	67%	61%
B 204	67%	56%	50%
B 205	78%	78%	100%
B 206	100%	100%	100%
G 207	89%	56%	100%
B 208	67%	56%	61%
G 209	67%	67%	67%
Mean	*67%*	*73%*	*81%*
SD	*0.28*	*0.17*	*0.21*

In line with my expectations, most of the students' performances developed over the academic year, as presented in Table 6. Overall they achieved good scores. However, their development showed a diverse picture. In the case of B206 a ceiling effect can be observed, he achieved the highest scores in all the assessments. Three students' (B204, G207, B208) performances showed some decline either in October or in May. One student (G202) steadily developed according to her scores. In some cases, (B201, B205, G209) students' scores did not change from one assessment period to the other. It is important to note that in May the second scoring system required more precise use of English than the first one, which could result in some decline in the scores. The SDs reveal that in September and in May the achievements varied to a larger extent than in January.

In October, students mainly used two- or three-word utterances referring to those entities in the pictures they could name. The typical utterances included nouns and indicated

locations, but students tended to omit copulas or verbs. Thus, omission seemed to be the most typical error in their utterances. The meaning, however, was clear. The examples below give some insights into how young learners pointed out the differences.

Extract 1

B208:   this picture is a goat, fish in river, cow eating.
B204:   the dog in the river.
B208:   no cloud and no cow, here is a goat and a dog, a school bag behind the dog.

Extract 1 also shows that students managed to convey meaning. In my view, this is a great achievement, as they were not shy or anxious, but tried to engage in communication as required by the task. A possible reason for this openness must have been the supportive classroom environment they were socialized into and the emphasis paid to communicative language teaching.

As far as grammatical correctness is concerned, in Extract 2 the use of *have/has* was overgeneralized, most probably meaning *there is/are*. This may be an indication of children transferring the Hungarian "a képen van egy…" structure to mean "there is an item in the picture". Such errors tend to be typical in children's discourses in the lessons.

Extract 2

G207:   this picture is have a cow.
G209:   in this picture has a bush.

In the dialogue in Extract 3, B201 reacted to his peer's (G203) utterances by saying yes and no, indicating that the item mentioned in each turn was or was not present in his picture. This indicates that he could understand the messages. After assessing the task, he claimed that he remembered that there was a structure we used for picture description but as he could not remember it right then, he did not dare to use it improperly.

Extract 3

G203:   this picture a bicycle
B201:   no
G203:   in this picture has a sun
B201:   yes
G203:   this is a small dog
B201:   no

In my experience as a practicing teacher, as well as an observer of my colleagues' classes, one-word answers are typically not welcome by language teachers. However, in my view, these short answers are valuable, as they signal that B201 fully understood his partners' utterances. Extract 3 also revealed how flexibly children use certain structures, indicating their level of development. In the first turn, the word *has* was omitted, whereas in the second one "in this picture" is used instead of this picture. These seemed to be all approximations for *there is something in this picture*.

In May some of the students claimed that this task type was not very interesting any more, whereas others reported that the pictures were difficult to talk about, as we had not learnt the particular vocabulary (see Extract 4). Also, the pictures depicted situations which were unfamiliar to them. Extract 5 reveals that they listed sentences about the two pictures but they hardly reacted to each other's utterances. This means that children were highly aware of the importance of familiarity with a topic. They could also reflect on why they were unable to say something about a certain picture. In the first case it was their lack of background knowledge, in the other one there was nothing worth describing and they lacked the strategies to allow them to find a way of describing the scene. This also indicated that they were very much focused on actions.

Extract 4

G209:   Nem is tanultunk buszokról, az állatosok sokkal egyszerűbbek. [We did not learn about buses, the ones with animals were much easier]

B201:   A buszos képen semmi sem történik, semmit sem tudtam mondani. [Nothing happens in the picture with the bus, I couldn't say anything.]

Extract 5

B205:   I can see two men in the picture. In a bus stop.

B208:   Yes. Two.

B205:   I can see the bus. Yes?

B208:   Yes. And the street.

B205:   They are eating and reading.

B208:   They are drinking and writing sms.

B205:   There is a bird.

B208:   No, there isn't.

To gain a deeper understanding of their point of view, I asked them about the task. They pointed out that it was very hard for them to say something about this picture. During a follow-up activity we brainstormed ideas together. As Extract 6 shows, they were familiar with the vocabulary items they could have used to talk about the picture, but they did not find the pictures inspiring enough.

Extract 6

Teacher: Please, look at picture A. In picture A what is the man holding in his hand?

B205:   Telephone.

T: Telephone? In picture A?

B206:   Hamburger

T: Yes-yes. And the other man?

B208:   A newspaper.

T: Thank you B208. What number is the bus they are waiting for?

B206:   Huszonkettő and kilencvenkilenc. (Twenty-two and ninety-nine)

T: Would you say it in English, please.

G202:   Twenty-two and ninety-nine.

T: Thank you. B205 may I ask you to close the window, because it is getting extremely noisy.

B205:   *Closes the window.*

T: Thanks a lot. Would you look at picture B, please. Is the bus coming or going?

B206:   Going.

T: So in picture A the bus is coming and in picture B the bus is going. OK. What is there in the man's hand who is drinking something in picture B?

G207:   Telephone?

T: No, I don't think so.

G207:   A photo?

T: It's a camera.

G207:   [nodding] yes, yes, camera.

T: What about the other man? What is there in his hand?

B206:   A telephone.

T: Yes. Where is his other hand?

B206:   *to his pocket.*

B208:   In the trousers.

T: Yes. That's right. In the trousers in his pocket. In the pocket of his trousers. Perfectly done. Where are they? What country is it?

G209:   Hungary?

T: Yes, it can be in Hungary. What's the weather like if you look at their clothes?

Together: Sunny.

T: Yes, that's right.

The fact that students did not use more advanced structures and vocabulary in Extract 6 may be partly due to the fact that they knew they were not tested and partly due to the type of brainstorming task we were engaged in. Students' comments about this picture and the consecutive task convinced me that some pictures used in the test booklets are not fully appropriate for my students, as they require to talk about situations and topics they are unfamiliar with. As all of them grew up in socially privileged families, they never or very rarely use public transportation or wait for a bus.

In May noticeable improvement could be seen in some students' performance. They mostly used appropriate sentence structures and asked meaningful questions to keep up the conversation and to help their partner. Extracts 7 and 8 show examples of this improvement.

Extract 7

B201:   In my picture there is a man and two woman. And you?

B208:   In my picture there are four. They drinking tea. And you?

B201:   The man is standing and the woman are eating pizza. Is there pizza in your?

B208:   Yes, one *szelet* [slice].

B201:   Piece. In my picture there is a big pizza on the table and flowers. Have you got flowers?

B208:   No I haven't got flowers on the table. I have flowers on the window. Have you got a window?

B201:   Yes, 3 windows. Has the man long hair?

B208:   No. no.

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Extract 7 shows that B201 frequently uses the *there is/there are* structure, the one that he asked for in October after the task. I believe this is a perfect example of how the tasks fostered development: they made students aware of their need to use certain structures in different contexts (i.e. *there is/there are* in picture description). This phenomenon is called "noticing the gap" (Schmidt, 1990), when the students realize what they do not know. Thus, they take conscious steps in their learning to fill the gap.

Both students invite turn taking either by using the overgeneralized form "and you?" or by asking for details about the other's picture. This is a new strategy in their discourse.

As for how children scaffold one another's learning, B201 offers a vocabulary item after interpreting a code switch as a request for help. This means that the task managed to engage students in cooperation which is beneficial for the development of their proficiency. This search for possible cooperation is also present in Extract 8.

Extract 8

G203:   In my picture there is a table and there are two chairs. And in your?

G207:   In my picture there are three chairs and three girls and a waiter. Is there a dog in your picture?

G203:   No, there is no dog. You have a dog?

G207:   No. (Smiling)

G203:   Akkor miért kérdezed? [Why are you asking then?] There are three windows and there is a vase in one window. And you?

G207:   There is only one window in my picture and one door. Is there a door in your picture?

G203:   Yes, next to the window.

G207:   The waiter is sad and has long hair. Your waiter?

G203:   Mi az a waiter? [What is waiter?]

G207:   *pointing to the waiter.*

G203:   OK. Finish.

At the end of almost each utterance students invited their partners to take their turn. In most of the cases it helped their peer to overcome the communication gap. Although overgeneralized forms are still present, grammatically correct structures also occur. There is / there are structures are used well in contrast with Extract 1; in October

students used "have" to express existential clauses. The smooth flow of the dialogue is remarkable; they loop into one another's point.

Code switch is applied for requesting help. Extract 8 also shows how students helped one another, mostly by offering vocabulary items. I observed cooperation rather than competitiveness during the administration of the tasks.

4.3.1.2. Quiz questions task

The test booklets contain a task with ninety-nine quiz questions about different topics children are expected to be familiar with, as they are included in all teaching materials (see App. F-G). Two sets of questions were compiled to assess students' development. List of questions B is a slightly modified version of A; it comprises a few more complex questions. The task can be carried out in two different ways, according to the teachers' manual:

> Step 1: This is frontal class work; practice session. To make sure that all students know what the questions are, children take turns picking numbers randomly from a hat/box. Numbers are NOT put back. Child says/shows number, teacher asks the question, and student answers it.
>
> Step 2: This is a pair work task. Students work in pairs (A&B). Each pair has 99 numbers in a box/hat and a list of 99 questions. One student (A) draws a number, and asks the question on the list. The other student (B) answers it. B puts the number in his/her table and a tick or cross under it, if correct/incorrect. Then they swap and go on like this (B draws the number, asks the question, and A answers it).

I applied the first option, as second graders could not read out the questions to one another in English. According to the instructions of the test booklets, one point was given for each appropriate answer when list A was applied. Three questions were asked from each student; thus, the maximum score was 3. When List B was used the scoring system was different. Table 7 contains the assessment rubrics belonging to List B (see App G). I gave examples to how I applied the scoring system in the third column. The numbers indicate the number of questions of List B.

Table 7
Assessment rubrics for the quiz questions task with examples

3 points	The answer is appropriate and relevant; a sentence or so long; 1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	15'Hot chocolate and sandwich. And at home.' 21'I listen to pop music, because my mother likes it.'
2 points	The answer is appropriate and relevant; 2+ words long; 2 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	77'I, my mum buy food in Tesco.' 70'Lion and tiger.'
1 point	The answer is appropriate and relevant; 1or 2 words long; 2+ mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	5'Fish'
0 point	The answer is not relevant or more than 3 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	Not given

In October and January, test A was used, while in May test B was applied to assess students' development. As data in Table 8 indicates, all the students achieved maximum scores in January, so it was reasonable to move on to the more advanced list of questions. This change can be the reason for the decrease in their scores in May. Now let me analyze the students' answers at the three points of measurement: in October, January and May.

Table 8
Second graders' scores on the quiz questions tasks

	October, 2013 List A	January, 2014 List A	May, 2014 List B
B201	67%	100%	89%
G202	100%	100%	100%
G203	100%	100%	67%
B204	100%	100%	67%
B205	100%	100%	100%
B206	100%	100%	100%
G207	100%	100%	89%
B208	100%	100%	89%
G209	67%	100%	56%
Mean	*93%*	*100%*	*84%*
SD	*0.15*	*0.00*	*0.17*

Overall, the questions were very easy and all the students performed well. The SD indicated in Table 8 shows only minor differences between the achievements in October and January. The more difficult set of questions resulted in slightly higher SDs indicating more differences in students' proficiency. Although the scores decreased due to the higher requirements, obvious development in sentence formation can be seen in students' answers considering both grammar and vocabulary.

The difference between the SD in October and January reveals that whereas in October there were 2 students who received lower scores than their peers, in January all of them achieved maximum scores. More varied results can be observed in SD in October and in May. The higher SD shows that there was a slightly bigger difference between the achievements of the students in May than in October. The results in May show a more diverse picture about their achievement than the scores in October and in January. The scores of two students (B201 and G209) show development between October and

January, and a decrease in May. Three students (G202, B205 and B206) achieved maximum scores during the three assessment periods, whereas four students (G203, B204, G207 and B208) achieved lower scores in May after getting maximum scores in October and in January.

In October students typically gave one-word-utterances as answers. They did not get scores when they did not answer a question, but a single word was acceptable to earn a score. In most of the cases their answers revealed that they had understood the questions. However, it turned out after the assessment from the interviews that in some cases children did not answer because they did not understand the questions. As Extract 9 shows, students rarely asked for clarification and help when they did not understand the question. I realized I had to encourage them in class to ask for help or explanations if they did not understand something.

Extract 9

T: What clothes do you wear in spring?

G209:   T-shirt

T: How many brothers do you have?

G209:   (No answer)

T: Which animal can swim well?

G209:   Fish

T: Which is a domestic animal?

G209:   (No answer)

The interviews after the assessment revealed that the student was familiar with the vocabulary item *brother*, so the problem was not identifying what the question was about, whereas in case of the last question the term *domestic* was unfamiliar. So understanding the questions was the obstacle to giving answers.

As cooperation and engagement in communication was present on other tasks, I believe that me as the interlocutor must have also influenced G209's performance. After the task, when we discussed her performance and evaluated the task, it turned out that there was a misunderstanding between us, as G209 thought that she was not allowed to ask for help

or ask me to repeat of the question. As a follow up, I encouraged all students to ask for help if they needed it.

The next extract (10) is an interesting example of strategy use: B204 only understood parts of the first question and tried to answer it according to his best knowledge, thus he got the gist of the question. When he was given the chance to correct himself, he could do so. This proves that it is essential to encourage learners to engage in communication, because an on-going exchange will provide them with opportunities to make up for their lack of understanding.

Extract 10

T: What color is your favourite animal?

B204:   dog

T: Yes, and what color is a dog?

B204:   black or white.

T: What is your favourite fruit?

B204:   no favorite fruit

T: What is your favourite farm animal?

B204:   dog

In January students gave longer answers, although some grammar mistakes still occurred in most of the cases. The most frequent types of mistakes were omission of verb and subject; 'no favourite food'. Students generally started their answers with one- or two-word utterances and then they supplemented them with additional information. The reason underlying this change can be that I gave strong positive feedback for longer utterances knowing that List B requires longer utterances for higher scores. Positive feedback motivated them to try to express more ideas in connection with the questions even if they knew that at that point they did not get higher scores for this extra effort.

At this point I have to mention that during the lessons I did not ask my students to answer my questions in full sentences. I put emphasis on negotiating meaning which can be fulfilled with one-word utterances. Thus, they did not only negotiate meaning but kept the task requirements also in mind. It was quite surprising for them to change this practice when we started to use the other set of questions (List B) with the different scoring

system. At this point of the research I felt that the practice I applied for the sake of the assessment tool was not in line with the practice I would use otherwise as I asked my students to express themselves in full sentences even if they felt that one word would be enough to convey meaning.

In May with the more complex set of questions not only the length of the utterances but grammatical correctness and sentences with proper word order also gained more emphasis. The answers show that they consciously focused on using longer and correct utterances. This phenomenon suggests that as students knew that the longer and more appropriate their utterances were, the more points they received and they consciously used a strategy to expand their utterances for more scores. Extract 11 reveals that B205, a second grader concentrated strongly on giving some extra information to make his utterance longer about frogs and alligators relying on his background knowledge.

Extract 11

T: What sports do you do?

B205:   At school I have PE, after school I play tennis and walk my dog.

T: What is the color of frogs and of alligators?

B205:   Green and brown. They live near rivers. Elég ennyi? [Is it enough?]

T: What color do you dislike?

B205:   Brown and pink. And I like blue.

Extract 11 clearly demonstrates that B205, a highly successful learner in the class, managed to tailor his test-performance to the requirements I had explained to the class (i.e. need longer utterances); his utterance 'is this enough' shows his awareness of the requirements.

Extract 12 also reveals the effort students made to meet the requirements. G206's first answer to the question was a single-word utterance, perfectly suitable regarding task achievement. However, she added a longer utterance indicating both her knowledge of telling someone's name in third person/singular and the awareness of the requirements.

Extract 12

T: What's your father's name?

SG206: Zsolt. My father's name is Zsolt Kiss (pseudo-name)

T: When do you brush your teeth?

SG206: In the morning, after lunch and in the evening.

T: Think of something blue.

SG206: My pencil-case. My eyes are blue, too.

Although Extracts 13 and 14 show that in some cases the first answers lacked verbs these mistakes did not occur in the following utterances. The reason can be found in the initial anxiety these students may have felt at the beginning of the tasks.

Extract 13

T: What do you have for breakfast on Sundays?

B 201: Hot chocolate and sandwich. And at home.

T: What color are your friends' eyes?

B 201: I don't know. Blue or green or brown.

T: What are your three favourite farm animals?

B 201: I like dogs, cats and pigs.

Both Extract 14 and 15 include utterances where students' first attempts are hesitant, and both initial answers are followed by two completely correct and appropriate solutions. These also support my assumption that students might have felt anxious at the beginning of the task. Reducing anxiety during testing thus is very important as it can be debilitating and inhibiting.

Extract 15 reveals a typical mistake, the omission of the third person singular "s". As a matter of fact, in case of G202 this is not a frequently occurring mistake. In this extract it might be the result of the student's initial surprise at the question (i.e. She never buys, but her mother does)

Extract 14

T: What's your hobby?

SG203: No hobby.

T: Where do you like to go on Saturday and Sunday?

SG203: I go to my grandmother.

T: Where do you buy new clothes?

SG203: I buy clothes in H&M and Zara.

Extract 15

T: Where do you usually buy food?

G202:   I, my mum buy food in Tesco.

T: How can you travel from your place to a big town?

G202:   By car and bus. I can go by car.

T: How do you go to school every day?

G202:   I go to school by car.

Extract 16 nicely indicates how B204 improved by comparing his achievement to that of the previous assessment period (see Extract 10). He used full sentences, and he even supplemented his answers with additional information. Apart from the grammaticality of his answers, he also succeeded in asking for help when he did not understand the question.

Extract 16

T: How can you travel from your place to a big town?

B204:   By car, I go to school by car. Car is fast.

T: How often do you travel by bus?

B204:   I don't know. How often?

T: Yes. How often? Every day?

B204:   No, never.

T: When do you go to bed on weekends?

B204:   I watch a film…. aztán [after that].

As for the last question, instead of saying what time, he attempted to express his idea in more detail, and after realizing that he did not know the words and structures needed to fulfill his communicative intention, he switched to Hungarian.

4.3.1.3. Picture description tasks

Two different kinds of tasks were applied in the three assessment periods. In October and May children were asked to talk about a girl's timetable (see in App H and J), describing what they saw in small pictures showing different activities. Due to a misunderstanding in January a slightly different kind of task was applied. According to the teachers' booklet, this task was meant to be more difficult than the task applied in May. Students were to talk about a Christmas story in pictures (see in App I). They worked in pairs and talked about the pictures taking turns. Three pictures out of the 28 were described and scored when they talked about the girl's timetable, whereas four pictures were scored for each student when they talked about a Christmas day, according to the manual. Scoring is described in Table 9 according to the teachers' booklet.

Table 9

Assessment rubrics for the picture description task with examples

4 points	an appropriate and relevant description of the picture in one sentence; 0-1 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation. OR more than one sentence but 0-2 mistakes	'Dad cutting the Christmas tree' 'Father is very angry. Tree eldőlt [fell off]' 'No the family is in the living room and the Christmas tree is standing in the corner.'
3 points	an appropriate and relevant description of the picture in one sentence: 1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation. 2 or more than one sentence but 3 mistakes	'The cats in window, on window.' 'She is playing card.' 'She playing the guitar.'
2 points	a few appropriate and relevant words about the picture	'Hands in pocket' 'Decorate the tree.'
1 point	1 or 2 words relevant to the picture	'eat dog'
0 point	text is not relevant; or in Hungarian, or student says nothing.	Not given

The percentages in Table 10 show that children's achievements varied to some extent both in October and January (SD .15 and SD .21). This confirms my pervious observation that their proficiency and performances are rather varied. However, SD was much lower at the last point of assessment indicating that the group was more homogeneous, the previously somewhat larger differences decreased as a result of practice. Overall, students performed well.

Table 10
Second graders' scores on the picture description task

	October Appendix H	January Appendix I	May Appendix J
B201	50%	100%	100%
G202	75%	88%	100%
G203	25%	50%	92%
B204	25%	88%	75%
B205	100%	100%	100%
B206	100%	100%	100%
G207	100%	100%	100%
B208	75%	50%	100%
G209	83%	88%	100%
Mean	*70%*	*85%*	*96%*
SD	*0.15*	*0.21*	*0.08*

As Extract 17 shows, in October low achievers mainly used nouns or verbs in lists. While they used ing-forms, they consequently omitted the auxiliary "is" from the present continuous structure. They omitted subjects as well and this may reflect transfer from their L1, Hungarian. They had hardly any problems with vocabulary, however. Most of the word choices were relevant and appropriate to the situations.

Extract 17

JB204:   tennis, music, computer

G203:   guitar, singing, eat dog,

Their performance on the Christmas story was outstanding (see in App I). The reason for their high scores can be found in the fact that in December we talked a lot about Christmas, thus the relevant vocabulary had been revised before the assessment. Extract 18 shows

that B204 and B206 talked about the pictures with ease. They were engaged in conversation and conveyed meaning. It is interesting to observe that B204 achieved low scores in October, whereas in January he got maximum scores. The interview after the assessment revealed that he misunderstood the task and "collected" words about the pictures.

Extract 18

B204:   I can see the family in the living room.

B206:   The cats are watching the mother and the son. They are baking cakes. There is a Christmas tree on the wall.

B204:   They decorate the tree.

B206:   The family is singing. And the cats are singing too. Everybody is happy. Még [for now] (he is laughing).

B204:   Cats jumping is.

B206:   The father is very angry because the cats bombed (laughing) the tree.

B204:   The cats in the garden, not happy.

As opposed to Extract 18, in Extract 19 students switched to L1 when they needed help and when they corrected each other. Both peer and self-correction occurred suggesting that students felt comfortable in this kind of assessment situation.

Extract 19

B201:   Dad cutting the Christmas tree. Boy building gingerbread man.

SG209: Gingerbread? Az a mézeskalács. [That's gingerbread]

B201:   Snowman-t mondtam. [I said snowman]

G209:   Nem. [no] Na, mondom az enyém [Then, I'm saying mine.] Father, mother and children in the living room, and the tree.

B201:   Mother and boy making vagy [or] cooking gingerbread house. (Both laughing)

G209:   Decorate the tree. Stars and … stars. (Smiling) Ezt nem tudom [I don't know this; pointing to the decoration].

B201:   They singing, and the cat meowing. I can see presents under the tree.

G209:   Meowing ez nem angol. [Meowing is not in English].

B201:   Akkor mi? [Then what?]

G209:   Nem tudom. [I don't know]. One cat on the box, they jump on the tree.

B201:   Father is very angry. Tree eldőlt [fell over].

G209:   Cats are in the garden. It is cold.

"Be" as an auxiliary in the present continuous tense is used more often than in the previous assessment period and the utterances are more complex. Vocabulary related to the topic of Christmas was applied in their utterances. In my view, the fact that students used their L1 if they did not know how to express themselves indicates their desire to communicate their ideas.

In May the improvement was easily detectable in both grammar and vocabulary.

Extract 20

B204:   Sally playing piano.

Sally reading a book.

Sally playing the cat.

G207:   Sally is playing basketball.

Sally is giving apple to the hamster.

Sally is painting flowers.

Although *is* was still missing in some cases, the majority of the students used present continuous tense forms appropriately and expressed themselves accurately. Articles are used mostly correctly. Extracts 17, 18 and 20 show development of B204' performance over the year.

Table 11
Means of the three task types

	Spot the difference	Quiz questions	Picture description
October, 2013	67%	93%	70%
January, 2014	73%	100%	80%
May, 2014	81%	84%	96%
Mean	*73.6%*	*92.3%*	*82%*

Table 11 shows that students' overall performance was outstanding. Although in May I applied the more difficult list of questions, students' achievements were the best on the quiz questions. Gradual increase can be seen in their performance in the other two tasks over the year.

Findings in this section show that second graders improved to a considerable extent over the academic year. Besides enriching their vocabulary, they consciously used those structures they had become familiar with during the year. In May they turned to L1 in fewer cases and often asked for help if they needed an item in English. They also became more confident and more cooperative in pair-work. The three different task types activated students' knowledge in a way which allowed them to perform what they knew without getting frustrated about what they did not know.

4.3.2. Second-graders' task evaluation

According to the teachers' booklets, students are asked to evaluate the task from three aspects: (1) difficulty; (2) likability and (3) familiarity on a four-point Likert-scale. After the evaluation they were asked for their opinions in a group interview. In some cases, they commented in English, as they were encouraged to do so, but they used Hungarian overwhelmingly. The Hungarian comments are translated into English in the extracts. Table 12 contains the task numbers, the appendix numbers belonging to them and the month when they were applied.

Table 12
Tasks evaluated in the three assessments

	October, 2013	January, 2014	May, 2014
Spot the difference	Appendix C	Appendix D	Appendix E
Quiz questions	List A and Appendix F	List A and Appendix F	List B and Appendix G
Picture description	Appendix H	Appendix I	Appendix J

4.3.2.1. Task familiarity

In Figure 1, 2 and 3 the nine diagonal axes indicate the number and the code of the participants (e.g., G201 is the first girl in grade 2) and the four 'rings' show the level of familiarity, 1 meaning fully unfamiliar, 4 meaning fully familiar. Blue rhombuses refer to the first assessment period in October, red squares to the second one in January and green triangles to the third one in May. It is clear that all children's scores shifted towards the more familiar extreme over time. The patterns, however, are different. As Figure 1 reveals, except for a few cases, after the second assessment period, the majority of the students found the spot the difference tasks familiar. They mainly gave 1 in October and 4 in January and May. According to Figure 2 students found the quiz question tasks familiar

already during the second assessment period in January. Figure 3 indicates that in the case of the picture description task, students evaluated familiarity with 3 suggesting that they were aware of both the similarities and the differences between the two task types in October and January. Although in October they described a girl's time table, while in January they told a Christmas story, both were supported by pictures.
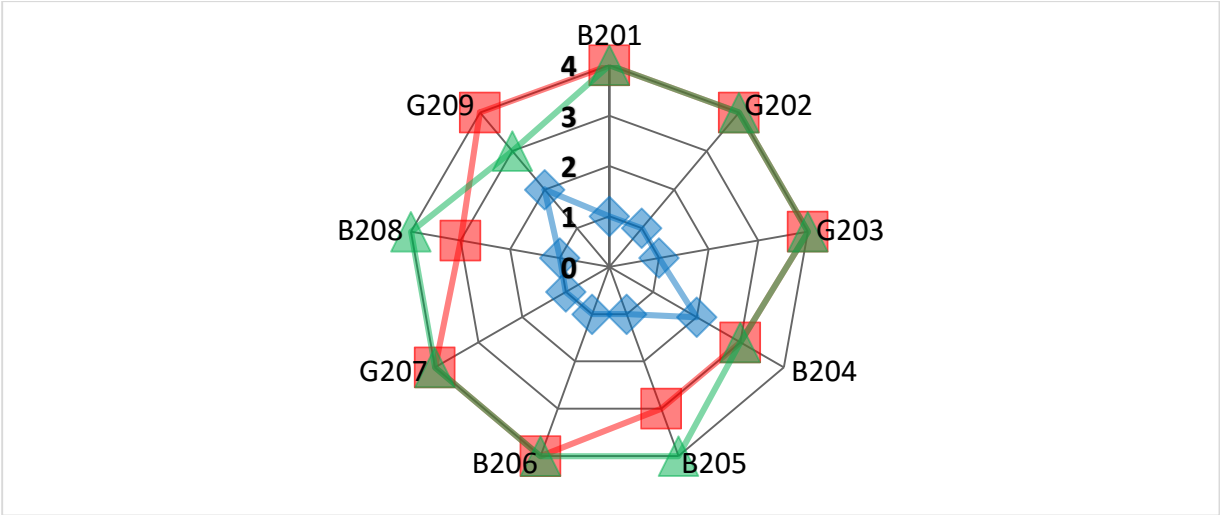
Figure 1. Second graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the spot-the-difference task
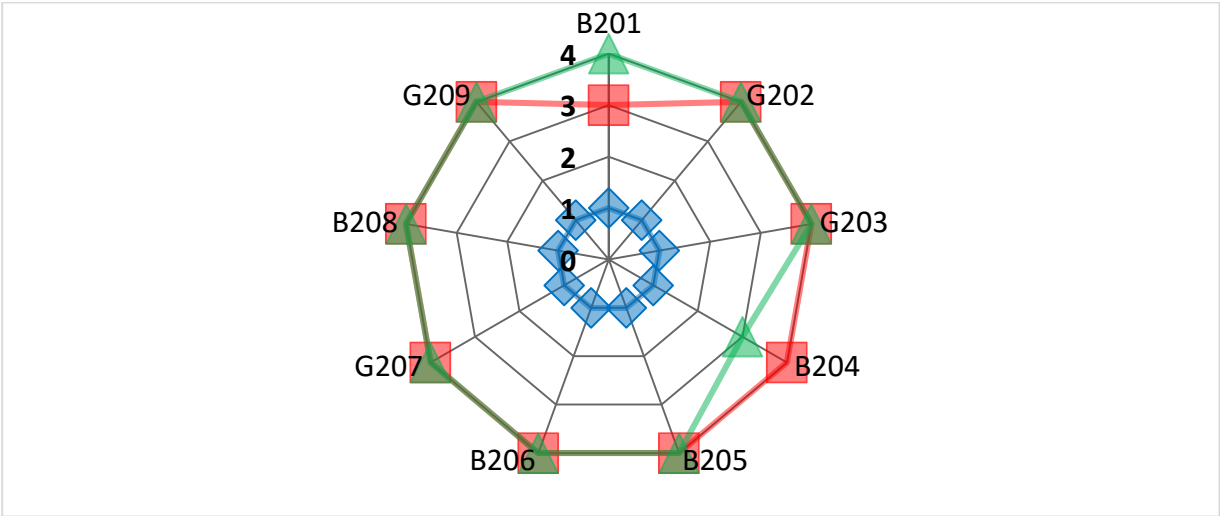
Figure 2. Second graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the quiz questions task
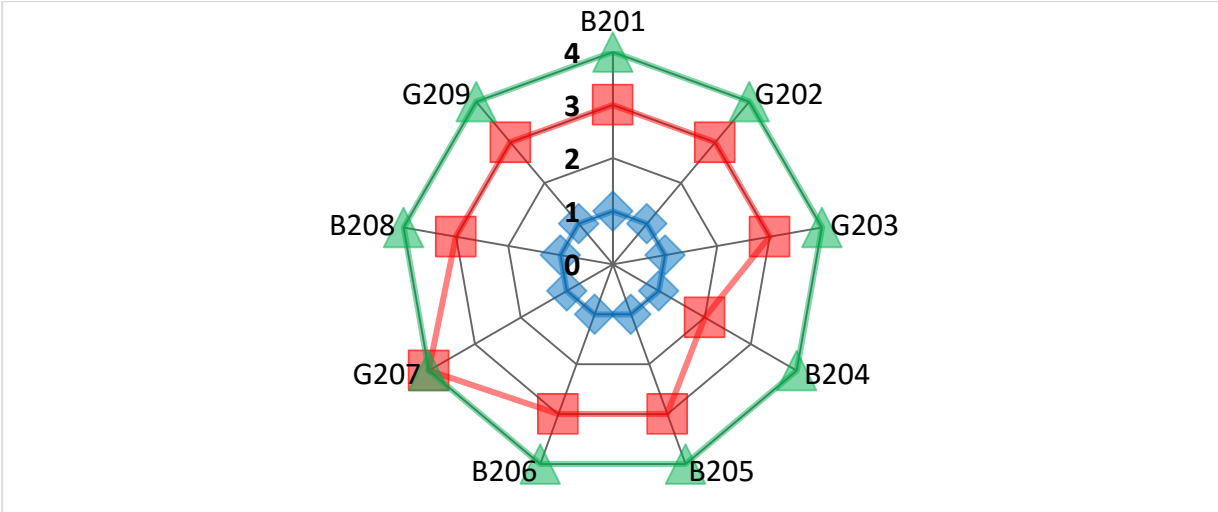
Figure 3. Second graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the picture description task

4.3.2.2. Task difficulty

Figures 4, 5 and 6 show how difficult students found the spot-the-difference tasks on the four-point Likert-scale in the three assessments. Similarly, to previous figures, the nine diagonal axes indicate the number and the code of the participants and the four 'rings' show the level of difficulty, 1 meaning very difficult, 4 meaning very easy. Blue rhombuses refer to the first assessment period in October, red squares to the second one in January and green triangles to the third one in May.
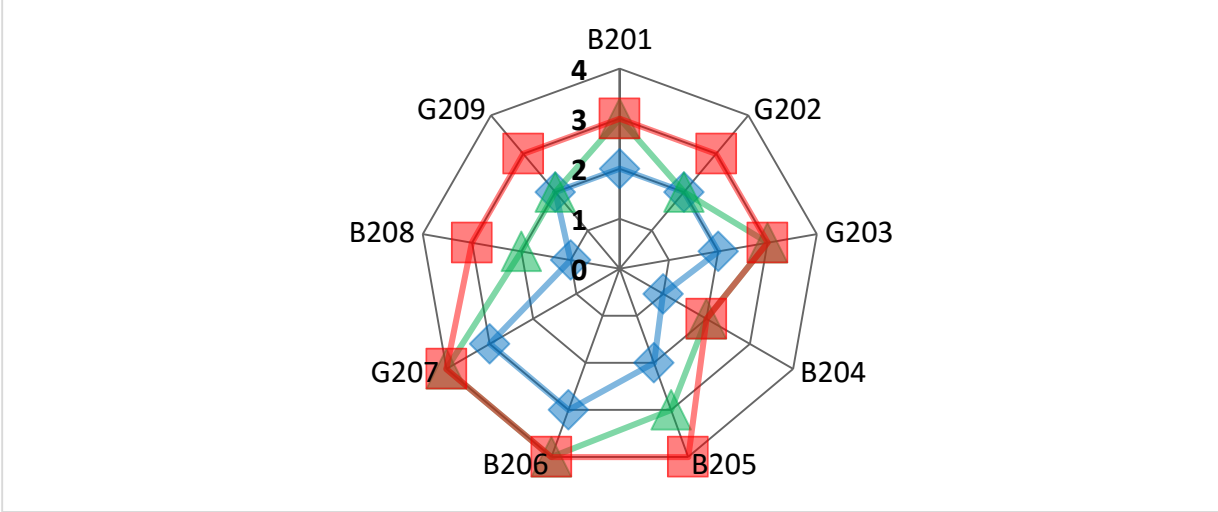
Figure 4. Second graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the spot-the-difference task
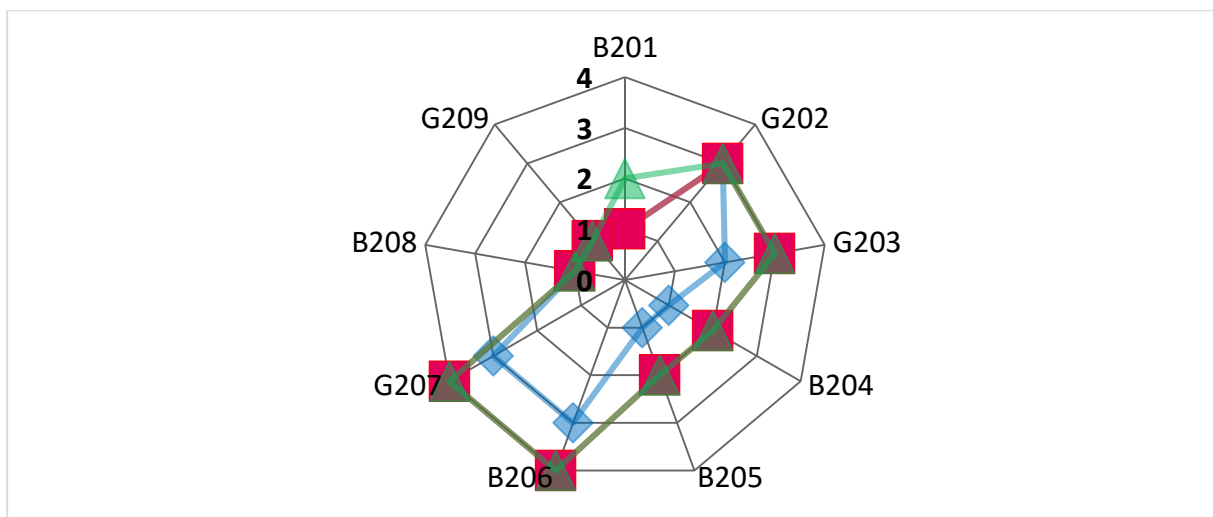
Figure 5. Second graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the quiz question task
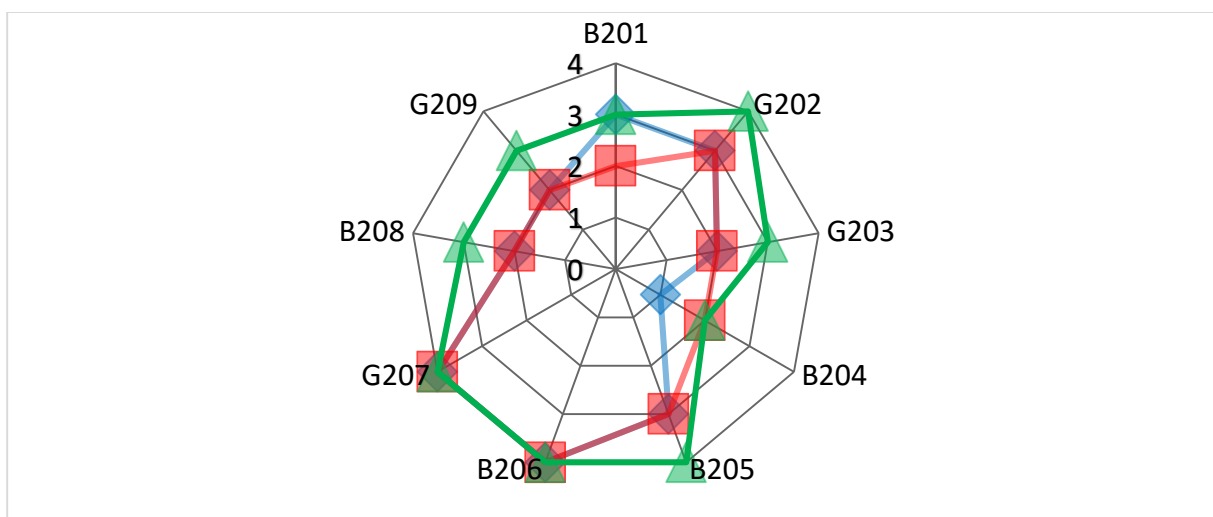
Figure 6. Second graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the picture description task

Comparing students' scores with the results of their evaluation about the difficulty of these tasks shows interesting patterns. The results and students' comments underlined that the topic and actual contents of the pictures determined how difficult the tasks were.

Extract 21

G202: A feladat nem nehéz, csak erről a képről nem lehet mit mondani. [The task itself is not difficult, but there is nothing to say about this picture.]

Thus, the tasks were not perceived easier as time went by, because students faced challenges to talk about slightly different pictures. Their comments also suggest that children evaluated the topic and the content of the pictures and they were not concerned about the task type.

Extract 22

G203: Sokkal egyszerűbb állatokról beszélni, mint a buszról vagy az étteremről. [It is much easier to talk about animals than about buses or the restaurant.]

Although two students, G206 and B207 did not find the tasks difficult in the first assessment and later in January and in May they considered them very easy, five students in the group evaluated the tasks with 2 or 3 indicating that they did find them very difficult. The reason for the difficulty in talking about the picture with the bus stops can be that they never or hardly ever travel by bus; thus, the situation suggested by the picture was unfamiliar for them.

Figure 5 clearly shows that although students achieved high scores in the first and second assessments on the quiz questions, only two of them evaluated the tasks easy. The reason can be the high level of anxiety due to the unexpected questions. Some comments from the follow-up interviews underlined this assumption.

Extract 23

G209: Nem szeretem, sose tudom, hogy milyen kérdést kapok [I don't like it. I never know what question I get.]

B201: Túl nehéz figyelni is, meg válaszolni is. [It is too difficult to listen and to answer as well.]

During the third assessment students' evaluation revealed that questions in list B meant real challenges for the students. Thus, they did not evaluate the task type, answering questions, but the actual content of the items in the list of questions. It is important to keep in mind that list B was not compiled for grade 2. I was my decision to apply it, as students achieved very high scores in the previous assessment period. As Extract 24 shows, the content of the questions was not age-appropriate for this group.

Extract 24

B204: Most hosszabbak és nehezebbek a kérdések. [Now (in May) the questions are longer and more difficult.]

As Figure 6 reveals, the majority of the students found the picture description tasks easier as time went by. Their evaluation concerning the second assessment in January suggests that although students achieved high scores on the Christmas story some of them found it difficult to recall the relevant vocabulary (see Extract 25). Anxiety can also be detected in their comments (see Extract 26).

Extract 25

G203:   Nem találtam a szavakat. [I couldn't find the words.]

Extract 26

G202:   Tudnom kellett volna a szavakat. Ideges voltam, mert tudom, hogy már tanultuk őket. [I should have known the words. I was nervous because I knew that we had learnt them.]

As a recurring issue, some students found it hard to figure out the story line from the drawings. Thus, they had critical remarks emphasizing that the drawings made the task difficult.

Extract 27

G209:   Én nem is értettem a történetet. Rondák a rajzok. [I didn't even understand the story. The drawings are ugly.]

Even if some students found the tasks difficult in some cases, they actively participated in the assessment and tried to do their best.

4.3.2.3. Task likability

The third aspect they had to evaluate was the extent to which they liked the task. On the four-point Likert-scale 1 means that they do not like the task at all and 4 means that they really enjoyed the task.
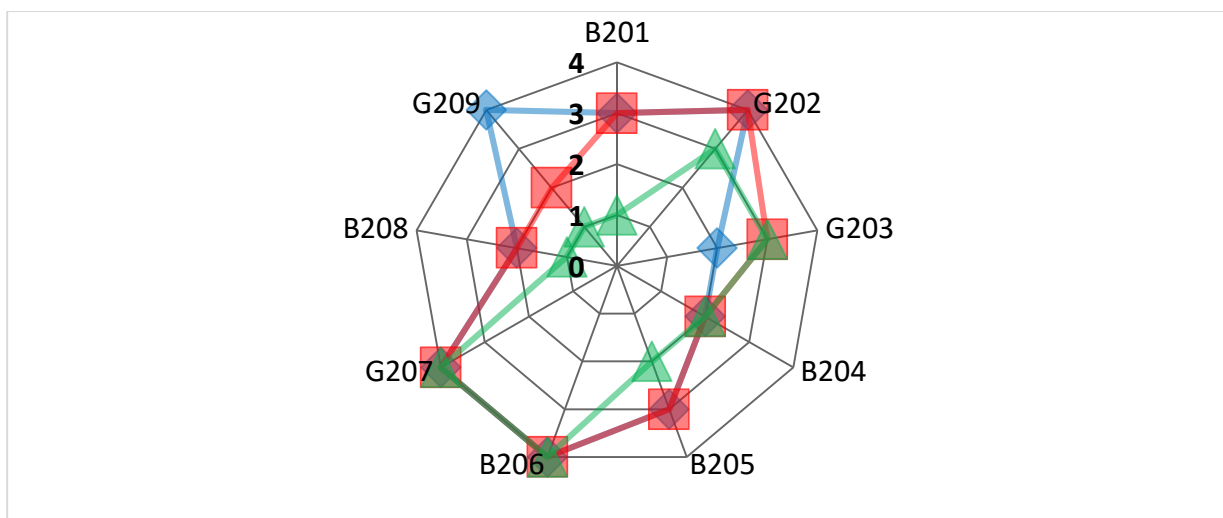
Figure 7. Second graders' evaluation of likability of the picture description task
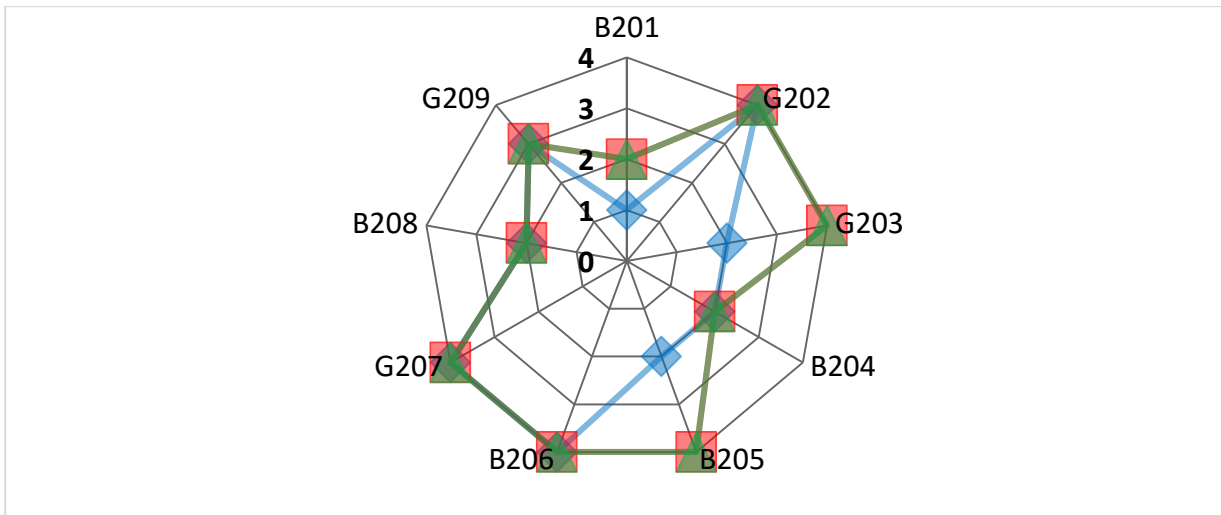
Figure 8. Second graders' evaluation of likability of the quiz question task
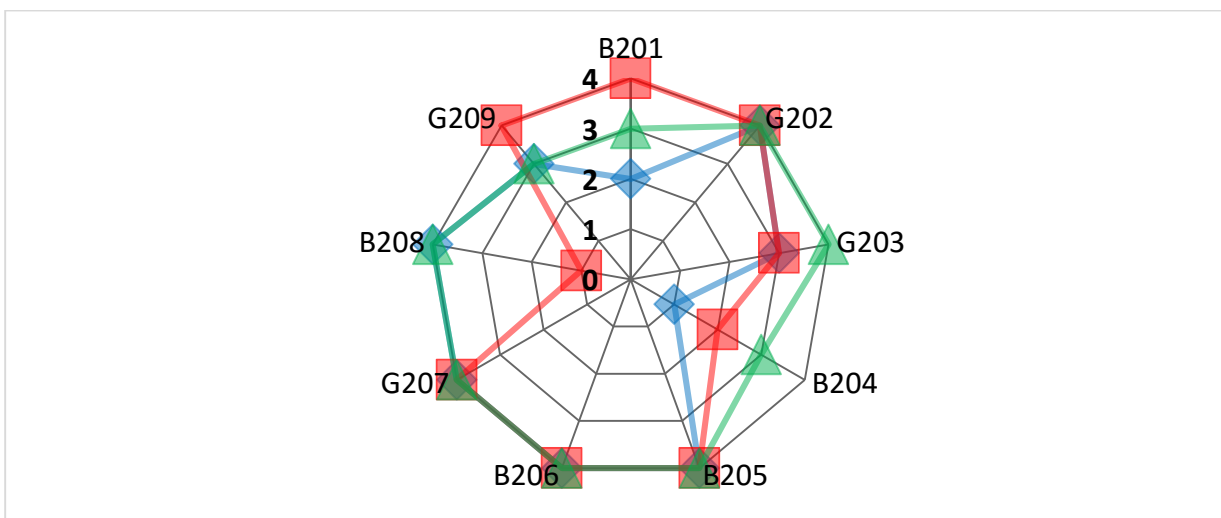
Figure 9. Second graders' evaluation of likability of the picture description task

As Figure 7 suggests the majority of the students liked the spot-the-difference task, although a decrease in the likability can be observed in the third assessment. This can be explained by the fact that students focused on the content of the task in that case. As Extract 28 shows, some students did not like the topic of the task because it was not age-appropriate, in their view. They had to compare to pictures showing a bus stop and some adults waiting there.

Extract 28

B208:   Nem tetszett ez a feladat, felnőttes a téma. [I didn't like this task; the topic is for adults].

On the whole, in spite of the above mentioned task, children had positive comments about the task type. They appreciated that spotting the difference was like a game, so they found it intrinsically motivating.

G203:   Olyan, mint egy játék, vicces. [It is like a game, funny.]

Figure 8 indicates that students' opinion on the quiz questions task varied to a great extent. Six students did not change their opinion about the task over the year. Three students liked the task type in October. Three students gave 4 in all the assessments. Two students gave 2 at all the three times of evaluation, indicating that they did not get to like them. One student evaluated the task with 3 over the year, stating that she was positive about the task.

Students' opinion varied according to the focus of their evaluation. B201, B204 and B208 found the questions difficult and highlighted that they did not like the task because they did not feel confident about doing them. Five of the students, on the other hand, found the task exciting, as they learnt a lot about each other, thus, they liked it, as Extract 29 underlines it.

Extract 29

G207:   Izgalmas, szeretem az osztálytársaimat hallgatni. [It is exciting; I am like listening to my classmates.]

Extract 30

B206:   Itt is olyan, mint egy kvíz az osztályról. [It is like a quiz about the class.]

As Figure 9 shows, the story telling task was popular with the students in the first assessment. The popularity of the task can be explained by the fact that students felt that the girl's life they described was similar to their lives.

B204:   Én is ezeket csinálom délután. [I do the same things in the afternoon.]

As Extracts 31 and 32 reveal, the girl's timetable and the Christmas story were fun to talk about; they made children feel successful, as was reflected in the high scores they achieved.

Extract 31

B208:   A karácsonyi történet vices volt, jó pontokat katam rá. [The Christmas story was funny, I got good point.]

Extract 32

G202:   Ez a lány vicces dolgokat csinál, jó elfoglalt. De tudtam minden szót. [This girl does funny things, she is quite busy. But I knew all the words.]

Apart from the task's high popularity critical remarks were also articulated (see Extract 33).

Extract 33

B201:   Nem értem, miért folyton egy lányról kell mondatokat mondanunk. A fiúk élete sokkal érdekesebb. [I don't understand why we always had to say sentences about girls. Boys have much more interesting lives.]

4.3.2.4. Conclusion

In this section I aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of students' opinions on three aspects of the assessment tasks. Data revealed that even if students found some tasks difficult, they liked them if they were funny and offered them an opportunity to perform well. They find pleasure in their mastery of the task, thus demonstrating their proficiency. Their comments reveal external intrinsic and mastery motivation. The tasks were cognitively challenging and doable.

4.3.3. Third-graders' achievement on 3 oral tests

4.3.3.1. Spot-the-difference task

The teachers' booklet described the task as follows:

> Work in pairs. Look at picture A and picture B. Student 1: Point to something in picture A and say what you can see. Student 2: find what Student 1 is pointing to and talking about in picture B. Say if it is the same (yes) or different (no). Then take turns. For example: Student 1 starts, "There are two bushes." Student B says, "No, there is one bush." Then it's B's turn to say something about picture B. Circle the differences you find.

The pictures used in the tasks can be seen in Appendix C-E. The teacher's booklet contains a detailed explanation of the scoring system. The teacher scores the task while the students work in pairs. Three turns are scored for each student. The scoring system was

the same as the ones introduced in the previous subchapter. Table 13 contains further examples illustrating the use of the assessment rubrics.

The spot-the-difference tasks in October were scored according to the first system, whereas in May they were scored according to the second system described in Table 14 according to the teachers' booklet. Three turns of each student's talk were assessed. Thus, the maximum score in October was nine points, and it was eighteen in January and in May.

Table 13
Assessment rubrics for the spot-the-difference task in October with examples

3 points	an appropriate and relevant statement with 0-1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation.	'Now it is your turn. Would you say a sentence, please.' 'The weather is sunny.'
2 points	an appropriate and relevant statement with 2-3 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'There is bike and ugly.' 'Man catches fish.'
1 point	an appropriate and relevant statement of one or two words with 1-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'A man horgászik. Mi az a horgászik? [What is fishing?].' 'Yes, dog, and yes cow.' 'Yes, ugly dog.'
0 point	says nothing or text is not relevant or in Hungarian	given for not saying anything

Table 14
Assessment rubrics for the spot-the-difference task in January and in May

6 or 5 points	an appropriate and relevant statement + question. 0-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation.	'I can see two young mans. One is playing with the mobile phone, the second is drinking coke or orange juice.'
4 points	an appropriate and relevant statement + question. 3-4 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'There are two man and one on the bus. You?'
3 points	either an appropriate and relevant statement or a question. 1-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'There are two man and one on the bus. You?' 'Reading and eating a hamburger.'
2 or 1 point	either an appropriate and relevant statement or a question. 3-4 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'Yes, no drinking and nem tudom [I don't know.]'
0 point	text is not relevant or more than 5 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation	given for not saying anything

The scores and the SD in October showed a diverse picture about the group indicating that there were large individual differences among the students. SD did not change over the year which indicates that the diverse achievement of the group both in January and in May. However, development can be observed in the case of eight students. The diverse performance of the group can be explained to a certain extent by their FLL backgrounds. G301, B305, G308 and G310 had learnt English prior to primary school or used English at home with their parents on a regular basis. B306 had Autism Spectrum Disorder and refused to respond in certain situations of communication. G303 and B309 had such a high level of learning related anxiety that in many cases they could not express themselves in their L1 either in the school environment.

Table 15
Third graders' scores on the spot-the-difference tasks

	October Appendix C	January Appendix D	May Appendix E
G301	78%	100%	89%
B302	44%	50%	50%
G303	33%	50%	67%
B304	67%	67%	50%
B305	100%	100%	94%
B306	0%	0%	0%
B307	56%	50%	67%
G308	100%	100%	100%
B309	33%	56%	67%
G310	89%	33%	89%
G311	67%	83%	78%
Mean	*61%*	*63&*	*67%*
SD	*0.31*	*0.32*	*0.31*

The group's scores in October on an oral English task met my expectations as their teacher. They mainly used one-word utterances and added many Hungarian words. Their utterances could be characterized by the lack of conscious use of tenses or grammar items.

Some students, for example, G308 and G310 outperformed their mates by applying grammatically correct three- and four-word-long utterances.

Extract 34

G303: One cow and one man. One dog and one bicikli, azt nem tudom angolul. [one bicycle but I don't know it in English] and sunny and foggy. Ennyi. [That's it].

G308: I have a goat, not a cow.

I have a dog and a bicycle.

And it is sunny and not foggy. Mutasd, hogyan ködös? [Show me what foggy looks like.]

G303: [shows her the picture].

Ez nem köd, hanem felhő. [It is not fog but a cloud.]

Nem mindegy? [Isn't it all the same?] (shrugging her shoulder)

In Extract 34, G303's utterances indicate that she was familiar with the words that the task required, but she could not arrange them into sentences, so omission characterizes her utterances. She commented on her own performance in L1 which most probably was a request for help. However, she did not wait for help, but went on expressing what she could in L2. Finally, she indicated the end of her utterance and gave the floor to G308. Although she used grammatically accurate utterances when she wanted to check the similarities between the two pictures, she used L1 indicating that her comment was off task. She corrected her peer in L1 thus making G303 upset and refuse to take part in the conversation. In this situation peer help did not work effectively and resulted in frustration, as a more proficient peer was seen as showing off rather than helpful.

In contrast with the previous case, in Extract, 35 B309 and G310 established a strategy to work more effectively. The strategy was figured out by B309 who was a less proficient student than B310. In spite of this, G310 let B309 made this decision most probably because she knew that SB309 was a very effective organizer in different classroom projects.

Extract 35

B309:   Mondjad a mondatokat, én majd javítom, ahogy nálam van a képen. [Say the sentences and I will correct them as they are in my picture.]

G310:   OK. There is a man.

B309:   Yes.

G310:   Man catches fish.

B309:   No fish.

G310:   There is a bicycle.

B309:   No.

G310:   What is there? A car?

B309:   No car. A school bag.

In the conversation peer-help can be observed when G310 tried to elicit meaningful utterances from B309 by asking back. She asked a relevant question, and when she did not get an answer, she uttered a word with rising intonation to help her peer. As a result, B309 could react appropriately. Both students' utterances are characterized by omission and lack of present continuous tense and the definite article. Although G310 used *there is* properly, she used it as a chunk without indicating location. B309 reacted to G310's utterances as if they were all questions.

The comments concerning the pictures of the spot-the-difference task in January showed that third graders, just like second graders, found the pictures difficult to talk about. Their scores also underlined their assumption. Extract 36 shows that B309 did not know what to say about the picture.

Extract 36

G301:   Tudnom kéne, hogy mi a megy és jön, az egyszerűbbé tenné ezt a feladatot. [I should know what go and come are, they would make this task very easy.]

B309:   Nem voltak érdekes részletek a képen. [There were no interesting details in these pictures.]

Although some parts of the sentences were missing, children responded to each other; thus, they could continue the conversation. As Extract 37 shows, in January students were able to maintain a conversation about the pictures, although they did not ask questions about their partners' pictures. G301 used the oversimplified question of *And you?* only

once to elicit an answer. Peer correction also occurred in the case of reading out numbers. Present Continuous tense was properly used by both students while B305 consequently used the plural form of *man* incorrectly.

Extract 37

G301:   I can see a bus stop. And you?

B305:   Yes, I can see a bus stop. And two men are standing in the stop.

G301:   Yes, two man. The old man is watching the newspaper and the young man is eating.

B305:   I can see two young mans. One is playing with the mobile phone, the second is drinking coke or orange juice.

G301:   OK. There is a bird on the bus board.

B305:   No, no bird. It's bus one, four, six, nine

G301:   It's two, two, nine, nine.

B305:   Mi? [What?] Looking at G301's picture. This is twenty-two and ninety-nine. There are two mans on the bus.

G301:   No, just one.

The utterances in Extract 38 show that the omission of the verb, mainly the copula characterizes them. B305's comment reveals that he found an unexpected difference, and immediately checked his peer.

Extract 38

SB302: I can see a bird on the board.

G303:   No, no bird. Two boys, and a bus.

B302:   Yes one old and one young and a bus. And a man on the bus.

G303:   Two boys on the bus.

B302:   One boy is reading and one boy is eating McDonalds.

G303:   Yes, no drinking and nem tudom [I don't know.]

B302:   And there is a bird.

G303:   Már mondtad. [You've said it.]

B302 applied a replacement strategy when he used the name of a well-known fast food chain to replace an unfamiliar word. G303 seemed to lose her temper after not knowing a

word and switching to L1. When B302 tried to go on with the conversation, he refused to continue it in L1.

After analyzing the transcripts, it became obvious that most of the students played a more active part in the conversation than they did in October. They paid attention to word order in their sentences. They used tenses and there is / there are structures as well. Extract 39 reveals that although they used Hungarian words when they asked for help, if they received help they could easily switch back to English.

Extract 39

G301:   There is a table in the middle. Yes?

B305:   Yes. There are three chairs. Yes?

G301:   No, there are two chairs. There are two girls near the table. Your picture?

B305:   No there are three girls at the table. Near or at?

G301:   Mi a különbség? [What's the difference?]

B305:   (Miming near and at by pointing to himself as at, and pointing to the student sitting nearby as near.)

G301:   Akkor at az enyém is. [Then mine is at too.] They are eating pizza and there is pizza on the table. What about you?

G305:   There is one pizza piece in the middle and the girls are drinking tea. Is there drinking in your picture?

G301:   No drink. The man is standing near the table, (correcting herself) at.

B305:   The man has long hair.

Extract 39 is a good example for peer help. B305 thought that the difference between the two pictures must have been in connection with the people's location in the picture, so he asked whether they were near or at the table. When G301 could not understand it, she asked for clarification in L1. B305 did not use L1 to help but explained the meaning of the two unfamiliar words by miming which was a common practice during the English lessons. His help seemed to be effective, as G301 corrected herself.

Turn-takings were proposed by using the overgeneralized form of yes with rising intonation and by asking the question What about you? B305 used drinking as a noun and combined it with a there is structure in interrogative word order to ask about the actions

happening in the picture. She could elicit a meaningful but ungrammatical answer from her peer. Thus they could maintain communication.

Extract 40 reveals planning of conscious strategy use suggested by G311. The utterances show that G311 was aware of her knowledge of the there is / there are structure and the use of Present Continuous tense for picture description. Thus, she suggested listing the objects first to be able to use these familiar structures. Her second utterance applied a replacement strategy when she noticed the gap caused by not being able to recall the word man. The intention to use Present Continuous tense was clear although is / are or the ing ending was omitted in some cases. 'And you?' a simplified form was used to elicit further information, to initiate turn taking and to maintain conversation.

Extract 40

G311:   Kezdjük a tárgyakkal! [Let's start with the objects.] There is a table, there are three windows and there is a door.

G303:   Carpet. You?

C311:   No. There are two mothers and a (hesitating), a old boy.

G303:   People, nem nem tudom a férfit. [no, no I don't know man.] De van nekem is. But I have one too.

T: In English, please. That is a man. A waiter who works in a restaurant.

G303:   The mothers are sit and the man standing. Mother's drinking tea. And you?

G311:   The mothers are eating pizza. They aren't drinking. The man, yes, is standing and watching. And in your picture?

G303:   Yes, he watching. There is a flower. And you?

4.3.3.2. Quiz questions task

The two sets of questions can be seen in Appendix F-G. I applied the more difficult set of questions, List B, in January and May. Although the students found this task difficult in October, by January their development made me assume that they would be able to work with the second set. Looking at their relatively high scores, I found this decision justifiable. The higher SD (0.38) was due to two students who refused to answer the questions for the first time and the ones achieving maximum scores.

Table 16
Third graders' scores on the quiz questions task

	October List A	January List B	May List B
G301	100%	100%	100%
B302	67%	89%	78%
G303	0%	67%	67%
B304	67%	67%	100%
B305	100%	100%	33%
B306	0%	33%	78%
B307	100%	22%	100%
G308	100%	78%	67%
B309	67%	22%	100%
G310	67%	44%	56%
SG311	100%	33%	78%
Mean	*70%*	*60%*	*78%*
SD	*0.38*	*0.3*	*0.20*

As reading is introduced in third grade in our school, in October I read the questions to the students who worked in pairs. I asked them to work in pairs to let them help each other if they can and want to. The scoring system was similar to that of applied with the second graders. Table 17 contains the description of the scoring system and some examples. The numbers indicate the number of questions of List B (see App G).

Table 17

Assessment rubrics for the quiz questions task with examples

3 points	The answer is appropriate and relevant; a sentence or so long; 1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	39'My favourite fruits are apples, bananas and strawberries. 25'He plays computer games always. And we watch TV.' 10'I don't like football, because boring and box because dangerous.'
2 points	The answer is appropriate and relevant; 2+ words long; 2 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	29'Reading newspaper.' 24'Four; I, my mother, my father and my sister.'
1 point	The answer is appropriate and relevant; 1or 2 words long; 2+ mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	89'I like no go' 23'Judo'
0 point	The answer is not relevant or more than 3 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	'Nem értem ezt a hosszút. [I don't understand this long one]'

Extract 41 shows the performance of G303 who received 0 points as she could not give relevant answers in English. However, her answer to the last question indicates that she understood the question.

Extract 41

T: What's your favourite story?

B302:   (Making faces. Laughing.) Little Red Riding Hood.

T: When do you go to bed on weekends?

B302:   no answer, hesitating

T: (Rephrasing and miming) When do you go to sleep on Sundays?

B302:   aha, at night.

T: Think of something green.

B302:   green apple

T: Who is your favourite singer?

G303:   no answer

T: What's your favourite drink?

G303:   no answer (T mimes drinking)

G303:   No thank you.

T: Think of something pink.

G303:   Points to her pencil case.

By January the students had become more confident communicators and used more complex sentences. However, they still often switched to Hungarian when they could not express themselves in English. I decided to read out the questions as I felt that they got frustrated when they had to read aloud.

Extract 42

T: What are your three favourite domestic animals and why?

B302:   My favorite domestic animals are dogs, hamsters and tortoises. And small.

T: What is your favourite song and why?

B302:   My song (waiting) nem tudom [I don't know] Lehet magyar? [Can it be Hungarian.]

T: Yes, of course.

Ja nem, Patty Shukla színes. [Oh, no. Patty Shukla, color song] (a song from the English lessons by Patty Shukla who is a singer-teacher.)

T: Thank you. (smiling) And why?

B302:   shrugging his shoulders

T: What is your favourite school subject and why?

B302:   Maths, no, no English. (laughing)

T: Thank you, thank you. (laughing) Why?

B302:   Teacher (laughing)

T: How many lessons do you have a day?

G303:   Five or six lessons.

T: Where would you like to travel next year and why?

G303:   I don't understand.

T: How often do you ride a bicycle and why?

G303:   Sometimes. What why? I like it.

T: What do you like to do in your winter holidays?

G303:   I Iike to go to my grandmother.

Students' development in their L2 proficiency is obvious especially in the case of G303. Extract 42 shows that learners reacted to all the questions even if they did not know the answer. They asked questions to keep up the conversation. The utterances conveyed meaning. The funny hints of B302 suggest that he felt more relaxed during the assessment than in October. G303's utterances were appropriate and grammatically correct. Cooperation between the two students did not occur, most probably due to my active participation in the activity. The lower scores are due to the higher requirements of the second set of questions.

In May three students (B307, B309 and B310) asked to use the first set of questions as they considered it more appropriate to their knowledge. All of them achieved higher scores in October than in January. I treated this request as an important step in their SA and let them use the questions they wanted to use. It is important to know that these students were very enthusiastic in the lessons and actively took part in the assessments. However, their learning difficulties (attention deficit) made their development slower. Their scores are introduced in percentages as well, thus, they can be compared and contrasted with their previous achievements and with those of their peers. In some cases, (B304 and B306) development can be seen considering the complexity of the sentences, however, some students still used their L1 dominantly. The questions in the third assessment period were read by the partners. I had some additional questions to check their understanding and to elicit more communication.

Extract 43

G311:   What is your favourite word in English?

G310:   Cupcake. Mert van értelme. [Cause it makes sense.]

T: What do you mean?

G310:   Olyan süti, mint egy csésze. [It's a cake, like a cup.]

G311:   How old is your grandfather or grandmother?

G310:   Fifty.

T: Sure? (Writing the number on the board)

G310:   No, sixty. Vagy nem tudom, csak úgy válaszoltam valamit. [Or I don't know. I just said something.]

G311:   What fruits don't you like?

G310:   I don't like grapefruit.

G310:   Where do you like to go on a Saturday or Sunday?

G311:   Tordas.

T: Why do you like going there?

G 311: Because the cats are there.

G310:   How many friends do you have at school?

G 311: I have three best friends and four good friends.

G310:   How often do you go to the cinema?

G 311: My birthday and sometimes at the weekend.

T: What did you last see?

G311:   Rio.

Students' utterances were appropriate in the assessment of the quiz questions. In May they switched to Hungarian fewer times and did not find it difficult to read the questions to each other. Cooperation between the partners was constant as they concentrated on each other to be able to carry out the task. In some cases, they asked their partner in Hungarian to read the question again so as to understand it. Minor grammar mistakes characterized the utterances, which means the students applied verbs, articles and prepositions mostly correctly in May as opposed to the previous assessment periods. Students' consciously used strategies to give appropriate answers. They did not insist on the truth if they could not express it. They said that it was more important to them to say something appropriate than to tell the truth.

4.3.3.3. Picture description task

Similarly to the second graders, third graders were given two different kinds of tasks in the three assessment periods. In October and May children talked about a girl's timetable, describing what they saw in small pictures showing different activities. In January they told a Christmas story they could see in pictures (see App H-J). The same scoring system was applied as in the case of second graders (see Table 9).

Table 18
Assessment rubrics for the picture description task with examples

4 points	an appropriate and relevant description of the picture in one sentence; 0-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation. OR more than one sentence but 0-2 mistakes	'The old man is cutting a tree. There is a house in the corner. The boy is making a snowball. 'She reading a book, she playing the guitar.'
3 points	an appropriate and relevant description of the picture in one sentence: 1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation. 2 or more than one sentence but 3 mistakes	'The cats are afraid. There is messy.' 'There is a family. And Christmas tree.'
2 points	a few appropriate and relevant words about the picture	'Monday, Sally and guitar.'
1 point	1 or 2 words relevant to the picture	'The boy csinál egy snowman-t. [is making a snowman] tennis.' 'Sally photot.'
0 point	text is not relevant; or in Hungarian, or student says nothing.	'Given for not saying anything.'

A diverse picture can be seen in the achievements (see Table 19). The SD also indicates the differences among the scores. While some students could easily use long, appropriate and grammatically correct utterances, some of them could name the objects in the pictures, and used mainly nouns. In spite of these differences most children could do the task successfully. B 306, the boy with ASD, refused to take part in these tasks as he did not find them useful. Due to the rigidity of his thinking, his refusal of certain situations and tasks is accepted in the lessons.

Table 19
Third graders' scores on the picture description task

	October Appendix H	January Appendix I	May Appendix J
G301	92%	89%	100%
B302	50%	50%	92%
G303	83%	67%	75%
B304	25%	50%	92%
B305	92%	94%	92%
B306	0%	0%	0%
B307	42%	67%	75%
G308	100%	100%	100%
B 309	0%	67%	75%
SG310	92%	89%	92%
G311	75%	78%	100%
Mean	*59%*	*67%*	*81%*
SD	*0.38*	*0.28*	*0.29*

Extract 44 reveals that although students listened to each other there was no interaction. They did not make comments on the task, they concentrated on expressing the most important feature of the pictures. Self-correction occurred but students did not help each other.

Extract 44

G301:   Sally is playing tennis. No Sunday.

        Sally is dances.

        Sally is horsing.

B304: Sally and guitar.

Sally and cards.

Wednesday Sally and dog. Small.

B305: Sally is walking in the park.

Sally is eating the dog. No not eating. Eteti, de mi az? [Feeding, but what's that?]

Sally is hiking in mountains.

Higher scores were achieved in January when the students told a Christmas story. Their performance was more balanced than in October as the SD (.28) indicates. They eagerly carried out the tasks and they were engaged in meaningful conversation. Extract 45 shows that G308 and B305 used English fluently. Their utterances conveyed meaning

Extract 45

G308: The old man is cutting a tree. There is a house in the corner. The boy is making a snowball.

B305: A snowman.

G308: Yes, snowman. Ez most hiba? [Is it a mistake now?]

T: No, you are doing really well.

B305: The family is in the room. They are watching the tree. The tree is big and white. (Laughing. G301 does not understand why B 305 is laughing, she is confused)

G308: Mi van? [What's that?]

B305: Nothing. (Looking at T's reaction)

T: Look at the picture. B305 said that the tree was white. Of course it is white as it is a black and white picture. (G301 nods)

G308: They are making gingerbread. The cats are sitting in the window. The cats are white. (They laugh)

B305: They are decorating the tree. The tree is tall. The cat is black and white. (They laugh).

G308: The family and the cats are singing.

B305: (interrupting) singing White Christmas. (Laughing)

T: (to G308) It is a famous song. (Smiling) Go on.

G 308: The tree is nice. There are gingerbread stars on the tree.

B305: The cats are attacking the tree. They are tigers now.

G308: The father is angry and sad. The cats are afraid. There is messy.

B305: Mess. The penalty (thinking), no. The cats are out. Dad said: Get lost cats!

B305 concluded about this task, 'we can have stories on Christmas, Easter, nice places in Budapest because we know all those words. 'Although they turned to L1 in some cases, they helped and corrected each other in English. Referring to the song 'White Christmas' clearly shows that students shared the same knowledge of English songs. Pair work thus seemed to be effective and suitable for communicative purposes. However, as Extract 46 shows, there were some conflicts when my help was needed to settle the situation. The boys relied on my help when they couldn't find the words they wanted to use. Due to their conflict they did not help each other, thus, they could not engage in a meaningful conversation.

Extract 46

B302: Nem értem a párom, ez nem igazság, hogy egy csomót kell rá várnom. [I can't understand my partner, it is not fair. I have to wait a lot.]

B304: The father cut the tree. It's cold.

B302: The boy csinál egy snowman-t. [is making a snowman]

B304: A sajátodról beszélj! [Talk about yours.]

B 302: There is a family. And Christmas tree.

B304: Ezt nem tudom. Valamit néznek a macskák. A lány meg kezet mos [I don't know this. The cats are watching something. The girl is washing her hands]. Wash hands. És a fiú játszik. [The boy is playing]. Plays.

B 302: Ne beszélj magyarul! [Don't use Hungarian.]

B 304: Hagyjál már. [Leave me alone]

B302: The mother and the father (looking at T for help)

T: are decorating

B302: the tree. The cat sitting near the tree.

B304: Christmas tree and presents. They is, no, are singing.

B 302: The cats (looking at T for help)

T: What are they doing? Are they sleeping, eating, jumping or playing?

B302: Playing.

B304: The father afraid… (looking at T for help)

T: (miming being afraid by chewing her finger nails) Afraid? Are you sure?

B304: No. Akkor nem tudom. [I don't know then] The cats afraid.

T: Yes, they are. The man is angry.

B302: Happy end. Tree is nice.

In May, except for two the students, everybody achieved better scores than before. They were familiar with the task type thus they felt comfortable while working with it. However, three boys resented that they had to talk about a girl's day again. G 311 found that 'the pictures about the girl were boring. She has such and ordinary life.' However, they took part in the activities and tried to do their best. As B 307 commented, 'I have to get good scores as we have done this task before.'

Extract 47

B302:   Clara is playing computer games.
        Clara is draw.
        Clara is walking the dog.
G311:   Clara is playing the guitar.
        Clara is playing the piano.
        Clara is playing the violin.

While the sentences were mainly grammatically correct, this task did not give a picture about their vocabulary development. They focused on the most characteristic word when describing the picture and used words they were familiar with in October. This way they could get high scores without using new vocabulary items.

The improvement in third graders' proficiency was detectable over an academic year. Their SA also reflected it. The most outstanding achievement however occurred in their willingness to communicate and SA. Cooperation between some students worked well, whereas it was hard for others to accept that they had to work together and rely on their peers. Analyzing students' self-correction and their requests for help during the tasks accuracy seemed to be of high priority, most probably due to my reactions. Although they participated actively and effectively, they were very critical about the tests. They mostly criticized the quality of the drawings and the usefulness of the tasks. They claimed that the tasks did not elicit meaningful and challenging dialogues. In the lessons they really enjoyed performing situations such as, shopping, eating out, asking for help in different situations. They found these activities useful.

4.3.4. Third-graders' task evaluation

Third graders also evaluated the tasks according to: (1) familiarity; (2) difficulty and (3) likability. After the assessment of their performances I asked them to score the tasks on

the task sheet and encouraged them to comment on them. They mainly did so in Hungarian. Their comments are translated into English in the extracts. Table 20 contains the number of the tasks evaluated and their appendix number.

Table 20
Tasks evaluated in the three assessments

	October, 2013	January, 2014	May, 2014
Spot the difference	Appendix C	Appendix D	Appendix E
Quiz questions	Appendix F	Appendix G	Appendix G
Picture description	Appendix H	Appendix I	Appendix J

4.3.4.1. Task familiarity

In Figures 10, 11 and 12 the eleven diagonal axes indicate the number and the code of the participants (e.g., G301 is the first boy in grade 3) and the four 'rings' show the level of familiarity (1 is fully unfamiliar, 4 is fully familiar). Blue rhombuses refer to the first assessment period in October, red squares to the second one in January and green triangles to the third one in May. It is clear that all children's scores shifted towards the more familiar extreme over time.

Figure 10. Third graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the spot-the-difference task

Figure 11. Third graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the quiz questions task

Figure 12. Third graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the picture description task

Similarly, to the second graders, the evaluation of task familiarity, except for a few cases, revealed that after the first assessment period, the majority of the students found the tasks unfamiliar. Thus, they mainly gave 1 in October and 4 (fully familiar) in January and May. Figure 10 reveals that three students gave 3 for the spot-the-difference task after the second assessment period. Two of them explained later that they thought 'familiar' meant that the pictures were the same as the ones in October. Figure 11 indicates that the quiz questions task was familiar to the students in January and in May as well as Figure 12 shows. In the case of the picture description task, students evaluated familiarity with 3 suggesting that they realized both the similarities and the differences between the two task types in October and January. Although in October they described a girl's time table, while in January they told a Christmas story, both were supported by pictures.

4.3.4.2. Task difficulty

Figures 13, 14 and 15 show how difficult third graders found the spot-the-difference task on the four-point Likert-scale at the three assessment points. Similarly, to previous figures, the nine diagonal axes indicate the number and the code of the participants and the four 'rings' show the level of difficulty, 1 meaning very difficult, 4 meaning easy. Blue rhombuses refer to the first assessment period in October, red squares to the second one in January and green triangles to the third one in May.

Figure 13. Third graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the task spot-the- difference task

Figure 14. Third graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the quiz question task
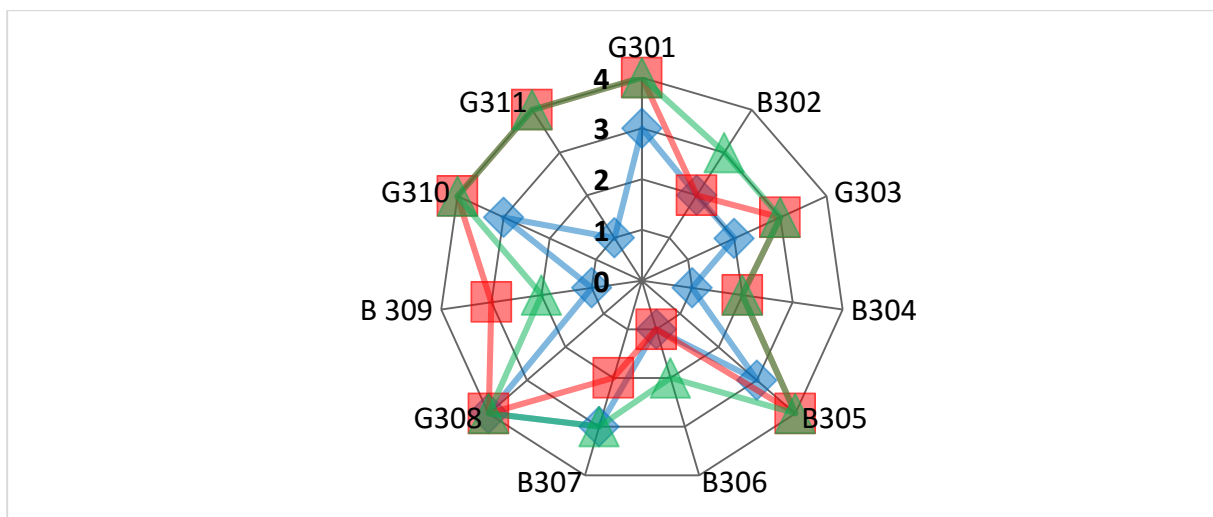
Figure 15. Third graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the picture description task

In the case of nine third-graders a gradual decrease in difficulty can be observed regardless of the topic of the picture. Five of them found the tasks easy after the third assessment period whereas six of them considered them difficult to a certain extent; three gave 2 and three gave 1. Comparing their scores on the tasks with their opinion about the difficulty of the same tasks, when higher scores are achieved the tasks are considered less difficult or not difficult at all. Students' comments in Extract. 48 and 49 revealed that they found those pictures easy to talk about which reminded them of stories we used prior to the assessment.

Extract 48

B307:   Olyan képeket kéne összehasonlítani, amik a történetek illusztrációi. [We should compare the illustrations of the stories.]

Extract 49

G308:   Ez kép olyan mint a Brémai muzsikusok, könnyű volt róla beszélni. [This picture looks like the one in the Musicians of Bremen. It was easy to talk about.]

Students' opinion on the difficulty of the quiz questions task shows a diverse picture. Only four students found the task easy after the third assessment, in spite of the groups's improving achievements. Their comments may help understand this seemingly contradictory feature.

Extract 50

G301:   A kérdések nem nehezek, de megérteni a párunkat és koncentrálni a nyelvtanra, meg mindenre, az nem könnyű [The questions are not difficult but to understand our partner and to concentrate on grammar and everything is not easy.]

Extract 51

B309:   Nehéz figyelni az angolra, mert jobban érdekelnek a válaszok, inkább beszélnék ezekről magyarul. Ezért nehéz. [It is hard to pay attention to English because I am more interested in the answers and I would rather speak about these in Hungarian. That's why it is difficult.]

Extract 52, on the other hand, shows that B302 found the task difficult because it was hard for him to understand the questions. Extract 50, 51 and 52 reveal that students had a high level of strategic awareness.

Extract 52

B302:   Gyakran úgy érzem, hogy nem értem jól a kérdéseket. [I often feel that I do not understand the questions well.]

Three students found the Christmas story, indicated by the red squares, difficult giving 1 or 2 to the level of difficulty. Extract 53 shows that as the pictures are rich in details, B 302 felt confused to find the right words.

Extract 53

B302:   Nem tudtam az szavakat, amikkel le tudtam volna jól írni a képet. [I did not know the words to describe the pictures well.]

It was difficult to find out why three students stated that the picture description task was difficult in May, although two of them achieved much higher scores than in October. It turned out that B304 and B309 found the task difficult because of their partners. The drawbacks of pair work were detectable in the assessment of these students. They could not cooperate with their partners and wanted to work with me. The evaluation of the tasks made it obvious for me that they would have needed my help to feel confident enough to speak about the pictures and the stories.

4.3.4.3. Task likability

Although the students actively participated in the three assessments, they were highly critical about the tasks.
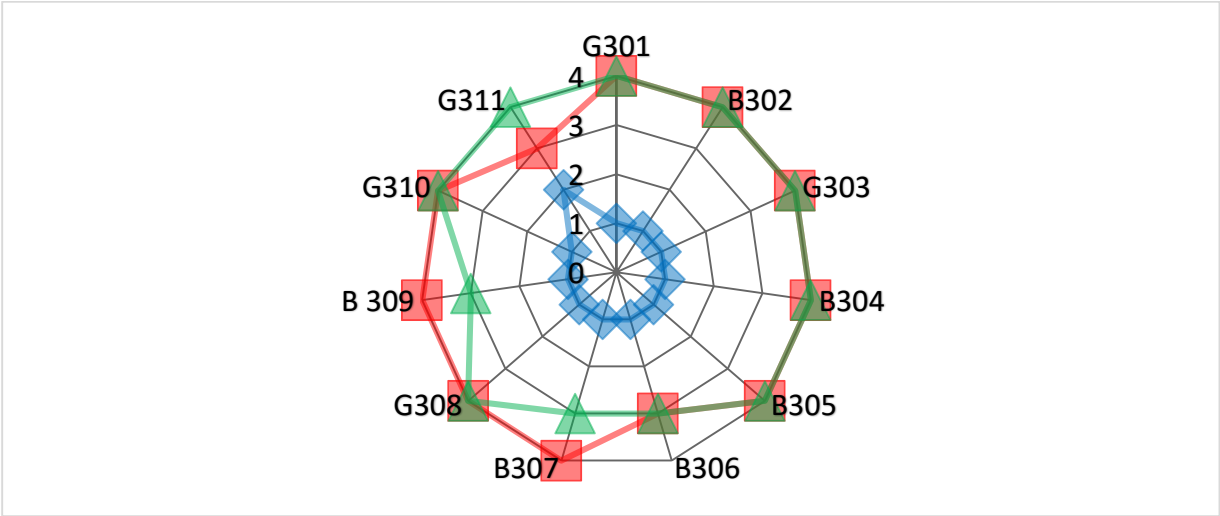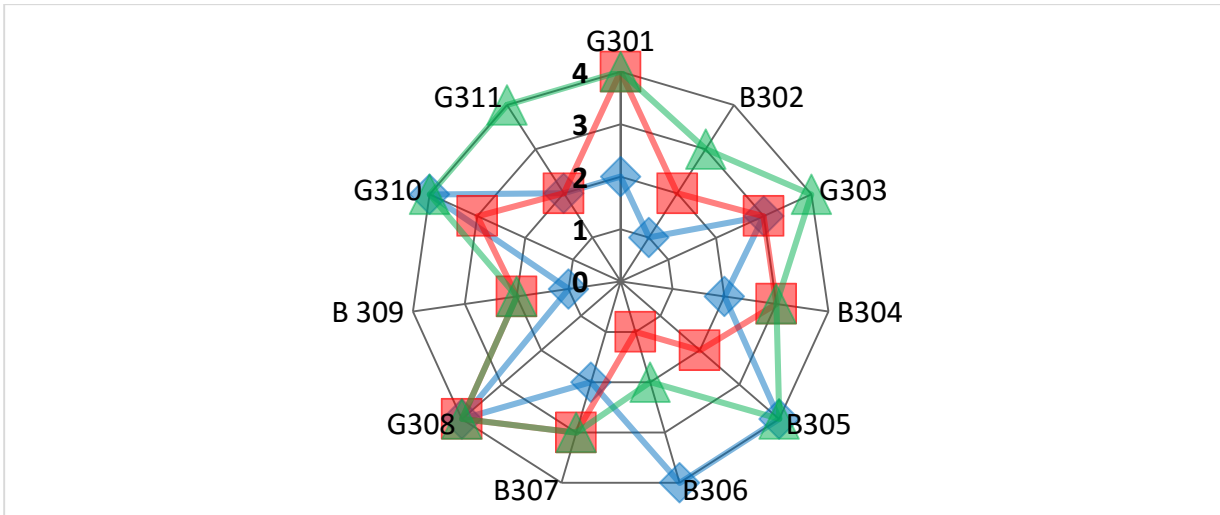
Figure 16. Third graders' evaluation of task likability of the spot-the-difference task
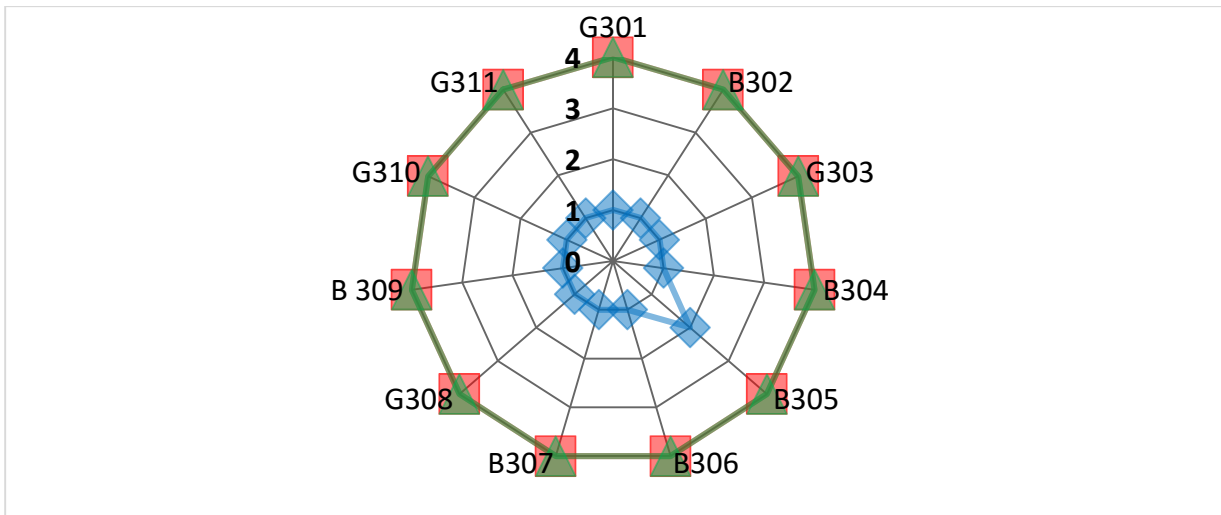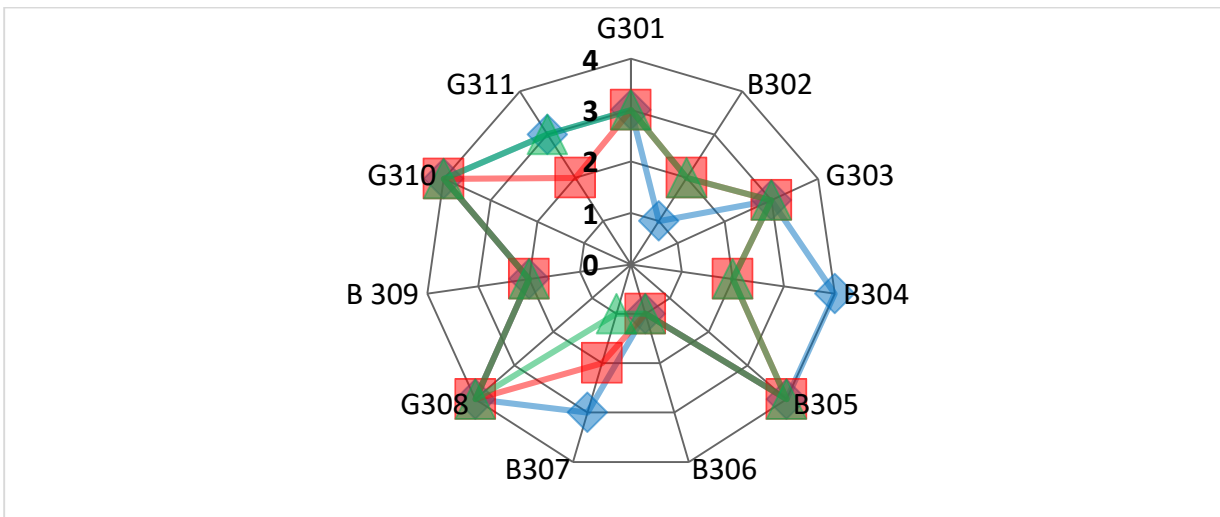

Figure 17. Third graders' evaluation of task likability of the quiz questions task
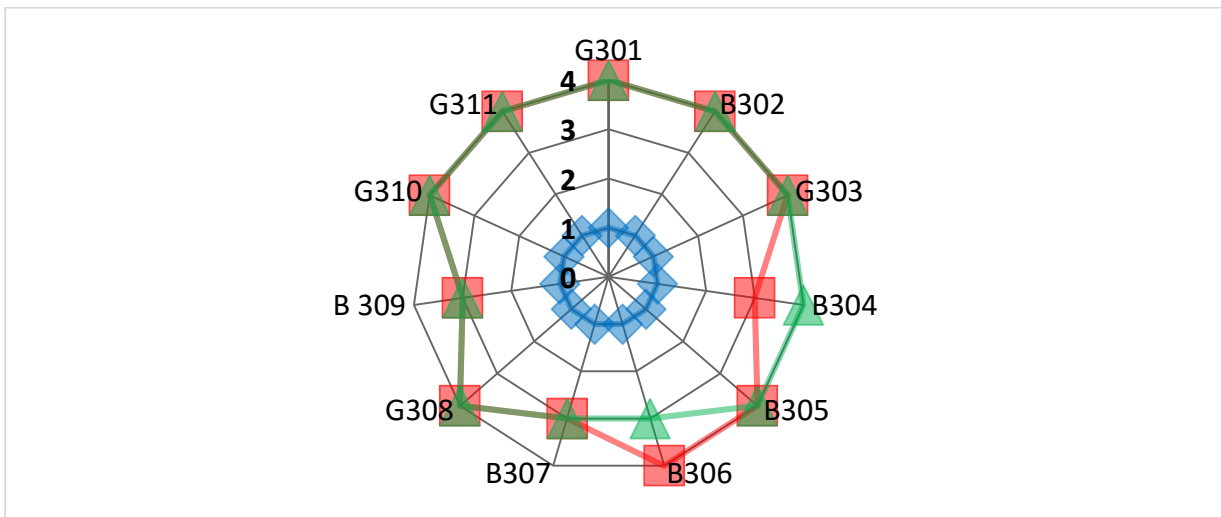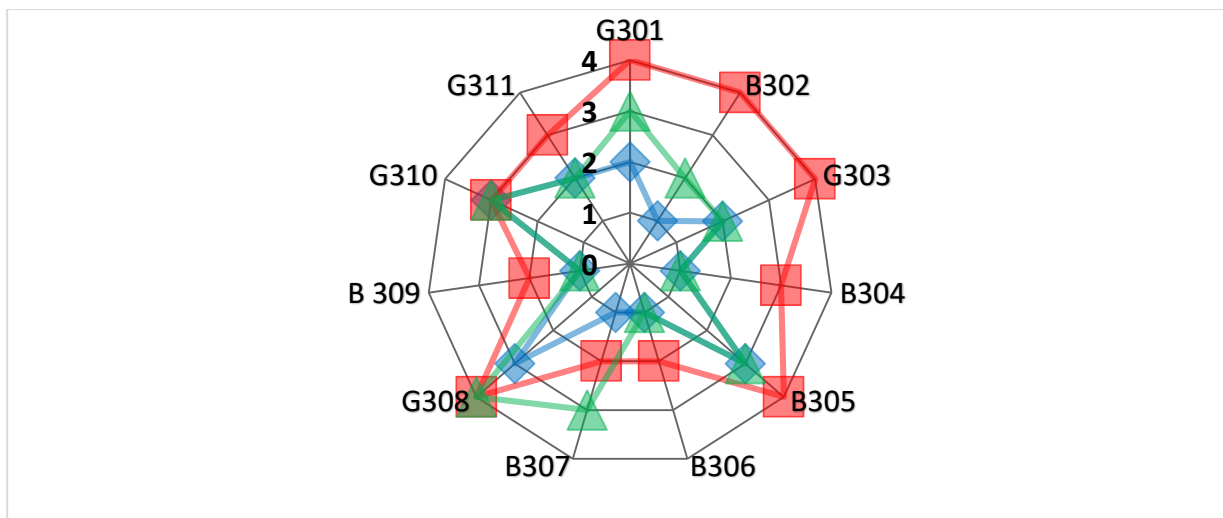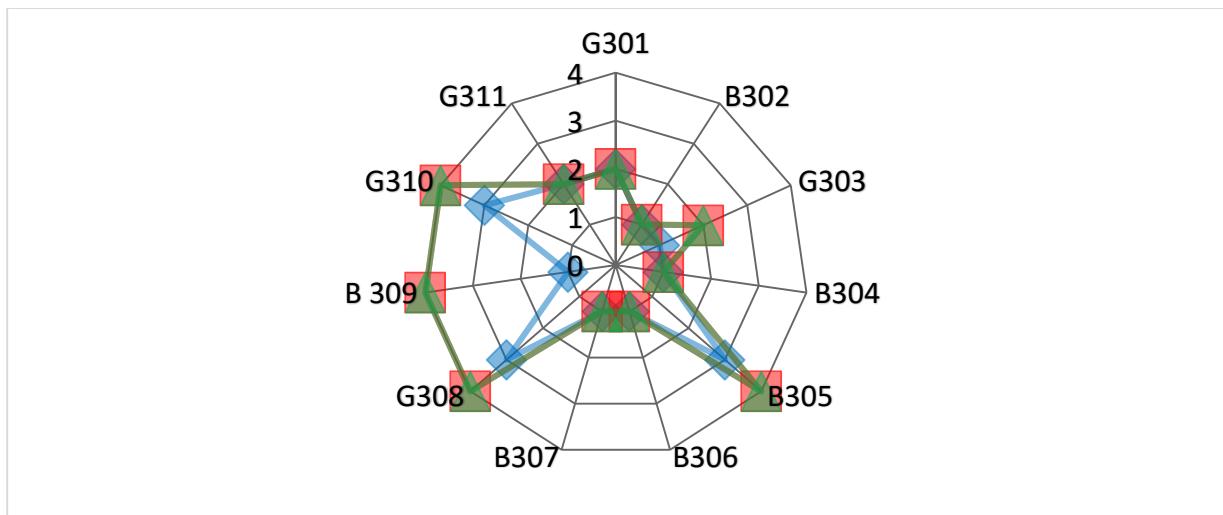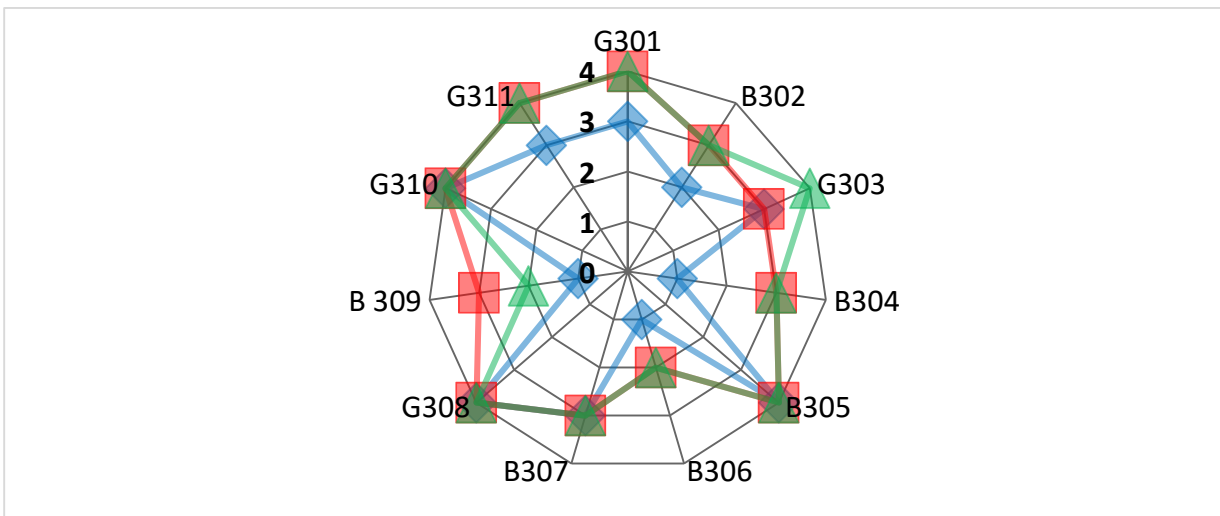

Figure 18. Third graders' evaluation of task likability of the picture description task

Four students found the task useless, as is stated in Extract 54. This comment shows that B302 had a specific idea about what should be learnt in the English lessons.

Extract 54

B302:   Minek csinálunk ilyen feladatokat, ez nem az angolról szól, hanem a különbségek kereséséről. [Why do we do tasks like these, it is not about English but about finding differences.]

Extract 55

G308:   Nekem tetszik, el tudom képzelni, hogy ezt játszom valakivel aki angolul beszél. Hasznos [I liked them, I can imagine playing it with someone who speaks English. It is useful.]

G308, on the other hand, enjoyed the task and found it useful. Her comment indicates how YLs reflect on instrumental motivation.

Although during the assessments students complained about the picture with the bus stop scene, their evaluation shows a diverse picture, indicated by the red squares. Six students gave 3 or 4 points, meaning that they enjoyed the task. However, five of them gave 1 or 2 stating that they did not like it. Those who did not like this task in January, complained about the pictures. They could not find enough details to talk about.

The third pair of pictures showing a restaurant scene were more popular with the students. They liked talking about a familiar topic and could activate their vocabulary related to describing people. The data reveals that the likability of the tasks is highly influenced by the topic and quality of the pictures.

Most of the comments about the evaluation of the likability of the assessment tasks concerned the general question task. In Extract 56, B304 raises the issue of face validity, whereas Extract 57 concerns content validity.

Extract 56

B304:   Úgy érzem, hogy mások kérdései mindig egyszerűbbek. [I feel that the others' questions are always easier.]

Extract 57

B307:   Nem tudom a válaszokat még magyarul sem. [I do not know the answers even in Hungarian.]

Extract 58

B306:   Nem szeretem, mert mindenki néz és vár. Jobb volt nekem, amikor a szünetben kettesben adtuk elő. [I do not like it because everybody is watching and waiting. When we acted it out during the break just with you, it was better for me.]

Extracts 56, 57 and 58 suggest negative feelings connected to the task. B304 felt that the task was not fair for him. B307 articulated the lack of background knowledge in connection with the questions. B306 talked about anxiety related to working with a peer as his partner. However, Extract 59 indicates that G310 eagerly took part in the task and enjoyed it. She was intrinsically motivated to chat.

Extract 59

G310:   Szeretem, csak beszélgetés. Kár, hogy nem magyarul van. Sok dolgot kérdeznék. [I like it, it is just chatting. It is a pity that it is not in Hungarian. I would ask a lot of things.]

The majority of the students enjoyed the tasks. Although some of them found them boring after the first and the third assessments they highlighted that it was good that they were allowed to say what they wanted to about the pictures. They enjoyed that they had autonomy in the tasks. Two of them emphasized that talking about a Christmas story was fun and G308 realized that she could speak English. Her comment suggests mastery motivation.

Extract 60

G308:   After the second picture észrevettem, hogy [I realized that] I speak English.

4.3.4.4. Conclusion

In this section I analyzed third graders' opinion on three aspects of the tasks. Similarly, to the second graders' findings, data revealed that even if students found some tasks difficult, they liked them if they felt challenged, and the tests offered them an opportunity to perform well. They found pleasure in their mastery of English, thus demonstrating their proficiency. Third graders also found it important to know how certain tasks contribute to their L2 development. Three comments reveal external and mastery motivation. A higher level of anxiety connected to the assessment is reflected in third graders' answers than in those of the second graders'. The reason must be that they knew more about grades and assessment.

4.3.5. Fourth-graders' achievements on 3 oral tests

4.3.5.1. Spot-the-difference task

Fourth-graders were the shiest and most reserved group out of the three participating in my study. We did not know each other well at the time of the assessment as we started working together in September, 2013. One month later, in October, they were very surprised at being assessed in pair-work and at being asked about their achievements. They were used to being assessed individually. Although they got high scores and they were aware of their good performances, they felt uncomfortable to talk in English. An obvious decrease can be seen when comparing the scores between October and January in Table 21.

Table 21
Fourth graders' scores on the spot-the-difference tasks

	October, 2013 Appendix C	January, 2014 Appendix M	May, 2014 Appendix L
B401	100%	72%	89%
G402	89%	67%	67%
G403	100%	89%	100%
B404	89%	67%	89%
G405	89%	61%	83%
B406	89%	67%	89%
B407	67%	61%	56%
B4o8	100%	67%	100%
Mean	*90%*	*69%*	*84%*
SD	*0.11*	*0.15*	*0.16*

According to the tests applied in January, students were required to use longer utterances and fewer mistakes in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. I found it appropriate to turn to higher requirements, as their proficiency developed noticeably during the term. Thus, the spot-the-difference tasks in October was scored according to the first system, whereas in May they were scored according to the second system described in Table 22-23 according to the teachers' booklet. Three turns of each student's talk were assessed. Thus, the maximum score in October was nine points, and it was eighteen in January and in May.

Table 22
Assessment rubrics for the spot-the-difference task in October with examples

3 points	an appropriate and relevant statement with 0-1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation.	'I can see a river and a tree in my picture.' 'And I can see a sun on the mountain.'
2 points	an appropriate and relevant statement with 2-3 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'Yes, yes, here is a dog.' 'The man is boring.' (Instead of bored)
1 point	an appropriate and relevant statement of one or two words with 1-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'Fishing.' 'Sunny.'
0 point	says nothing or text is not relevant or in Hungarian	Not given

Table 23
Assessment rubrics for the spot-the-difference task in January and in May

6 or 5 points	an appropriate and relevant statement + question. 0-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation.	'Because under the tree is a dog and a cat is climbing on the tree. And do you have cats and dogs?'
4 points	an appropriate and relevant statement + question. 3-4 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'Yes and it is sunny and it is spring. Your weather?'
3 points	either an appropriate and relevant statement or a question. 1-2 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'Three and a teacher. Is computer?' 'One window. Has the teacher long hair?'
2 or 1 point	either an appropriate and relevant statement or a question. 3-4 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	'It is sunny.' 'I can see a nem tudom, mi ez [I don't know, what this is in English].'
0 point	text is not relevant or more than 5 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation	Not given

The most common strategies applied by the students in October were code switch and avoidance. They either used Hungarian or avoided talking about things they could not express in English. Extract 61 comprises examples for code switches in October.

The pictures of the task are in Appendix C, M and L.

Extract 61

B406:   I can see in my picture a goat.

B407:   Goooat? It is not a goat. It is a tehén. [cow].

B406:   Cow vagy valami olyan. [or something like that.]

B406:   In my picture is a dog.

B407:   Yes, yes, here is a dog. And a man, aki horgászik. [who is fishing]

B406:   Fishing.

B407:   And the bike. It is on the floor.

B406:   And I can see a sun on the mountain.

Code switch was still typical in students' speech in January and in May but in fewer cases. The sentences were longer and contained fewer grammar mistakes compared to those used in January. In January and May students were more enthusiastically engaged in pair work. They listened to each other carefully and tried to talk by reacting to one another's utterance.

Extract 62

B407:   There is a man, a cat, a dog and a boy in my picture. And you?

G402:   There are two birds, that is different.

B407:   Yes, I have two birds. One on the tree and one in the air.

G402:   Yes. It isn't different. And the dog and the cat?

B407:   Yes, one dog and one cat.

SG402: And the man is stretching the arm.

B407:   Stretching? Az mi? [What's that?]

G402:   Hogy kinyújtja. [That he is stretching.]

B407:   Yes. Akkor nincs különbség. [Then there is no difference] Weather?

G402:   It is sunny.

B407:   It is cloudy. Na akkor ennyi [Then that's it.]

Extract 63 shows that in May students started to talk about the actual topics suggested by the pictures; they did not only talk about the pictures themselves. For example, they guessed what season it was in the pictures. Their involvement in task is obvious from B404's reaction to a detail he could not understand. He asked his partner how he knew that the bird was singing in the picture.

Extract 63

B404: There is a bird on the tree. He is watching a dog and a cat under the tree. Yes?

G405: No, the cat and the dog watching the bird. The bird is singing.

B404: The cat and the dog are jumping. They want the bird.

G405: No, the cat and the dog are sitting and listening to the bird.

B404: Listening.

G405: Yes, the birds is singing.

B404: Honnan tudod? [How do you know that?]

G405: Hangjegyek vannak a fejénél. [There are music notes around its head.]

B404: Mutasd! [Show me.] (Looking at the picture) You, you have two trees. And I have one.

G405: Yes and it is sunny and it is spring. Your weather?

B404: Cloudy and maybe autumn.

4.3.5.2. Quiz questions task

The task can be carried out in two different ways, according to the teachers' manual:

> Step 1: This is frontal class work; practice session. To make sure that all students know what the questions are, children take turns picking numbers randomly from a hat/box. Numbers are NOT put back. Child says/shows number, teacher asks the question, and student answers it.
>
> Step 2: This is a pair work task. Students work in pairs (A&B). Each pair has 99 numbers in a box/hat and a list of 99 questions. One student (A) draws a number, and asks the question on the list. The other student (B) answers it. B puts the number in his/her table and a tick or cross under it, if correct/incorrect. Then they swap and go on like this (B draws the number, asks the question, and A answers it).

However, I applied a third option, as in October I put the pieces of paper with the questions into a box and allowed students to pick and read the questions for themselves. They enjoyed it and asked me to do the task this way. I let them do so because they became highly motivated to work on the task as they were involved in negotiation about it. However, some students asked me to read the questions for them.

According to the instructions of the test booklets, one point was given for each appropriate answer when list A was applied. Three questions were asked from each student; thus, the maximum score was 3. According to the instructions of the test booklets, one point was given for each appropriate answer when list A was applied. Three questions were asked from each student; thus, the maximum score was 3. When list B was used the scoring system was different. As in the case of third-graders, in October I applied the easier set of questions and in January and May the more difficult one. In October, all the students achieved maximum scores. Table 24 shows the scoring system with some examples.

Table 24

Assessment rubrics for the quiz questions task with examples

3 points	The answer is appropriate and relevant; a sentence or so long; 1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation	21'I listen to rock because I like it.' 86'I can make pancake and hot sandwich and tea and pasta.'
2 points	The answer is appropriate and relevant; 2+ words long; 2 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	51'At 7 o'clock because azt nem tudom [I don't know], I go to school.'
1 point	The answer is appropriate and relevant; 1or 2 words long; 2+ mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	80 'snake'
0 point	The answer is not relevant or more than 3 mistakes in vocabulary and/or grammar and/or pronunciation.	Not given

Table 25 contains the scores of fourth graders.

Table 25

Fourth graders' scores on the quiz questions tasks

	October, 2013 (List A)	January, 2014 (List B)	May, 2015 (List B)
B401	100%	100%	100%
G402	100%	56%	78%
G403	100%	100%	100%
B404	100%	33%	89%
G405	100%	78%	78%
B406	100%	100%	100%
B407	100%	56%	78%
B408	100%	78%	89%
Mean	*100%*	*75%*	*89%*
SD	*0*	*.25*	*.10*

They could understand the questions and reply to them as well. Although they used only one-word utterances, their answers were appropriate as it can be seen in Extract 64 and 65. The change in the SD shows that in January there was a bigger difference between the achievements than in May. Improvement was detectable between January and May in the case of students who had lower scores than the maximum in January. The two sets of questions can be seen in Appendix F-G. Students did not do this task as pair work.

Extract 64

T: Which animal is very long?

G403:   Snake.

T: What clothes do you wear in spring?

G403:   Jeans, T-shirt and Converse shoes.

T: Who is your favourite film star?

G403:   No favourite.

Extract 65

T: What color do you dislike?

B406:   Pink.

T: How many sisters do you have?

B406:   One.

T: Who cooks lunch on Sundays?

B406:   My mum.

In January their attitudes to the assessment changed to a great extent. They were more relaxed and active. We had talked about the assessment system, and they realized that for longer utterances more scores could be given, as Extracts 66 and 67 reveal most children tried to express themselves in more words.

Extract 66

T: How can you travel from your place to a big town?

G402:   By car and by plane.

T: What shops do you usually go to at a shopping center?

G402:   I don't understand.

T: What kind of shops do you go to?

G402:   I go to clothes shop and book shop.

T: What do you eat for lunch on Wednesdays?

G402:   I don't know. Mindig mást. [It's always different].

Extract 67

T: How many friends do you have at school?

G405:   Five.

T: How often do you go to the cinema?

G405:   I rarely go to the cinema.

T: How often do you travel by bus?

G405:   I never travel by bus.

Between January and May their proficiency improved a lot and they asked to start all the lessons by asking each-other quiz questions about different topics. In April we started to

do the tasks in pair work. Extract 68 indicates that although students worked in pairs, in some cases it meant that one student read out the question to the other, and the other answered. It was not a real conversation.

Extract 68

B406: How do you go home after school?

G403: I go home by car with my mum or dad because we live in Brank (pseudo-name) not in Bp.

B406: Where can you go to a museum?

G403: In Budapest there are museums. Museum of Fine Arts and National Museum.

B406: What food can you cook?

G403: I can make pancake and hot sandwich and tea and pasta.

However, the regular practice and the students' intensive motivation to take part in the activities resulted in high scores in May. Extract 69 shows that S403 did not only ask the questions but engaged in conversation with B401 about the topic suggested by the question. She helped once with a word his partner could not recall.

Extract 69

S403: Who helps you at home with your homework?

B401: My mother.

S403: How does she help you?

B401: She asks questions and I answer. She asks the words. Ellenőrzi a helyesírást. [Checks the spelling].

S403: Spelling. How often do you travel by train?

B401: I never travel by plane because we have a car.

S403: How often do you play games on your computer?

B401: Every weekend I play computer games because no school at the weekend.

S403: No play computer games on weekdays?

B410: No, I can't because the homework.

4.3.5.3. Picture description task

Fourth graders were given two different kinds of tasks in the three assessment periods. In October children talked about a girl's timetable, describing what they saw in small pictures showing different activities (see App H). In January they told the story of a fly family (see App K). In May they told a Christmas story they could see in pictures (see App I). Table 26 shows the scoring system with examples according to the teachers' booklet.

Table 26

Assessment rubrics for the picture description task with examples

4 points	an appropriate and relevant description of the picture in one sentence; 0-3 mistakes in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation. OR more than one sentence but 0-2 mistakes	'They go to hospital. They go fast 'Mother fly talks about the baby. Sam is sad because the baby.'
3 points	an appropriate and relevant description of the picture in one sentence: 1 mistake in vocabulary or grammar or pronunciation. 2 or more than one sentence but 3 mistakes	'She is playing violin.' 'She is in the park'
2 points	a few appropriate and relevant words about the picture	'. Airplane on the wall' 'Papa is phone
1 point	1 or 2 words relevant to the picture	'Sam watch.'
0 point	text is not relevant; or in Hungarian, or student says nothing.	'Given for not saying anything.'

Table 27 shows the fourth graders' scores on the three picture description tasks.

Table 27
Fourth graders' scores on the picture description tasks

	October, 2013 Appendix H	January, 2014 Appendix K	May, 2014 Appendix I
B401	100%	63%	100%
G402	92%	75%	100%
G403	100%	75%	100%
B404	75%	94%	75%
G405	33%	75%	75%
B406	100%	100%	100%
B407	75%	63%	94%
B408	75%	100%	100%
Mean	*81%*	*80%*	*93%*
SD	*0,23*	*0,15*	*0,11*

Fourth graders' absolute favorites were the picture description tasks, especially the one in January: they had to tell the story of a fly family with a pregnant fly mother (see Appendix K).

G402: 'A legyes sztoriról vicces volt beszélni, bár nem volt könnyű követni.' [The fly story was fun to talk about although it was not easy to follow.] B406: Rémes, hogy emlékszem, a béka a végén.' [I remember the frog in the end, horrible!]

In October when Sally's diary (see Appendix H) was the topic, most of the students used mostly grammatically correct sentences. Their vocabulary was rich enough to get high scores in most of the cases. Although they sometimes turned to L1, they expressed themselves in English with ease. Three students worked together as Extract 70 shows. B401 and G402 described pictures in short sentences, whereas G403 tried to make the task more interesting or wanted to please the teacher by showing that she knew more than one expression with the word ride.

Extract 70

B401:   She is playing guitar.

    She is singing, very open mouth.

    She is paint a picture.

G402:   She is playing violin.

She is playing the dog.

She is playing ball. Valami [some kind of] ball.

G403:   She is riding not a horse. Segítsek, hogy mondom, hogy min? [Should I help by saying what she is riding?]

T: Yes, please.

G403:   I see. She is riding a bike. Her hair is short.

She is choosing pictures. Vagy a falra rakja. [Or she is putting them on the wall.]

As Extract 71 shows, students who achieved lower scores mainly used utterances with some grammar mistakes; nevertheless, they could express the meaning shown in the pictures, so that their pair could guess which one they were talking about.

Extract 71

B408:   She plays tennis.

She plays guitar.

She is in the park.

B407:   I am playing computer games. Nem én, hanem she. [not me but she].

She reading.

B408:   What?

B407:   A white book.

She eating with dog.

B408:   She walking in park, near chair.

She walking up mountain.

She walking in street, watching shoes.

In January the Fly Story (see App K) impressed all the students. They became open and tried to express themselves by giving a hint of humor to the story. Although their sentences still contained grammar mistakes they were familiar with the relevant vocabulary and could convey meaning (see Extract 72).

Extract 72

B406:   Mother fly talks about the baby. Sam is sad because the baby.

B408:   Sam thinking. He is sad, mother is happy.

B406:   Mother fly goes to hospital with a bag.

B408:   Sam and father drive a car.

B406:   Father fly calls the hospital. He is interested, Sam waits.

B408:   They go to hospital.

B406:   The family is happy. Poor Sam.

B408:   Not poor. Sam is happy. Unhappy end because a frog there.

As Extract 73 reveals, in May the development in their L2 proficiency was apparent as they worked on a new story. They used long complex utterances with proper grammar. At certain points they had comments about the story in English. They were thus engaged in meaningful conversation. They had funny comments and enjoyed the task. The decreasing SD indicates that students' proficiency in this group got more balanced.

Extract 73

B407:   The man is slicing the tree. The boy is making a snowman.

B403:   The family is watching the tree in the corner. There aren't any nice things.

B407:   The girl and the boy are in the kitchen. They are cooking.

B403:   The father and the mother are putting a decoration on the tree. The cat is sitting. And watching.

B407:   Everybody singing. We wish you a merry (singing and laughing, the whole group is singing)

B403:   Na hagyjátok már abba! [Stop it.] The cats are ruining the tree. (they start taking turns very fast.)

B407:   This is chaos. The father is very angry. (speaking very fast)

B403:   The cats are watching the tree from the cold garden

4.3.6. Fourth-graders' task evaluation

Fourth graders evaluated the tasks according to: (1) familiarity; (2) difficulty and (3) likability. After the assessment of their achievements, I asked them to evaluate the tasks on the task sheet and encouraged them to comment on them. Some students commented in English, but they mainly did so in Hungarian. Their comments are translated into

English in the extracts. Table 28 contains the number of the tasks evaluated and their appendix number.

Table 28
Tasks evaluated in the three assessments

	October, 2013	January, 2014	May, 2014
Spot the difference	Appendix C	Appendix M	Appendix L
Quiz questions	List A	List B	List B
Picture description	Appendix H	Appendix K	Appendix I

4.3.6.1. Task familiarity

In Figures 19, 20 and 21 the eight diagonal axes indicate the number and the code of the participants (e.g., B401 is the first boy in grade 4) and the four 'rings' show the level of familiarity (1 totally unfamiliar; 4 meaning totally familiar). Blue rhombuses refer to the first assessment in October, red squares to the second one in January and green triangles to the third one in May.

Figure 19. Fourth graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the spot-the-difference task

Figure 20. Fourth graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the quiz questions task

Figure 21. Fourth graders' evaluation of task familiarity of the picture description task

After the first assessment, the fourth graders found the three task types unfamiliar. Their comments underlined that they evaluated the content of the task and not the task type. They found assessment in pair-work unreliable, as they could help each other. In January and in May, their evaluations show a diverse pattern which indicates that some of them scored the content of the tasks in the second and third assessments as well.

In October all the students gave 1 for the quiz questions task, whereas in January and in May they gave 4, meaning that they became familiar with the tasks.

In the case of the picture description tasks, except for one student, they gave 3 after the second assessment indicating that talking about Sally's diary is a different kind of task than taking about a day of a fly family. The difference between the task types is indicated

in their evaluation after the third assessment, when three of the students gave 3 indicating that they were not totally familiar with the task type.

4.3.6.2. Task difficulty

Figures 22, 23 and 24 show how difficult fourth graders found the spot-the-difference task on the four-point Likert-scale in the three assessments. Similarly to previous figures, the nine diagonal axes indicate the number and the code of the participants and the four 'rings' show the level of difficulty. Blue rhombuses refer to the first assessment period in October, red squares to the second one in January and green triangles to the third one in May.
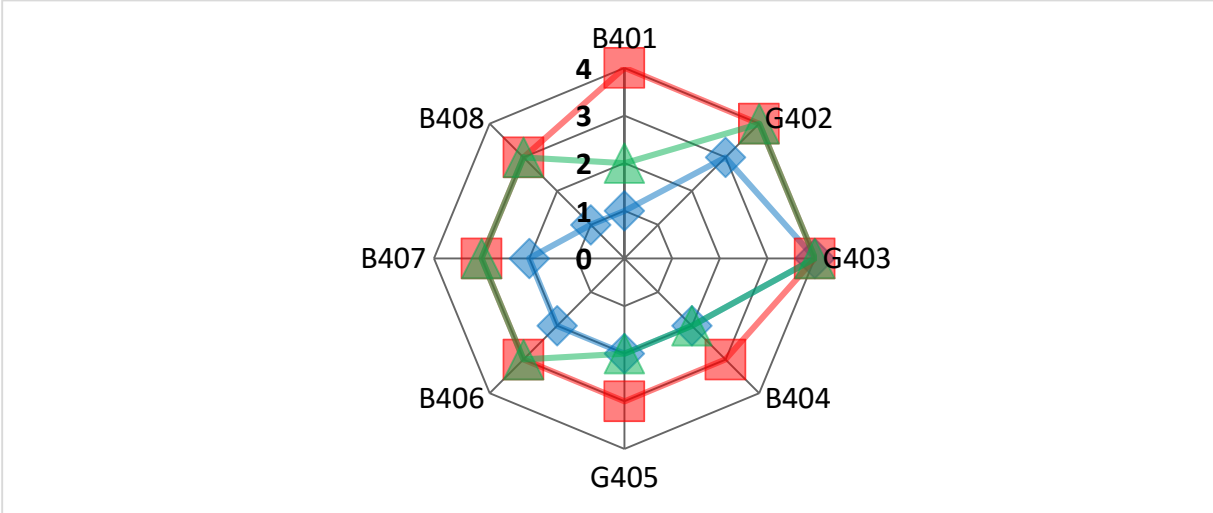
Figure 22. Fourth graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the spot-the- difference task
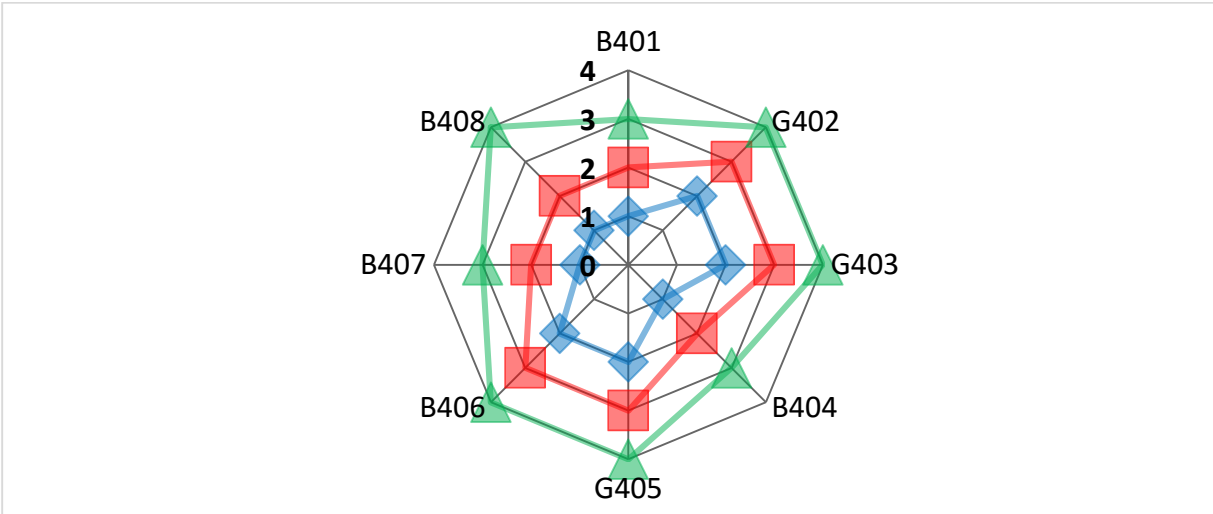
Figure 23. Fourth graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the quiz questions task
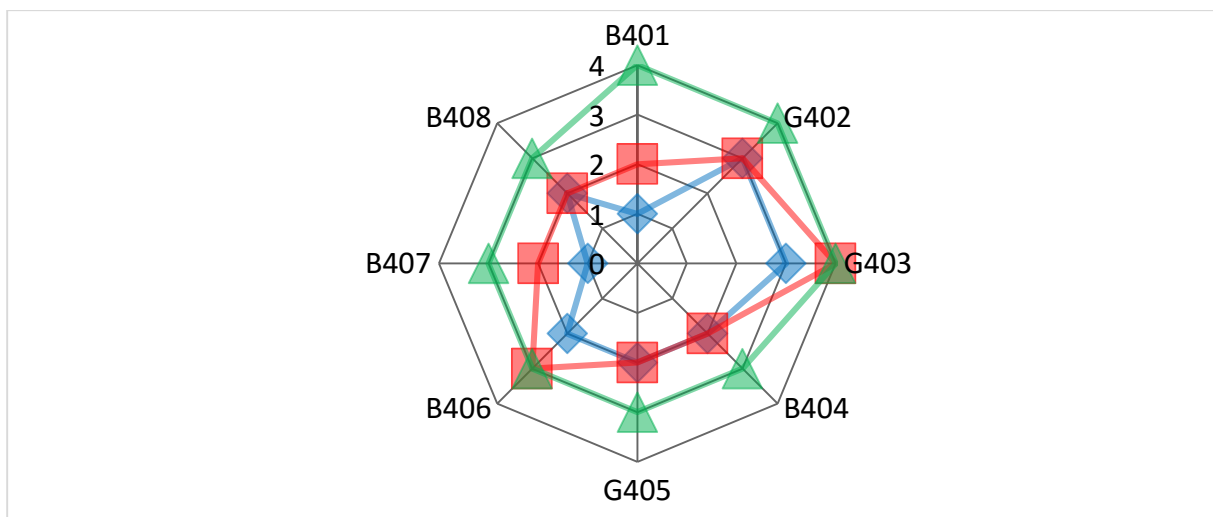
Figure 24. Fourth graders' evaluation of task difficulty of the picture description task

In the case of the spot-the difference task, students most probably evaluated the content of the task not the task type. In three cases they gave 3 in January and 2 in May meaning that they found the same type of task more difficult in May than in January. One student found the tasks easy in all the assessments and three of the children evaluated them at 3 in May. Some students found it difficult to ask questions about their partner's picture to find the differences. Pair work format was considered as an obstacle to carrying out the task successfully by two students, as Extract 74 shows.

Extract 74

B404:   Nem szeretem ezeket a feladatokat, mert a párom nem tudja kijavítani a hibáimat, és nem tudom, hogy jó-e a mondatom vagy nem. [I do not like these tasks because my partner cannot correct my mistakes, so I do not know if my sentence is OK or not.]

During the first assessment students found it both hard to understand and to answer the questions. Although they had good scores for the first set of questions, answering them took quite a long time. They were very anxious to use grammatically correct sentences.

Extract 75

G402:   Értem, hogy szerinted meg kéne próbálnom elmondani, amit akarok, akkor is ha nem tudom a szavakat, de ez nagyon nehéz. Meg kéne tanulnunk a szavakat a feladat előtt. [I see your point that I should try to explain what I want to say even if I do not know some words, but it is hard. We should learn the words before these tasks.]

Data clearly shows that later students felt a gradual decrease in the difficulty level of this task. Four students found the task useful and some comments revealed that students who

did not dare to talk in October enjoyed using English for communication. Extract 76 reveals instrumental motivation.

Extract 76

G403: 'Szeretem, mert hasznos ha csetelni akarok angolul valkivel.' [I like it because it is very useful if I want to chat in England with somebody.]

Students' opinion concerning the difficulty of the picture description task was diverse in October and in January. By May none of the fourth graders found the task difficult. They emphasized that it was easier to talk about a story than to describe what they saw in pictures without a story line. Three of them found the task easier if it was funny.
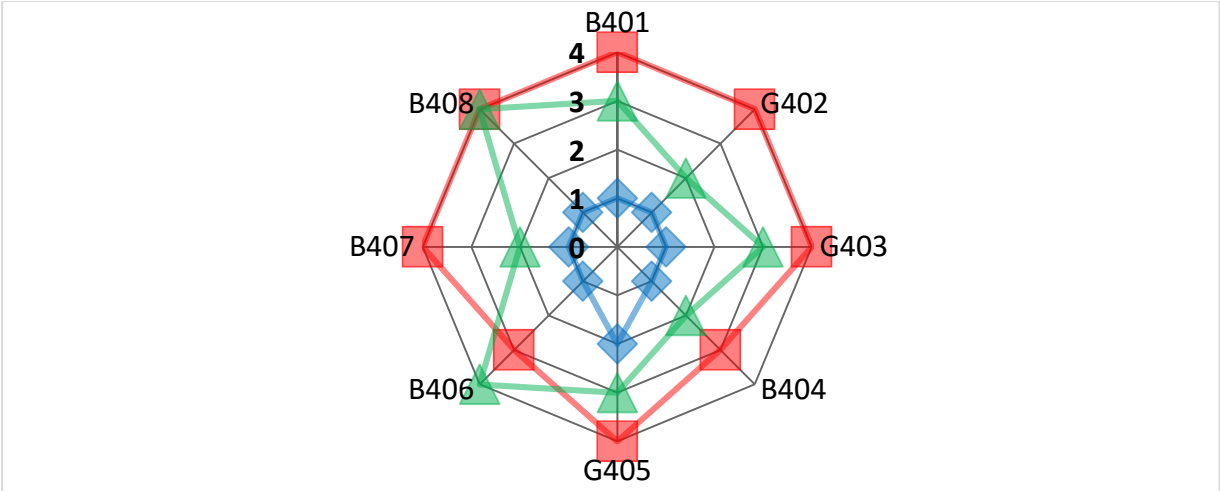
4.3.6.3. Task likability
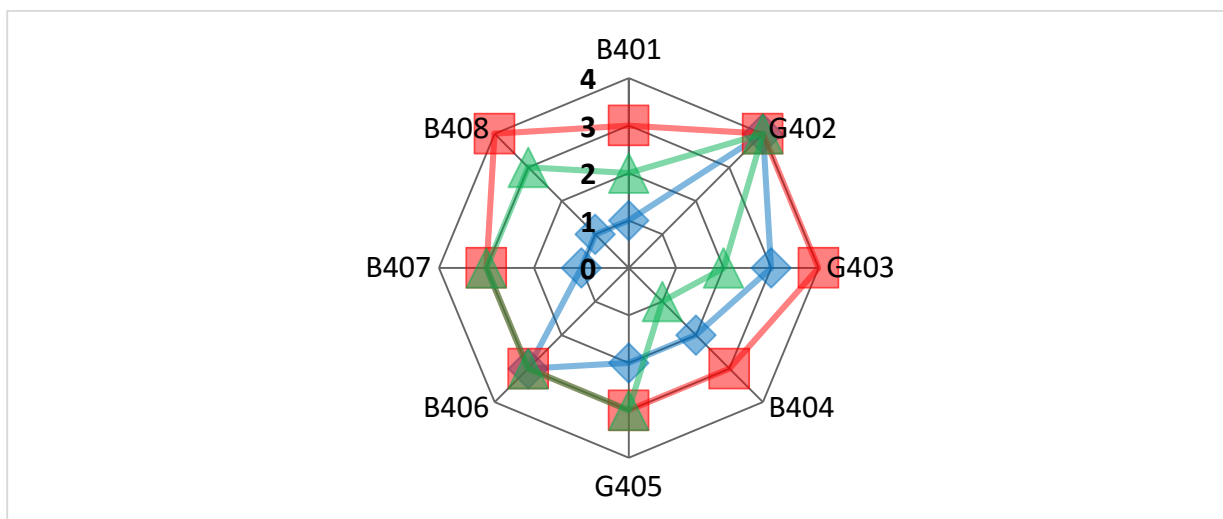
Figure 25. Fourth graders' evaluation of task likability of the spot-the- difference task
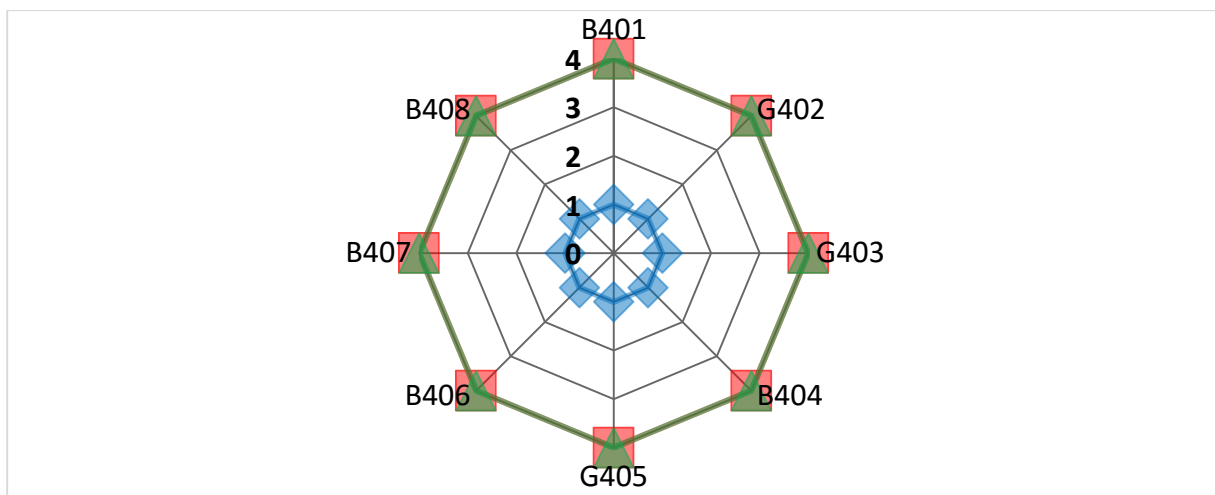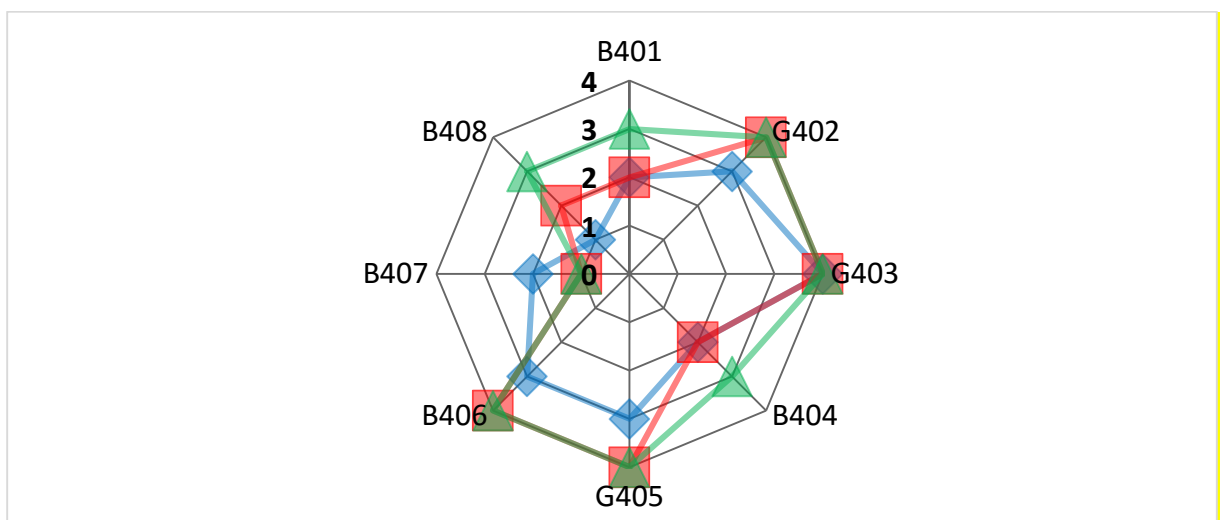

Figure 26. Fourth graders' evaluation of task likability of the quiz questions task
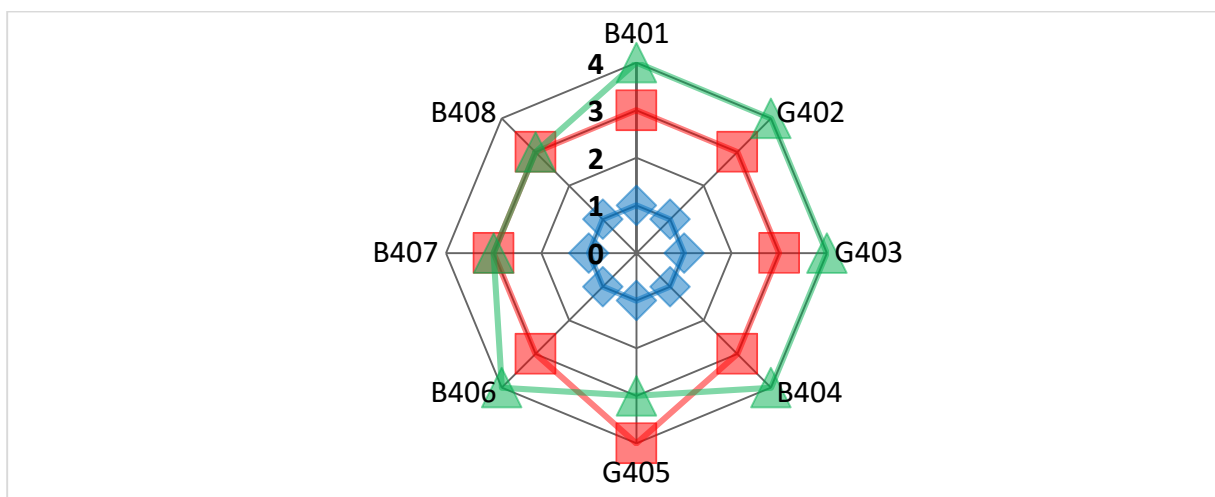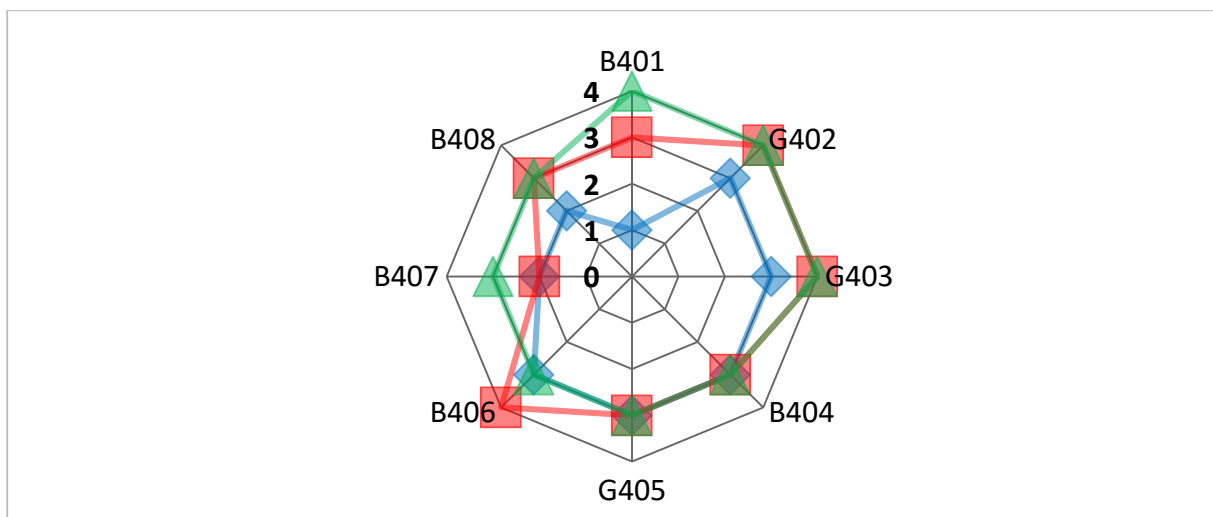
Figure 27. Fourth graders' evaluation of task likability of the picture description task

Although fourth graders were the most critical about the tasks and the procedure, they were active and had positive feedback as well.

The spot the difference task was the one which students did not really like. Even in May they complained about its uselessness. Their comments did not go into more detail.

Half of the group stated that they liked the quiz question tasks after the third assessment. Usefulness seemed to be of high priority in the case of this task as well. Two students liked them because they learnt new things about each other.

Extract 77

B401:   Vicces, úgy beszélgetünk egymással, mintha egy kávézóban volnánk. [It is funny to talk to each-other in English as if we were in a café.']

On the other hand, B407 stated that he did not like to talk about himself, thus, he did not like the task at all.

Although students gave many positive feedback on the story telling task and referred to it as real fun, only three gave 4 points. This data shows that fourth graders were highly critical not only about themselves but about the tasks as well.

4.3.6.4. Conclusion

The improvement in fourth graders' proficiency was obvious during the academic year. Their SA also reflected it, although their comments included negative remarks about themselves. The most outstanding achievement however was detected in their openness to communicate and cooperation with their peers. By May students tended to switch to L1 in fewer cases and became less anxious.

4.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I aimed to answer five research questions.

>RQ1: How do diagnostic tests on speaking offer the teacher opportunities to scaffold children's development in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?

>RQ2: How do the diagnostic tests work?

>RQ3: To what extent can the tests give useful feedback to the teacher about the student's development?

>RQ4: How do children's L2 proficiency and strategy use change over one year?

>RQ5: How do the diagnostic tests contribute to cooperation in pairs and small group?

As for RQ1, the diagnostic tests offer the teachers opportunities to scaffold children's development in EFL. The tasks are easy to use if the teacher is aware of the scoring system in advance. They can be used in the lessons as pair work. Similarly to Hild's (2014) experience, the only criticism articulated by the students, and I agree with them, concerns the illustrations of the story telling tasks.

As for RQ2, the instructions are clear and the task evaluations are easy to complete. However, ambiguous data were collected about task familiarity. During the first assessment some students' comments revealed that they misunderstood the concept of evaluating task familiarity. They thought familiar meant the same. Thus, even when we worked with similar tasks, they stated that the task was unfamiliar. We had to clarify this misunderstanding to gain valid data. The spot-the difference tasks and the picture description tasks were appropriate for pair-work. Whereas, the quiz questions tasks required assistance as children in second and third grade could not read the questions to each other. Children were motivated to take the tasks as they were challenging but not too difficult. Scoring the tasks was easy as the assessment rubrics gave clear guidance. The three turns required from each student let enough time and possibility for the children to do their best.

Considering RQ3 the tasks gave useful feedback about the students' development. They elicited both vocabulary and grammar knowledge thus the development in these two

fields can be followed by applying them. The task with a girl's weekly activities seemed to be slightly repetitive, according to the students. However, by changing the instruction and asking the students to give a detailed description about the circumstances of the activity it can be made more challenging. In the three assessments I did not change the instructions. The assessment tasks can be integrated into the syllabus as elicit vocabulary that is age-appropriate. Thus, I did not have to change the content of the syllabus to use the tests. In line with Bachman's (1990) and Pinter's (2006) definition the tests serve the pedagogical purposes of assessment tests as they provide valuable data for analysis to gain useful information about the students' development.

As for RQ4 the student's L2 proficiency and strategy use developed to different extents during the academic year. Second graders' one- and two-word utterances developed into longer, accurate sentences by May especially in those cases when they talked about topics and pictures related to their every-day life. During the academic year second graders became more confident in asking for help both in L1 and L2. Code switches were present during the three assessment periods as a strategy to overcome difficulties in communicating meaning and as a way of asking for peer help as well. They mainly asked me for help. When 'noticing the gap' (Schmidt, 1990) they consciously filled relying on their previous knowledge. Students did not apply strategies to lower anxiety. Although Oxford (1990) classified strategies, asking for clarification and help, as a kind of social strategy was present as a test taking strategy. Nikolov (2006) refers to 'applying for help' as a kind of social strategy during test taking. Cognitive strategies were also applied, (Nikolov, 2006) as children were guessing. And metacognitive strategies as self-correction, skipping item and starting with easy item were also used. Students consciously used longer sentences when they got higher scores for them and used relevant vocabulary to convey meaning. Self-correction also appeared in the assessment showing conscious L2 use. Development both in fluency and accuracy was detectable.

Third graders' L2 development was observed both in applying relevant vocabulary and accuracy. As opposed to second graders, grammatical accuracy was of high priority in this group. Their willingness to communicate and fluency increased to the same extent as their willingness to get higher scores. Conscious strategy use also appeared in third graders' L2 use. They asked for help, mainly by applying code-switches. They asked for clarification

and peer help was also present. Good achievement became more and more important according to students' self- assessment.

Fourth graders, the most anxious group of the three, were the least open and enthusiastic about the tests. Anxiety was mainly present during test taking (Horowitz, Horowitz & Cope, 1986). They regularly gave negative feedback about the tasks and themselves, they became conscious users and learners of L2. They consciously used structures to maintain conversation, tried to use longer sentences and to be accurate. As they became less anxious, they hardly switched to L1 and used L2 with ease and humor. Their fluency developed to a great extent. Peer help and effective cooperation among the students was one of the most outstanding features of fourth graders' achievements. Self-evaluation occurred both in negative and positive ways (Nikolov, 2006).

Regarding RQ5 the development of the students' eagerness to express themselves in pair work can be followed by applying the tests. I found it the real strength of the tasks that they are highly motivating for the students to participate in. Peer-correction and peer-evaluation gradually became a practice in the assessments indicating students' cooperation. In line with Sadler (1989) and Brown (2001), SA and PA became very important component of the assessment process as students started to pay attention to each other especially in the case of third graders. They corrected their peers and themselves regularly. In October, peer correction often resulted in conflicts, whereas in January and May peer help occurred besides peer correction

In sum, all the students became more independent and more confident users of English with considerable development in their L2 proficiency. They learnt how to assess their own achievement. They improved in cooperating with each other and working in pairs effectively. Their openness to ask for help also developed, whereas testing related anxiety decreased in most of the cases.

Chapter 5

A study on how children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence changed over a year

5.1. Introduction

The research started in September, 2013 with the aim of getting a better insight into students' actual thoughts and feelings about learning English. Thus, the following research question is to be answered:

RQ7: How do children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence change over one year?

Furthermore, I wanted to explore to what extent and in what ways the diagnostic tests are suitable for developing and measuring children's speaking skills and for supplementing the syllabus.

According to Dörnyei's (2007, p. 38) description, 'qualitative research is concerned with subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and thus the explicit goal of research is to explore the participants' views of the situation being studied'.

In line with this definition qualitative data was collected during the academic year of 2013-2014 to uncover students' opinions and beliefs about the diagnostic tests and the FL classroom practices. Stimulated recall and think-aloud protocol were applied for data collection. According to Gass and Mackey (2000), 'stimulated recalls are carried out with some degree of support' either visual or auditory which help the learners 'recall their motivation and thought processes during the original event' (p. 19). With think aloud, or self-revelation the participant provides an ongoing report of his or her thought processes while performing some task' (p. 10).

5.2. Data collection instrument

I started my research with structured group interviews in October, 2013 and in May, 2014, applying the questions presented in Appendix N with each group. The interviews

were conducted in Hungarian to allow children to express their ideas and feelings as precisely as possible. I took notes during the interviews which were later translated into English. I did not have to rephrase the questions, as the answers to the pilot questions were appropriate. Field notes were also taken during SA in the assessment periods.

5.3. Procedure

Before conducting the focus group interviews I asked two of my colleagues to review the questions to make sure they were clearly worded, unambiguous and suitable for revealing children's beliefs. A pilot interview was conducted with a child from the same population prior to the group interviews to see if the questions elicited meaningful answers. After the piloting phase I informed the groups about the aim of my research with the purpose of ensuring them that I would use their answers for improving the quality of the English lessons. Thus, students felt the importance and the value of giving truthful answers. The actual interviews were conducted in the English classes in October, 2013. I asked the questions in the order shown in Appendix N. The interview in October consisted of only the first eight questions, as the last two items aimed to reveal changes in the students' attitudes. While students were answering me, I took notes on a previously compiled form with the questions and the names of the children. The names were later substituted by codes. After the first interview with second graders I decided to change the schedule of this phase, as during the group interview children influenced each other to a great extent. Several times they simply repeated the response of the previous child or agreed with the others. Thus, with learners in grade 3 and grade 4, I conducted one-to-one interviews. They varied in length between ten and fifteen minutes, and were carried out in the afternoons. I started analyzing the data by rendering categories to the students' answers. The categories were numbered and processed in an excel chart.

5.4. Results

This chapter presents and discusses the findings related to the fifth research question: it reveals how children's attitudes, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence changed over a year. First, I explore students' conceptualizations of the importance of learning a foreign language and thus examine the sources of their L2 learning motivation. Then, I will examine their feelings about the English classes and diagnostic assessment. Finally, I will

elaborate on the issue of students' foreign language anxiety. For these analyses, data was gathered from the following sources: (1) interviews with students and (2) feedback notes on SA. In this chapter the extracts from students' self-report data are given in my translation, and students are cited under the codes applied in the previous chapter.

1. Why do you find learning English important?

The first question of the questionnaire aims to reveal children's motivation to learn English. Eight categories were established and quotations from the children are used to name them: (1) parents want it; (2) everybody speaks English; (3) good secondary school; (4) good money; (5) computer games; (6) using the internet; (7) films in English, and (8) travelling. Ten children replied by mentioning that their parents told them that English was very important. The highest number in this category was in grade 2, where more than half of the group finds English important because their parents strongly articulate this view. Table 29 shows the number of students belonging to the different categories from each grade.

Table 29
Students' motivation to learn English

	Second graders	Third graders	Fourth graders
1. Parents want it	5	4	1
2. Everybody speaks English	1	2	2
3. Good secondary school	0	1	3
4. Good money	0	1	0
5. Computer games	1	1	0
6. Using the internet	2	0	1
7. Films in English	0	1	0
8. Travelling	0	1	1

Extract 78

B205: A szüleim azt mondják, hogy a legfontosabb tantárgyak az angol és a matek. [My parents say that the most important subjects are English and Math.]

Extract 79

G209: Anyukám szerint az angol nélkül nagyon nehéz boldogulni. [My mother says that without English it is very difficult to succeed.]

Five children think that everybody speaks English, so they also have to learn it, whereas four respondents find ELL important in order to be able to get in a good secondary school.

Extract 80

G301: A nővérem egyetemre jár, jó gimnáziumba járt, mert tudott angolul. [My sister goes to university and she went to a good secondary school because she spoke English.]

Extract 81

B406: A jó iskolákhoz kell az angol. [For good schools you need English.]

Data reveal that the majority of the children are motivated either by believing their parents' opinion about ELL and by long-term goals to use English in their future also suggested by the parents. Getting into a good secondary school is more important for fourth graders than for younger learners.

2. How do you feel before the English lessons?

The second question aimed to gain information about children's feelings connected to the English lessons. Five categories were established in the datasets: (1) look forward to it; (2) anxious because of being asked; (3) nothing special; (4) bored and (5) anxious because of lack of homework or incorrect homework.

Table 30
Students' feelings connected to the English lessons

	Second graders	Third graders	Fourth graders
1. Look forward to it	5	4	2
2. Anxious because of being asked	2	2	4
3. Nothing special	1	1	1
4. Bored	1	1	1
5. Anxious because of the homework	0	3	1

Table 30 indicates that eleven students look forward to the lessons, whereas nine feel anxious because of the possibility of being asked to use the language either in speaking or writing. Their enthusiasm towards the lessons seems to decline and the feeling of anxiety seems to increase in higher grades. Anxiety is rooted in two sources: (1) the lack of homework or incorrect homework and (2) the possibility of being asked to use the language. The first reason is surprising, as in grade 2 and grade 3 the homework is

voluntary and only positive feedback is given on it. In grade 4, the lack of homework results in one extra task for the following lesson, for example, searching for some information the whole class can use next time. So, negative feedback is hardly ever given in connection with homework. Most probably the lack of positive feedback makes children anxious about not doing their homework. Three children feel bored before the lessons and three say they feel nothing special.

Extract 81

B302: Az összes óra előtt unatkozom kivéve a tornát és az informatikát. [I feel bored before all the lessons except for PE and IT.]

Extract 82

B306: Unatkozom, mert nem szeretek semmit, utálom a dalokat, nem értek semmit és nem tudok rajzolni sem. [I feel bored because I don't like anything. I hate songs, I don't understand anything, I can't draw.]

Extract 83

B407: Én mindig unatkozom az iskolában. Nem akarlak megbántani, de tényleg. [I always feel bored at school. I don't want to hurt you but really.]

3. How do you feel before the tests?

Seven categories were established in the analysis of feelings before the tests: (1) anxious about the results; (2) what others think; (3) what the teacher thinks; (4) what the parents think; (5) looking forward to them; (6) no special feelings and (7) I can correct it.

Table 31
Students' feelings before the tests

	Second graders	Third graders	Fourth graders
1. Anxious about the results	0	1	4
2. What others think	2	3	2
3. What the teacher think	2	2	0
4. What the parents think	4	3	1
5. Looking forward to them	1	1	0
6. No special feelings	0	1	0
7. I cannot correct it	0	0	1

The answers show that the students felt that their achievements on the tests may allow others to form an opinion not only about their L2 use but also about themselves.

Extract 84

G311: Sok pontot akarok elérni, hogy megmutassam a többieknek, hogy okos vagyok. [I want to have high scores to show the others that I am smart.]

Extract 85

B408: Nem akarom, hogy a többiek tudják, hogy sok hibám van, mert azt fogják gondolni, hogy megint lusta vagyok. [I do not want the others to know if I have many mistakes because they will think I am lazy again.]

Eight children thought about the reaction of their parents before a test, seven about the classmates and four about their teacher's opinion. Although these children did not claim that they were anxious about these opinions, it was obvious that in their interpretation getting a higher score would result in better judgment about themselves.

Five children reported anxiety in connection with test results; four in the fourth grade.

Extract 86

G301: Maximum pontszámot akarok elérni, mert mindig maximumot kapok minden tantárgyból. [I want to get maximum score, because I always get maximum in every subject.]

Two children looked forward to tests.

Extract 87

G 202: Szeretem a teszteket, vicces párban dolgozni. [I like tests; it is funny to work with partners.]

4. How do you feel after the tests?

As Table 32 shows, four out of the five categories indicate positive feelings in connection with completing tests: (1) relieved (2) happy; (3) satisfied; (4) waiting for my treat and (5) trying to forget.

Table 32
Students' feelings after the tests

	Second graders	Third graders	Fourth graders
1. Relieved	2	5	4
2. Happy	2	2	2
3. Satisifed	3	2	
4. Waiting for a treat	2		1
5. Trying to forget		2	1

Eleven students felt relieved and six felt happy after the tests.

Extract 88

G301:   Megkönnyebbülök a teszt után, mert tudom, hogy vége és mindent megtettem. [I feel released after the test because I know it is over and I did my best.]

Extract 89

G402:   Boldog vagyok, mert megcsináltam valamit és ez jó. [I feel happy because I've completed something and it is good.]

Data show that three children received rewards from their parents if they achieved high scores on tests. Thus they are externally motivated to do well.

Extract 90

B406:   Minden ötösért egy pontot kapok és 25 pontért fogok kapni egy biciklit. De csak a fontos tantárgyak számítanak, mint az angol, a matek, a magyar és a történelem. [For each five (best grade in Hungary), I get a point and for 25 points I will get a bike. But just the important subjects are considered, like English, Math, Hungarian and History.]

Four students tried to forget the tests after completing them. All of them reported in their answers that they felt that the others were better at English and they did not think that they could catch up with their peers.

Extract 91

B408:   El akarom felejteni a dolgozatokat, mert a többiek mindig jobb jegyeket kapnak. [I want to forget the tests because the others always get better scores.]

Extract 92

B306:   A dolgozatok után inkább nem gondolok rájuk. Tudom, hogy sosem sikerülnek. [After the tests I prefer not to think about it. I know I never succeed.]

5. How do you feel when I ask you to speak English?

The answers to question five reveal that not only tests cause students anxiety but also tasks in which they have to speak in front of the others in L2. Sixteen students feel anxious or embarrassed in such situations. Most of them emphasized that in one-to-one situations it would be easier to talk. Four categories emerged from the children's answers: (1) embarrassed; (2) shocked; (3) look forward to and (4) nothing special.

Table 33
Students' feelings when they are asked to speak in English

	Second graders	Third graders	Fourth graders
1. Embarrassed	4	5	3
2. Shocked	0	2	2
3. Look forward to it	2	3	3
4. Nothing special	3	1	0

Extract 93

B406:   Engem tényleg sokkol, ha az osztály előtt kell beszélnem. Csak szavakat tudok kimondani és gondolkodnom kell, mielőtt kimondok egy teljes mondatot. [I really feel shocked to talk in front of the class. I can say just words and I have to think before uttering a complete sentence.]

Extract 94

B307:   Nem szeretek beszélni, mert nem tudok elég szót. Ciki sokáig gondolkodni, hogy megtaláljam a jó szót. [I do not like talking because I don't know enough words. It is embarrassing to think a lot to find the proper words.]

The answers in the 'nothing special' category show that these children found talking in front of the class a normal and accepted part of the FL lessons.

Extract 95

G308:   Sokszor szólítasz fel, hogy beszéljünk, így nem érzek semmi különöset. [You ask us to speak a lot of times, so I do not feel anything.]

Extract 96

G310:   Semmit, egész órán folyton kérdezel. [Nothing. You keep on asking during the whole lesson.]

Extract 97

G203:   Nem tudok beszélni, csak ha kérdezel, így válaszolni nem gond. [I cannot speak just if you ask something, so answering is OK.]

Eight children reported that they found the teacher's questions funny and interesting, so they looked forward to the questions.

Extract 98

G402:   Szeretem a beszélgetős időt, mindig izgi, egymást hallgatni. [I like the talking-time, it is always interesting to talk and to listen to the others.]

Extract 99

B401:   Otthon mindig megpróbálok felkészülni a kérdéseidre, és nagyon örülök, ha tudok válaszolni. Mosolyogsz, ha jól mondom. [At home I always try to prepare for your questions, and I am always happy if I can answer. You smile if I speak correctly.]

6. What makes you anxious in connection with learning English?

Eight categories were established after analyzing the answers to this question: (1) oral tests; (2) performances; (3) open days for parents; (4) copying from the blackboard; (5) reading aloud; (6) nothing; (7) learning words and (8) not understanding anything.

Table 34
Reasons for students' anxiety

	Second graders	Third graders	Fourth graders
1. Oral tests	1	2	0
2. Performances	4	1	0
3. Open days for parents	1		2
4. Copying from the blackboard	0	1	1
5. Reading aloud	0	0	2
6. Nothing	2	2	2
7. Learning words	1	1	1
8. Not understanding anything	0	2	0

Table 34 shows that six students referred to acting out as the source of their anxiety. Taking part in these performances is voluntary. After working with a story the English groups finish the process by performing the story to their class-teacher or other groups of English learners. The six students usually do not volunteer to perform in front of others and sometimes explicitly ask to opt out, but they usually help as assistants.

Copying from the board and reading aloud induce those students' anxiety who have difficulties in these fields. Learning words is the cause of anxiety for students who experience learning difficulties at home when preparing for the next class.

Extract 100

B408:   Nem tudom otthon megtanulni a szavakat, nem tudom, hogy miért. [I can't learn the words at home, I do not know why.]

Extract 101

B302:   Leülök és meghallgatom a hanganyagot de valahogy nem tudom megjegyezni a kifejezéseket. [I sit down and start listening to the word files but somehow I can't memorize them.]

MP3 files are sent to each student at the end of the week with the new expressions in context and some tasks to practice them. Students like these files and regularly use them. Parents also give positive feedback about them, because they can follow what their children learn in the EFL lessons.

Three answers referred to the open days organized once a month in order to allow parents to gain insights into their children's daily life at school; children whose parents have high expectations concerning FLL feel under pressure due to being observed.

Extract 102

B401:   Az, hogy meg kell mutatni az anyukámnak, hogy mit tudok az nyílt órákon. Tudom, hogy azt várja, hogy csak angolul beszéljek az óra közben. [To show my mum what I know in the open lessons. I know she wants me to speak only English during the lessons.]

Extract 103

G202:   Inkább hiányzom az órákról a nyílt napok alatt. [I would rather miss the lessons on open days.]

Two students commented on the anxiety caused by the possibility of not understanding something. One of them was a high achiever who was very motivated and always an active participant of the lessons, while the other one was less successful and suffered from attention deficit disorder.

Extract 104

B305:   Félek attól, hogy nem értek semmit. Mondjuk még nem történt meg, de rémes lenne. [I am afraid of not understanding anything. It hasn't happened, but it would be horrible.]

Extract 105

B302:   Néha nem tudom követni az órát, mert egy szót sem értek. Mindig izgulok, hogy meg tudom-e oldani a feladatot. [Sometimes I cannot follow the lesson because I don't understand a word. And I am always anxious to be able to do the tasks.]

Six students stated they never felt anxious in connection with the English lessons.

7. How well do you speak English?

Question 7 aimed to reveal how students perceive their own speaking skills. Their answers are categorized in three groups: (1) very well; (2) a little bit and (3) I don't speak English.

Table 35
Students' beliefs about their speaking skills

	Second graders	Third graders	Fourth graders
1. Very well	5	3	5
2. A little bit	4	5	3
3. I don't speak English	0	3	0

Table 35 indicates that thirteen students thought that they speak English well, whereas twelve state that they speak English only a little bit. The comments of these 25 students show that they have different concepts about speaking very well and a little bit. The examples illustrate why they think their English is at a higher or lower level. Extracts 106 and 107 suggest that being able to use L2 for real oral communication purposes means speaking very well, whereas Extract 108 shows that the time spent learning is the best indicator of proficiency.

Extract 106

G 310:   Nagyon jól beszélek angolul. Az összes szót tudom, amit tanulunk. Egyszer beszéltem az anyukám barátjával angolul. [I speak English very well. I know all the words we learn. Once I talked with my mother's friend in English.]

Extract 107

B206:   Nagyon jól beszélek angolul, azt hiszem mindent el tudok mondani, amit akarok. [I speak English very well, I think I can explain everything I want to.]

Extract 108

B306:   Nagyon jól beszéIek angolul, mert három éve tanulok. [I speak English very well because I have been learning English for 3 years.]

B404 elaborated on what he felt missing to think about himself as someone speaking English well. His statement suggests that the topic he could talk about did not make him a confident L2 speaker.

Extract 109

B404:   Egy kicsit tudok angolul. Csak magamról, az iskoláról, Magyarországról, a hobbiimről és a napirendemről tudok beszélni. Ja és az iskoláról. [I speak English a little bit. I can only talk about myself, my school, Hungary, my hobbies and my daily routine. Well and about my school.]

8. Could you speak in English with somebody who does not speak Hungarian?

Although 25 students stated that they spoke English well or to a certain extent, only nine students worded positive answers to this question. As Table 36 indicates, none of the fourth graders felt that they could speak English with a native speaker. The children's answers from all the three grades reflect that using the language with a non-Hungarian speaker seems to be difficult and frightening.

Table 36
Students' beliefs about speaking with a native speaker

	Second graders	Third graders	Fourth graders
1. Yes	5	4	0
2. No	4	7	8

Extract 110

G310:   Egyszer igen, de az anyu ott volt, hogy segítsen. Egyedül nem ment. [Once I did it, but my mother was there to help. I couldn't do it alone.]

Extract 111

G311:   Veled könnyű beszélni, mert tudsz magyarul segíteni. [It is easy to talk to you (teacher) because you can help in Hungarian.]

Extract 112

B404:   Nem mernék olyannal beszélni, aki nem beszél magyarul, mert lehet nem érteném, ha ő is kérdez vissza. [I would not dare to talk to someone not speaking Hungarian, because I might not understand if he asks me.]

In May 2014 the same participants were interviewed applying the same questions supplemented with two further questions. All the interviews were conducted in Hungarian. I tape recorded and translated their answers into English

1. In what ways have your feelings changed in connection with learning English this year?
2. In what ways have your feelings changed in connection with English tests?

As was discussed, the interview protocol was changed in October: children were asked in one-to-one situations not to influence each other. As this process was very time consuming, in May the students were asked to write down the first words coming to their mind in connection with the questions and later they elaborated on their answers in the form of a group interview.

Although the questions were the same, new categories were established in some cases as the participants' opinion changed and new ideas occurred.

1. Why do you find learning English important?

In May students did not mention parental expectations or better opportunities for getting a good job in connection with the first question. As Extract 113 shows, a new category occurred; it is important to learn the English as this is the easiest language.

Extract 113

B 205: Fontos angolul tanulni, mert ez a legkönnyebb nyelv, és később nehezebb nyelveket tudunk tanulni. [It is important to learn English because this is the easiest language, and later we can learn more difficult languages.]

Extract 114

B407: Szerintem fontos angolul tanulni, mert ez egy bébi-könnyű nyelv, éppen gyerekeknek való [I think it is important to learn English because this is a 'baby-light' language, just right for children.]

In contrast with the results in October twelve students found travelling the most important reason for learning English. In the interview they referred to their summer plans abroad several times.

Extract 115

G303: Szlovéniába fogunk utazni, szeretnék majd angolul beszélni, mert vannak ott barátaim. [We will travel to Slovenia and I want to speak English, because we have friends there.]

Extract 116

B305: Egyiptomban angolul beszélünk, a szüleim beszélnek. [In Egypt we speak English, my parents speak it.]

Answers to the second and fourth questions did not change to a great extent. The order of the categories about students' feelings connected to the English lessons did not change: (1) look forward to; (2) anxious about being asked; (3) nothing special; (4) bored and

anxious about the homework. The order did not change in the case of feelings about tests either: (1) relieved; (2) happy; (3) satisfied; (4) waiting for a treat and (5) trying to forget.

The number of students who were anxious about the test results doubled since October (5 vs. 10). The parents' opinions induce anxiety in the case of only five students and the teacher's opinion was not mentioned as the root of anxiety before the tests.

According to the answers given in May, no student felt shocked when I asked them to speak English. The number of students feeling embarrassed among the fourth graders, on the other hand, increased from 3 to 5.

Answering the sixth question about anxiety connected to learning English five categories were mentioned: (1) oral tests; (2) open days for parents; (3) copying from the blackboard; (4) reading aloud and (5) nothing. The number of students sating that they did not feel anxiety increased from six to 14. Three students felt anxious about the presence of parents in the lessons.

Extract 117

G403:   Próbálom a szüleimnek és neked is mutatni, hogy jó vagyok. Rohadt fárasztó. [I try to demonstrate to my parents and to you (the teacher) as well. It is pretty tiring.]

Extract 118

B206:   Ha az anyukám itt van, tudom, hogy viselkednem kell és kevesebbet beszélgetnem. Mármint magyarul. [When my mum is here, I know that I have to behave and speak less. That's in Hungarian.]

A new category emerged in the answers to the seventh question (How well do you speak English?): Eleven students stated that they speak English well. None of the students said that they did not speak English at all, and only five of them said that they speak English only a little bit. In May all the participants answered that they could speak with someone who speaks only English as opposed to nine in October. Questions 9 and 10 were included in the interview only in May to reveal students' feeling and ideas about the whole academic year.

2. In what ways have your feelings changed in connection with learning English this year?

Five categories were established after analyzing the answers: (1) his year is very difficult, not fun anymore; (2) no more crafts, I miss it; (3) more interesting stories; (4) I like it and (5) no change. Ten participants liked the lessons more than in the beginning of the academic year.

Extract 119

B208: Mostanában jobban tetszenek az órák, csak jók. [I like the lessons more nowadays, they are just good.]

Extract 120

B304: Az órák egyszerűbbek és könnyebbek, szeretem őket. [The lessons are better and easier, I like them.]

Seven students find the stories more interesting; thus, they enjoy the lessons more. As extract 121 shows children appreciated that they were involved in selecting the stories

Extract 121

B205: Jó ötlet volt, hogy mi választhatjuk a meséket. Mázlim van, mert mind azt olvassuk, amire én is szavaztam. [I was a good idea that we can choose the stories. I am lucky because we always read the one I vote for.]

Extract 122

G308: A mesék már nem olyan dedósak, viccesek. Ez jó. [The stories are not that childish any more, they are more fun. It is good.]

Three students found the lessons too difficult, and three others articulated that they missed crafts activities from the lessons. Crafts activities were integrated into the syllabus to create illustrations to the stories and props for the performances.

Extract 123

B204: Hiányzik, hogy nem kézműveskedünk papírból. Elsőben egy csomó dolgot csináltunk. [I miss the paper crafts. In first grade we made a lot of things.]

Extract 124

G405: Én szerettem a színezős lapokat, meg a kézművezést. [I liked the coloring sheets and the crafts projects.]

3. In what ways have your feelings changed in connection with the oral tasks of the English tests?

Six categories were established in the students' ideas about the diagnostic tests: (1) enjoy more; (2) feel the tasks easier; (3) less anxious; (4) boring; (5) enjoy the evaluation and (6) no change.

Eight students liked the tests more because they felt working in pairs was easy. Seven students found them interesting and enjoyable.

Extract 125

B407: Először nehéz volt megérteni a feladat lényegét, de most érdekes amit csinálunk. [First it was difficult to understand the main point of the tasks, but now it is interesting what we do.]

Extract 126 refers to the list of quiz questions, where children had to wait for their turn before answering the questions.

Extract 126

G203: Izgalmas kivárni a kérdésemet és az új történetek izgalmasabbak. [It is exciting to wait for my question and the new picture stories are more interesting.]

Three students found that the tests became easier over the year.

Extract 127

B206: Valahogy ezek a tesztek most könnyebbek, mint az ősziek. [Somehow these tests are easier than the ones in autumn.]

Four students enjoyed the discussions after checking the tests together. They reported on the usefulness of this process; thus, they underlined the importance of diagnostic feedback and scaffolding their learning.

Extract 128

B208: Azt szeretem, hogy az angolon van időnk megbeszélni a feleleteket, mert tudom, hogy mit kellett volna mondanom. [I like that in English we have time to talk about the tests, because I know what I should have said.]

Extract 129 suggests that students enjoyed negotiation with me and with each other about their achievement, the tasks and the stories we used.

Extract 129

G308:   Szeretem, hogy megbeszéljük a hibákat, és elmondhatjuk neked a saját véleményünket is az órákról. [I like that we discuss the mistakes, and we can also tell you (the teacher) our opinion as well about the lessons.]

5.5. Discussion

Considerable change can be seen in connection with the students' ideas on the importance of learning English. According to students' answers in October 2013, the idea that everybody speaks English seems to be motivating to learn it as well as the possibility of getting into a good secondary school. Similarly to Nikolov's (1999a) findings, integrative motivation did not have an influential role in FL learning in this age group. Parents' ideas about this item dominated children's own considerations and in the next interview in May none of children refer to their parents but present their own ideas. In contrast with the findings of Lopriore and Mihaljević Djigunović (2011) about the role of FL language exposure among YLs, the use of internet as a source of motivation was hardly present. Computer games and learning from the internet are important reasons for learning English only for five participants, which is a surprising finding knowing that according to classroom comments the most popular free-time activity of the participants is playing computer games. Their answers given in May, 2014 reveal that travelling becomes an important issue when thinking about FL learning. The reason can be found in the forthcoming summer holiday, when most of the students travel abroad.

Similarly to Chan and Wu (2004), the two most anxiety-provoking situations were: (1) speaking in front of others and (2) tests. The cause of students' anxiety related to testing situations changed over the year. By the end of the academic year twice as many participants felt anxious about their results than in October, while the teacher's beliefs about the students did not cause anxiety any more. In grade 4 anxiety caused by the other students' comments disappeared by May and students reported that they did not feel anxious before the tests. They were, however, anxious about the results. Most probably students got used to talking about their mistakes in front of their mates and the teacher thus they did not connect anxiety to these situations. Meanwhile test results became more important for them as feedback about their knowledge. In grades 2 and 3 the opinion of

the parents and the classmates was more important than in grade 4. In grade 4 classmates' opinion became more influential.

Students' anxiety connected to situations where they are asked to speak English decreased considerably by May. Although 16 students still felt embarrassed, strong negative feelings were not reported by any of the students. The decrease of anxiety among students is also indicated by the answers given to question 6: 14 students stated that they experienced no anxiety in connection with learning English. The main cause of anxiety seemed to be taking part in a lesson in front of the parents and guests on open days.

Students' perception of their proficiency in English changed to a great extent over the year. By May all of them declared that they could converse with someone speaking only English, and 23 students stated that they could speak English very well or well. Their test results offer evidence to support these ideas.

Seventeen students' feelings became more positive in connection with learning English. Their answers reveal that two main reasons are given why: interesting, intrinsically motivating materials and their improving proficiency indicating resultative motive caused this positive attitude towards learning English. The importance of motivating materials and classroom activities is highlighted in Nikolov's (1999a) research. They also found negotiation motivating, as in Nikolov (2000b) on negotiation syllabus.

The opinions about the diagnostic tests also changed for the better. After getting to know the task types, students found them interesting and funny, and they found working in pairs affective and easy.

5.6. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyze my students' self-perceptions as language learners and their motivation connected to their English lessons and diagnostic testing. Anxiety, proficiency and motivation were the focus of investigation.

Apparently, they have straightforward beliefs about the ways they like learning English and about the advantages of diagnostic testing. Although they are anxious about language learning in some cases, most of the children are generally confident about mastering English. Foreign language anxiety seems to decrease over time, as their proficiency

improves. Most of the students were inspired by instrumental and mastery motives during the year of the investigation.

The findings revealed useful messages for me as a teacher and researcher. They helped me realize my students' needs and ways of thinking, and they also made me rethink my own teaching practice. Anxiety is an issue which still has to be dealt with by giving more positive feedback to my students.

Chapter 6

A case-study on how the diagnostic tests worked with a student with ASD

6.1. Introduction

As my school successfully integrates and educates students with special educational needs (SEN), I decided to write a case study about one of my students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The analysis of the way he studied English and the methods I applied to make his learning successful can help colleagues who work with SEN students.

6.2. Description of ASD

In this section I do not aim to elaborate on the construct of autism but I introduce those features of ASD which are necessary to understand the behavior and learning processes of students with ASD. The British Autism Education Trust explains ASD to teachers by applying Sternberg and Barbara's (2003) definition:

> An ASD is a lifelong developmental disability that affects the way a person communicates and relates to the people and the world around them. The term spectrum is used as, although people with an ASD will share three main areas of difficulty, the condition will affect them in differing ways. No one child you work with will be the same as another and therefore, the support strategies you put into place will vary from child to child. (para. 1)

The three areas mentioned in the definition are: (1) social communication; (2) social interaction and (3) social prediction. The last one refers to the ability of predicting and understanding other people's behavior and reactions. Besides these areas of social skills, areas of learning can also be influenced by ASD.

The following list indicates the difficulties children with ASD usually have at school according to Balázs (2000):

- sensory processing
- attention deficit
- visual-motor integration
- problem solving
- highlighting relevant information
- generalization
- adopting to new and unexpected situations
- symbolic thinking
- understanding of the aim of tasks
- in the development self-perception
- the interpretation of reality
- the interpretation of abstract expressions and oral instructions
- the creative use of knowledge and skills. (p. 640)

The following sections overview to what extent these problems influenced Daniel's school days.

6.3. Introducing Daniel

6.3.1. Pre-school years

In this chapter I analyze to what extent some of the above difficulties occurred in Daniel's case (B 306) and how they could be overcome in an integrated classroom environment. Instead of the code used so far, I will use Daniel as a pseudo name to make the style of this section more personal.

Daniel was a third-grader boy at the time of my study in 2013. He entered our school four years prior to my research as a member of the pre-school class. Although he was diagnosed with ASD at the early age of 3 and he had serious behavior problems in his previous kindergarten, he could get integrated easily into our community. His mates accepted him and they became friends quickly. His kindergarten teacher visited him in his previous kindergarten and observed his behavior. According to her notes, Daniel was a boy who could not tolerate if he was rejected in any situation. He lay down, cried and did

not communicate with anyone. Although this was quite a shocking experience for the kindergarten teacher, she was open to accept him in the pre-school group. It would be hard to find the reasons for a dramatic change in his behavior but it is a documented fact that from the first moment in the new group Daniel behaved in a totally different way. He was ready to cooperate, he accepted if his will was not fulfilled and he communicated if he had problems or difficulties of any kind. Most probably the smaller group, personal attachment to the new kindergarten teacher and the way she communicated with him resulted in this positive change. The above data was documented in her diary. SNI teachers dealing with students with ASD have to keep a diary about each student's development and difficulties. These diaries help us to follow students' development.

Before his acceptance to this class all the teachers and care-takers had a consultation with an expert on child ASD; she gave useful practical advice on how to integrate children with ASD. The management of the school offers such opportunities to consult specialists any time a new child with SNI is accepted to the school.

The most important advice in Daniel's case was to help him avoid unexpected events. Thus, the kindergarten teacher started every morning by explaining what would happen that day in what order. They created cards with drawings about the events of the day, put them in order and stuck them on the wall. If one event finished, they removed the card. Thus, it was easy to follow the daily schedule. They ended each day by talking about the events of the next day and emphasized if there were unusual events such as going to the theatre or having guests.

As I was the head of the SEN team, I organized his developmental classes. He needed speech therapy for the articulation of [r] sound. As to everyone's surprise he had no problems with communication, one of the leading symptoms of ASD, he did not need extra lessons for communication development in the pre-school year. His kindergarten teacher could recall only one event when Daniel needed extra help, besides the morning and afternoon talks about the timetable. One Monday morning the group went to the theatre, but Daniel thought that they would go on Tuesday, and he was quite upset. With the help of the kindergarten teacher he could calm down and they left for the theatre. Unfortunately, the first scene of the performance started with balloons and Daniel got so frightened that they had to leave the theatre and could not go back to the show.

6.3.2. School years

After the pre-school year Daniel continued his studies at the school with five of his groupmates. Thus, his new class was not totally unfamiliar to him. They had five meetings with their future classmates and teachers before the beginning of the academic year in September. These meetings offered opportunities to play together and to get to know each-other. Despite the fact that during these occasions Daniel did not take part in the games but took the role of an observer, his relationship with the new classmates was good from the beginning of the school year. His teachers were equipped with the necessary knowledge and methods needed to integrate him and to teach him effectively. Experts on ASD were invited to share their knowledge, and Daniel's parents also participated in a consultation with the teachers to share detailed information about his habits, likes and dislikes. He could read in Hungarian when he started school because he had learnt it at home with the help of his grandmother on weekends. He started learning English in the pre-school year. He enjoyed the lessons, memorized rhymes easily but did not take part in activities accompanied by music. His rejection of music was maintained during the school years as well. Learning to write and simple arithmetic operations did not cause him any difficulties. He was outstandingly good at spelling, but he was frustrated by not understanding proverbs, jokes and word problems in mathematics.

Applying Balázs's (2000) list of the difficulties children with ASD face, I will summarize to what extent Daniel's learning was influenced by them. Problems in sensory processing mainly occurred in overreacting to noises and music, confusing similarly sounding words, misinterpreting requests and performing tasks requiring fine motor skills such as hand-writing. Attention deficit was not observed either in the lessons or in free time activities. Visual-motor integration and eye and hand coordination made his drawing, copying, handwriting, cutting and manipulating classroom tools problematic. Difficulty in problem solving, highlighting relevant information, generalization and creative use of previously acquired knowledge set Daniel's development back both in arithmetic and L1. The lack of symbolic thinking and the misinterpretation of abstract expressions and oral instructions often caused further obstacles in his improvement. Helping him understand the aim of the tasks resulted in better achievement in all the school subjects. The ability to adapt to new and unexpected situations, as well as Daniel's self-perception, showed significant improvement over the first school years. Thus, the interpretation of reality around him

enabled him to find his place in the school community. However, unexplainable fears and obsessions frequently co-occurred in stressful situations.

6.3.3. Learning English as a FL

During his first year at school he could follow the English lessons, but he turned his back to me when the group started to sing and he did not want to do drawing tasks. However, Daniel showed significant development in these areas:

- he could recognize words and expressions in tales and poems after listening to them
- he could follow classroom instructions
- he could recall tales and poems with visual aid
- he could take part in role plays based on the stories we learnt.

He did not seem to enjoy the lessons to the same extent as he did in the pre-school year. He got frustrated easily because of code switching during the lessons. He kept asking me to translate into Hungarian everything I uttered in English. He refused to draw in the lessons, because he stated that it was not useful. He also felt uncomfortable to work with a partner or in groups, as he said he was afraid of learning something incorrect from his peers. As a first grader, his achievements in all the subjects were outstanding. Hungarian spelling did not cause any difficulties, he was one of the best readers and he had no problems with basic arithmetic skills. Drawing and music, however, frustrated him.

During the second year a minor relapse was detectable in his achievement as he could not take part in communication based activities. He refused to answer questions in English. While his classmates enjoyed tasks, he got frustrated by them. He refused to participate in role play, such as shopping for food, helping a foreigner with a map or showing a stranger around the house. As he put it, he did not want to take part because he would not do so in real life and found these activities useless.

To make his life easier in the lessons I applied the following practices:

- I let him withdraw from activities he did not want to take part in.
- As I knew that he was especially interested in maps and countries, I gave him tasks in English focusing on different countries and cultures. Thus, while the

others worked on activities he did not like, he could work on his personalized tasks, such playing memory card game with English words.

- As he was interested in the written form of words more than his peers, I made him word cards. Thus, he started learning reading in English earlier than the rest of the group. This special expertise made him proud.

- While the others worked on acting out certain roles and interacted with one another, I explained to him when to use certain expressions. We matched pictures showing social situations with appropriate expressions.

- I encouraged him to search on the internet and find the stories and topics we talked about.

- He was allowed to find stories he was interested in and to bring the books to the lessons. We used these stories afterwards.

As it became obvious that he was unfamiliar with many social situations, such as introducing himself, greeting a stranger or asking for help, he started to go to extra developmental lessons to work on this field in Hungarian.

The third year brought considerable change in Daniel's attitude towards English. This change was due to a journey to Austria during the summer holiday, where he realized that English could be used as a means of communication abroad. His family experienced similar situations to those we had practiced in the lessons, so he became more motivated to participate. In the third year he took part in both situational activities and class performances. Although he still refused pair- and group-work in one-to-one situations with me, he started to use English when answering my questions.

6.4. Applying the tests

The results of the assessment tasks showed change in both Daniel's attitudes towards FLL and his own English development. In the next section Daniel's results on the tests are overviewed.

6.4.1. Quiz questions

His reaction to the quiz questions task shows that using L2 for communication purposes was not fulfilled in October, 2013, when he was a 9-year-old third grader. He did not answer any questions and he did not let me help him either. He stated in Hungarian that

he would not take part in the task. In January, 2014 his attitudes changed: he refused to answer in front of the class, but he was willing to answer me in the break in a one-to-one situation. He was relaxed enough to work on the tasks. Here is an extract from January, 2014:

Extract 130

T: Who is your favorite sportsman?

Daniel: Messi.

T: What is your favorite TV program?

Daniel: Discovery and Da Vinci.

T: What do you like to do in the winter holidays?

Daniel: Nem értem ezt a hosszút. [I don't understand this long one]

T: In the winter?

Daniel: *nods*

T: What do you like to do in the winter?

Daniel: Nem, nem szeretem a telet. [No, I don't like winter] Ezt hagyjuk, ezt nem tudom. [Let's skip this one, I don't know this one.] Kérdezz egy újat! [Ask me another one]

T: What is the nicest building in your town?

Daniel: Building? Magyar? [Hungarian?]

T: Yes, in Budapest.

Daniel: Parliament and Erzsébet bridge?

His answers reveal that he understood nearly all the questions and he tried to find key words in the questions which helped him to understand them. He asked for help when it was necessary. His answers were relevant, and he was eager to get a new question when he could not understand one. This shows that he wanted to take part in the task. His enthusiasm was even more obvious in May, 2014.

Extract 131

T: Which animal can sing well?

Daniel: Bird.

T: Think of something white.

Daniel: Snow.

T: What is the color of snow?

Daniel: White (laughing because the previous question was very similar) Adhatsz még egy másikat. (You can ask another one)

T: What clothes do you wear in the spring?

Daniel: Shorts and T-shirt.

He asked for a new question when he did not find the item challenging enough. The answers were given in the classroom, but he insisted on me asking him. He still did not want to engage in pair-work.

6.4.2. Pair work

As I knew his negative feelings connected to pair-work, I was not surprised when he refused to interact in the picture comparison task. The task requires students to talk about similar pictures to find differences. First, Daniel showed some interest in the task but as I explained it, he realized that this task was very similar to those used for developing visual differentiation in his extra lessons. He stated that as this task had a different aim in another lesson, it could not be used for language learning purposes. I could not use this task for assessment during the whole academic year. When I tried to apply a similar task with different pictures about housing in England to elicit how he can describe them, he spotted the similarity of the task and refused to do it.

Although I knew that Daniel had difficulties with visual discrimination, I applied the picture description task twice during the academic year. This task requires students to talk about a girl's daily routine. The task contains small pictures showing different activities, such as riding a bike, doing shopping, playing the guitar. First, Daniel did not want to take part and was about to cry in October 2013. After the lesson he explained that the pictures about Sally were so similar that he could not see any difference. This showed that visual differentiation was still problematic for him and he was not able to do the task. In May, 2014 he agreed to do the task. Although he did not want to talk about the pictures, he listened to my sentences and pointed to the pictures I was talking about.

It was very difficult to make Daniel talk about his feeling. However, as he stated in Extract 58 he felt anxious about working in pairs and answering questions in English in front of his peers. Although he complained about the activities he did not find useful, he was highly motivated if he got grades for his achievement.

6.5. Conclusion

In spite of his difficulties, Daniel insisted on taking part in many activities. He found it important to be assessed and to be a good speaker of English. His openness and interest in other countries and cultures has increased to a great extent over the year.

Daniel could understand my utterances while taking tests. He was able to get engaged in conversation with me and reacted both in English and in Hungarian. However, it was clear that in some other areas he lagged behind. Creativity in language use and improvement in cooperation with peers were not at all observed. He mainly used one-word utterances in his answers without applying any previously learnt structures.

Unfortunately, the assessment tasks applied in this study failed to tackle all the improvements Daniel has made, mostly because they were not designed to assess SEN students with difficulties in social interaction.

Further research is needed to develop tests which are appropriate for assessing the oral performance of students with communication difficulties.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

7.1. Summary of the findings

In my dissertation I have studied the assessment of YLLs, as the introduction of early language programs is a strong trend in European and the Hungarian educational context as well (Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011). Age-appropriate assessment tasks and practices belong to those requirements which have to be met to launch an effective program. As diagnostic assessment is suitable for following learners' development, their strengths and weaknesses, the aim of my study was to observe how diagnostic assessment can be integrated into my syllabus and my daily practice. My ultimate aim was to contribute to the improvement of the present assessment practices of Hungarian language classrooms. Three studies are included in the empirical part of my dissertation. The first one gives an account of using oral tasks for assessment over an academic year. I also examined what my students thought of the diagnostic tests we had tried out. Data was collected with classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The second one investigates students' beliefs and feelings in connection with language learning and assessment. The participants were asked to answer questions and their answers were analyzed to find emerging patterns. The third one introduced the qualitative case study of a student with ASD.

7.1.1. Study 1: A study on the use of diagnostic speaking tests in three groups of YLs': Statistical data analysis on FL development over a year

Study 1 elicited both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was elicited from scoring the achievements of the students' on the diagnostic speaking tests, and I also analyzed my diary notes, classroom observations and the children's comments during test taking provided qualitative data. My diary contained my notes about (1) the students' participation, comments, strategy use and development and (2) the results and difficulties of administering the tests.

I explored how the diagnostic tests offer me opportunities to follow and scaffold children's development in EFL. The tasks gave useful feedback about the students' progress. The oral tasks elicited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, thus, the improvement in these two fields could be followed by applying them. The growth of the students' eagerness to express themselves in pair work can be also documented by using the tests as well. Students became more confident in asking for help during the academic year. Self-correction and the conscious use of longer sentences suggest conscious L2 use. The test results indicated development in students' accuracy and fluency The tests served the pedagogical purposes of assessment for learning, as they provided valuable data for analysis to allow me to gain useful information about my students' development (Bachman, 1990 and Pinter, 2006). The real strength of the tasks is that they are highly motivating for the students to do them (Nikolov, 1995). It was easy to apply the tests. The scoring system offers clear guide to the assessment. The student's L2 proficiency developed to different extents during the academic year. The scoring system allowed me to follow minor changes in students' achievement. All YLs became more independent and more confident users of English with considerable development in L2 speaking skills. Students gradually got used to the task types and in May, 2014 fourth graders were able to assess their peer's development and give positive feedback about it. Self-evaluation occurred both in negative and positive way (Nikolov, 2006). As Pinter (2006) highlights, regular training is needed to help students learn how to assess their own achievement. My study also reveals that with the necessary preparation students become capable of monitoring their knowledge (Butler, 2016). The diagnostic assessment tasks can be integrated into the syllabus as eliciting vocabulary with them is age-appropriate. Thus, I did not have to change the content of the syllabus to use the tests. Students' strategy uses were characterized by 'metacognitive' and 'social and affective' strategies, similarly to earlier findings (Nikolov, 2006).

7.1.2. Study 2: The study on how children's attitude, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence changed over one year

I analyzed my students' self-perceptions as language learners and their feelings connected to their English lessons and diagnostic testing in Study 2. Anxiety, proficiency and motivation were in the focus of investigation. I explored what beliefs emerged while

children took the speaking tests and how children's attitude, motivation, anxiety and self-confidence change over a school year.

Apparently, they had straightforward beliefs about the ways they liked learning English and about the advantages of diagnostic testing. Although they were often anxious about language learning in certain situations, most of the children were generally confident about mastering English. Foreign language anxiety seemed to decrease over time, as their proficiency improved. In contrast with Nikolov's findings (2002), students did not feel highly anxious about testing and its influence on their final grades at the end of the term. They felt more anxious about speaking in front of their peers, similarly to participants in Mihaljević Djigunović 's (2009a) study. However, oral tests did not cause anxiety in most of the cases. As highlighted by Nikolov (2016), both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are vital in case of YLs. Second graders were mostly extrinsically motivated, whereas intrinsic, instrumental and mastery motivation characterized most of the older learners.

7.1.3. Study 3: A case-study on how the diagnostic tests work with a student with ASD

Study 3 aimed to explore how the diagnostic tests work with a student with ASD. In the case of the student with ASD the speaking tasks applied for this study failed to show all the improvements. Creativity in language use, improvement in cooperation with peers and conscious strategy use were not at all detectable over the year. However, he actively took part in the assessments. He felt motivated to work on the oral tasks and to be assessed. As assessment became very important for him, he regularly asked for feedback about his development.

7.2. Limitations of the studies

Besides the analyses of the findings of my study it is necessary to mention its limitations. Perhaps the most serious limitation of the research design is the sample size. The small number of participants (n=28) does not allow the generalization of the findings. Although the dissertation provides sufficient data about the applicability of diagnostic oral assessment in teaching practice at one school, more research is necessary to explore how assessment tasks work in other contexts with other YLs and teachers.

Another limitation is related to my role in this research as a teacher researcher. As a participant researcher my interpretation might be biased and data can be distorted. However, my knowledge about my students allowed me to have a better understanding of their behaviour in the assessments. My close contact with them allowed me create a classroom environment which had beneficial influence on the students' achievements.

It would be necessary to extend the examination by involving a larger population with different educational backgrounds and by involving more practicing teachers and their classes.

7.3. Self-reflection

The study's findings carry important pedagogical implications for my teaching practice. Besides developing my students' L2 proficiency, my primary aim in the classroom is to assist my students to become autonomous learners. To achieve this aim SA is a necessary means. During the research I realized that giving regular and clearly worded feedback to my students helped them talk about and assess their own achievement. Although it was time consuming to discuss each task, students became more conscious about their strengths and difficulties and had the opportunity to negotiate possible ways of further development. These discussions in class let students help each other with ideas about learning and their self-perception also developed. Children could talk about their difficulties and about the possible causes of the problems. Thus, the cooperation between me and my students became more effective.

Previous studies (Nikolov, 1999b, 2003b, 2008; Nikolov & Józsa, 2006; Nikolov & Nagy, 2003, Hild 2014) highlight the benefits of early language programs, and they reveal that although language teachers are aware of the theories underlying good practice, their beliefs, parents' expectation and their previous language learning experiences overwrite their intentions. In many cases I also experienced this phenomenon.

Although I always thought about myself as a teacher who was highly aware of the importance of communicative language teaching, I preferred written forms of assessment to save time and spent less time on the assessment of my pupils' oral performance. I realized this contradiction between theory and my practice during the research. This finding about myself was especially important for me because in the case of students with

SEN I always kept in mind the significance of oral tasks for assessment regardless of time limits.

The most outstanding message of the study is that diagnostic feedback is a useful means of assessment for learning. It really fosters L2 learning by giving all the time feedback about the process.

Although I actively took part in the assessment of the tasks and helped my students when they needed help, I had to get used to a role when I, as a teacher, had to step back and let my students work by themselves to become autonomous learners.

Another very important finding of my research is reflected in my own concept of proficiency. I had to realize that I have a very traditional concept, as I constantly turned back to grammatical correctness as an indicator of competence. Many of the students' feedback show that they were highly concerned with accuracy. This may mean that I promote accuracy in a way which is much stronger than my intention. I was aware that diagnostic assessment aims to reveal students' strengths and difficulties as well, even the analysis of my data contained more reflections on omissions, mistakes and problems than on what learners can do well. Although the atmosphere of my classes and the assessments were overwhelmingly positive, I have to change my attitude towards grammatical accuracy and learners' difficulties.

In the research project I had to reconsider my view about homework and the mp3 files I sent to my students every weekend with the new expressions to let them practice at home. As there is considerable pressure from the parents I introduced this practice because they could easily follow what we learnt week by week if they listened to the files with the children. As I give detailed feedback about the students' L2 development after the assessments to their parents, I do not feel it necessary to inform the parents about our work in other ways. However, when children ask me to send the songs and videos home to show them to their friends and family, I will do so.

Finally, I find it very important to share the results of my research with practicing teachers as the benefits of ELL can be realized if teachers are aware of age-appropriate methods for FL teaching and assessment. Although my findings cannot be generalized, they indicate that DA with the tests I applied made it possible for me as a teacher to follow and scaffold children's development in EFL.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Parents' consent form

Kedves Szülők!

A 2013/2014-es tanévben gyermekük általános iskolai osztályában kutatási munkát szeretnék végezni. A kutatás során megfigyelném a gyerekek fejlődést az angolórákon. A kutatás eredményeit doktori disszertációm elkészítéséhez használnám. A gyerekek személyiség jogainak védelmében, a kutatás dokumentációjában álnéven fognak szerepelni.

Kérem, amennyiben hozzájárulnak a tanórákon való részvételemhez, írják alá az alábbi beleegyező nyilatkozatot!

Budapest, 2013. szeptember. 03.

Együttműködésüket előre is köszönöm:

Turányi Zsófia

…………………………………… (név) hozzájárulok, hogy Turányi Zsófia kutatási céllal a gyermekem által látogatott tanórákon részt vegyen, és megfigyelje gyermekem fejlődését.

Budapest, 2013. szeptember 03.

…………………………………….

Appendix B: Placement test for the first graders

	Answer	Note
What's your name?		
What's your favorite color?		
What's your favorite drink?		
What's your favorite dish/food?		
What's your hobby?		
What animals live on the farm?		
What animals live in the jungle?		
What animals live at the zoo?		
What color is your hair?		
How old are you?		
Where do you live?		
What can you buy at a supermarket?		
What can you do in a living room?		
What can you do in a kitchen?		

Appendix C: Spot-the-difference task 42 from test booklet 1
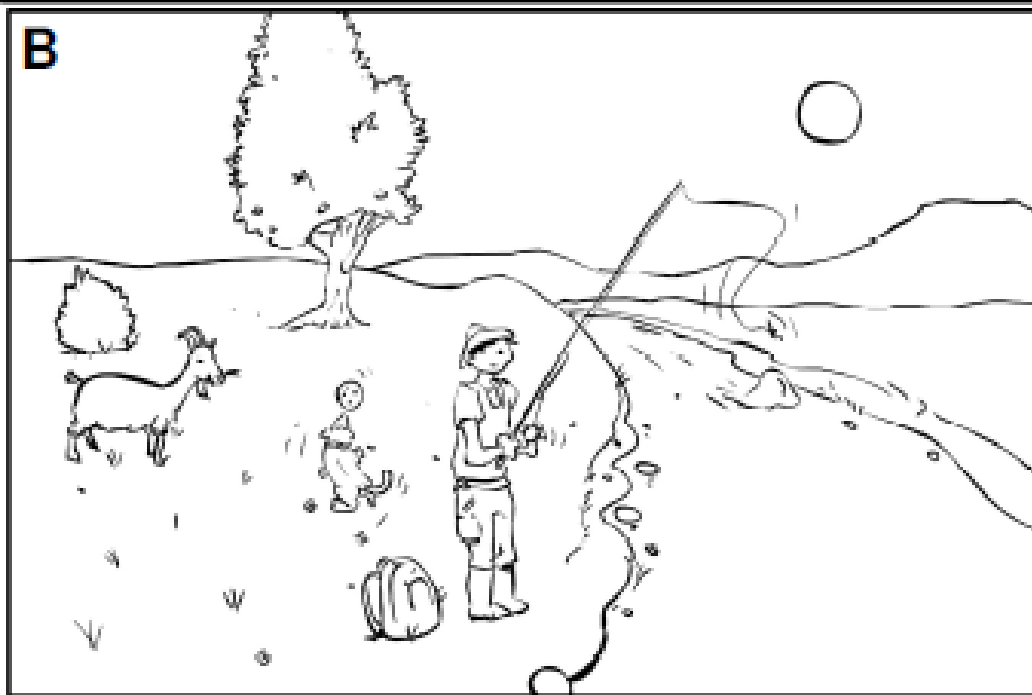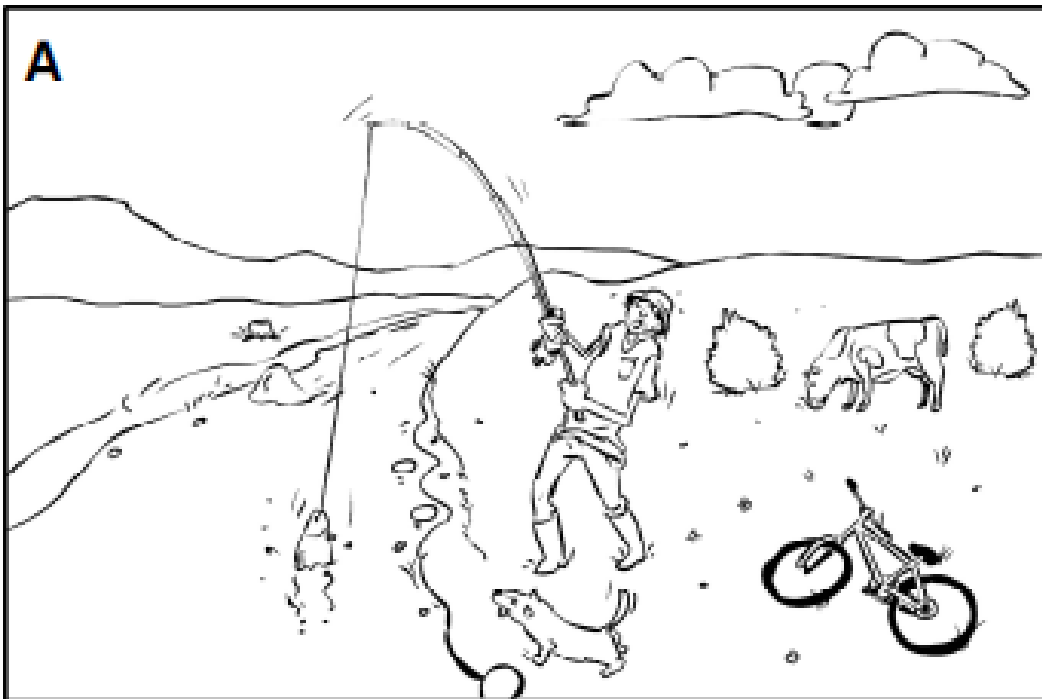
Task 42: Students' sheet

Appendix C.1: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 07.10.2013.

2nd graders — Partners are randomly chosen   07.10.2013

- Setting: B 201   G 203 — volunteers to start.

① ↓
↳ only reacting with yes/no. → & asking for help.
sit next to
each-other   – no conversation
↓   – no asking for help

no eye-contact.

② B 208 — G09 .. don't look at each other.
· list of utterances
· code switch (Tó) → looking at me for help.

③ B 204 — G 207 · embarassed
· concentrate to each other
· wait for each other
· copy each other
· react to each other → got relaxed.

④ G 202 — B-206   sitting ⊢ ⊣
· relaxed
·

⑤ B 205 — T
| ↳ does not repeat T's utterances.
| · embarassed
↳ his idea to work with the teacher.
· stands up (usually Ss stands up for oral tests)

B201:   No, yes, no (just reacting to the partner's sentences).

G203:   This picture a bicycle.

In this picture has a sun.

This is a small dog.

B208:   This picture is a goat.

Fish in river.

Cow eating.

G209:   In this picture has a bush.

This is a TÓ.

This is a mountain, small mountain.

B204:   In this picture is a fishingBOT.

In this picture is a bicycle.

Ez most egy hold vagy nap? [Is this the moon or the sun?]

A dog near the river.

G207:   This picture is have a cow.

In this picture is a fishing rod.

In this picture is a cloud.

B206:   No cloud and no cow.

Here is a goat and a dog.

A school bag behind the dog.

G202:   There is a cow. Cow is eating.

There is two bush.

Man fishing.

B205:   This picture is a fisherman.

No cow, a goat.

Not two bushes, one bush and a tree.

Appendix C.2: Dairy notes and transcript of the third graders' oral performance

Date: 08.10.2013.

App C2

3rd grade   Randomly chosen partners   08.10.2013.
                                                      8⁰⁰

① G 301   B 304
    · relaxed   · asking for help in L1.
    · laugh at the pictures ·
    · T helps to go on.
    · Raining outside → G 301 was looking out of the window.

②
    B 306 — B 305
        ↳ · doesn't look at his partner.
          · Asks T to let him go to the toilet / comes back /
            Refuses to take part

③ B 305 joins the other ø pair.

    B 305 — B 302 — G 311 → realizes that B 305 has the
    ‿‿‿‿‿‿‿‿‿‿   same picture.
      They work together.
                        ↘ directs the conversation.
        ↳ Translates to ask for help.
        · Listen and react to each-other
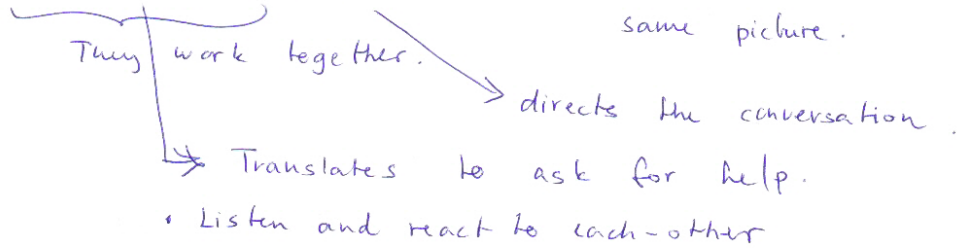
④ G 303 — G 308   A F
    ↳ wants to start → very fast. THAT's IT.
      · arguing about the weather,
        · ignoring T.
                        ↱ few minutes later asks to work
⑤ B 309 — G 310 — B 307   with T.
Yes/No!   ↳ asks questions to keep up conversation
             ↳ Peer-help.
⑥ B 307 — T → answers T's questions.
                    ↳ utterance without questions

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G301:   A man horgászik. Mi az a horgászik? [What is fishing?]

B304:   Fisherman, mint a Halászbástya. [Fisherman, like Fishermen's Bastion (famous sight in Budapest)

G301:   Akkor fish. [Then fish]

G304:   Nem, az a hal. Mi az a horgászik? [No, that is fish (the animal). What is to fish?

T: To fish. He is fishing.

G301:   A man is fishing.

There is a goat, a dog and a school bag in the picture.

The weather is sunny.

B304:   The man is fishing, yes.

The weather not sunny. Rainy. Not rainy, not sunny.

Yes dog, and yes cow.

B306:   He does not want to say sentences, he does not even look at the task sheet. He leaves the room. In the break he talks about the incident with T. They decide that he can just listen to the others and if he feels like, he can join.

B305:   He joins the next group.

B302:   Goat.

B305:   There isn't a goat in my picture. There is a cow.

G311:   There is cow. (Quickly repeating B305 as they have the same picture)

G311:   Now it is your turn. Would you say a sentence, please.

G311:   There is bike and ugly.

B302:   Yes, ugly dog. Mi az, az ugly? Kövér? [What is ugly? Fat?]

B305:   Ronda [ugly]. The dog is barking.

B302:   Játszik? [Is it playing?]

G311:   No, ugat. [No it isn't. It is barking]

B302:   This playing ball.

G311:   Cow eats.

B305:   Yes, grass. And the weather is cloudy.

B302:   My is sunny.

G311:   Fish in the river.

G303:   One cow and one man. One dog and one bicikli, azt nem tudom angolul. [one bicycle but I don't know that one in English] and sunny and foggy. Ennyi. [That's it]

G308:   I have a goat, not a cow.

I have a dog and a bicycle.

And it is sunny and not foggy. Mutasd, hogyan ködös? [Show me. What foggy looks like.].

G303: Shows her the picture.

Ez nem köd, hanem felhő. [It is not foggy. It is cloudy.]

G303: Nem mindegy [It doesn't matter]. (shrugging her shoulder)

B309: Mondjad a mondatokat, én majd javítom, ahogy nálam van a képen. [Say the sentences and I will correct them as I have them in my picture.]

G310: OK. There is a man.

B309: Yes.

G310: Man catches fish.

B309: No fish.

G310: There is a bicycle.

B309: No.

G310: What is there? A car?

B309: No car. A school bag.

B307: I can see a cow and a bike.

T: I can't see a cow but I can see a goat. Can you see a dog?

B307: Yes.

T: What is it doing?

B307: The dog is watching a fish.

T: Where is that fish?

B307: In the river. Half. And the cow is eating grass.

Appendix C.3: Dairy notes and transcript of the fourth graders' oral performance

Date: 08.10.2013.

App C3   fourth grad#ers   08.10. 2013.
                                                                        9:30

    · Sitting in a circle.

    → B401 - G403 - confident
                  · Rely on previous knowledge (I can see...)

    → B406 - B407 - turn to L1.
        ↳   · real# conversation.
    constantly   · relaxed
        looking at the teacher.   They speak very loudly.

        → B408 - B404
                    ↳ reacts to B408.
                     ↳ Yes   bush ↗ bush ↗ dog ↗ dog
        loses his temper — "encourages peer"
                                ↗   ↳ ↑ help.
            ↳ I will ask about it. !!

        → G402 — G405
                    ↳ billy - goat → previous knowledge.
                     ↳ looking at T for support.
            ↳
            · hesi ta ting.
            · anxicty.

B401: I can see a cow in the picture.

G403: I can see a goat in the picture.

B401: I can see a river and a fish in the picture.

G403: I can see a river and a tree in my picture.

B401: I can see the a bicycle is on the grass.

G403: The bag is on the grass, I can see.

B406: I can see in my picture a goat.

B407: Goooat? It is not a goat. It is a tehén. [cow].

B406: Cow vagy valami olyan. [or something like that.]

B406: In my picture is a dog.

B407: Yes, yes, here is a dog. And a man, aki horgászik. [who is fishing]

B406: Fishing.

B407: And the bike. It is on the floor.

B406: And I can see a sun on the mountain.

B408: In the picture there is a goat next to the bush.

B404: A cow next to the bush.

B408: The dog plays the ball with.

B404: The dog watch the water.

B408: The man standing next to the river.

B404: Yes.

B408: Mondjál már valamit. [Say something]

B404: Hagyjál. Mondom. [Leave me alone. I am saying] There is a mountain in the corner.

B408: Yes.

G402: I can see a cow.

G405: I can't see a cow. I can see a dog.

G402: I can see a dog and a fish.

G405: I can see a ball and a billy goat.

G402: The man is tired.

G405: The man is boring.

Appendix D: Spot-the-difference task 42 from test booklet 4
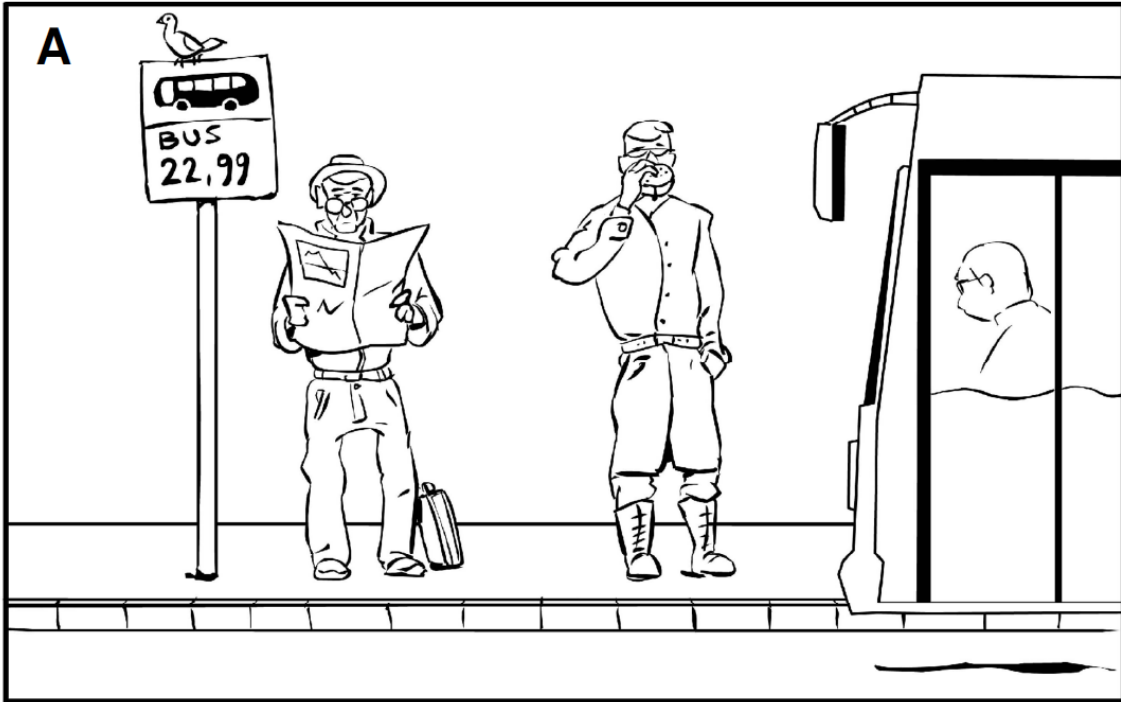
Task 42: Student's Sheet

Appendix D.1: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 08.01.2014.

App D1   2nd   randomly chosen   08.01.2014
                    pairs   8⁰⁰

sitting at the desks .

B 206 - G 203
    ↳ . very confident
    · reacting to each other
    ·
                    ↗ smiles
B 204 - G 209
    : very confident
    ° real conversation
    ↳ more anxious — thinking before the utterances .

relying on previous
knowledge → picture description

B 205 — B 208
        ↳ just reacts to the other .
        ↳ looks at the teacher for help / support .
        ↳ previous knowledge → 'ing' for .

G 207 - G 202 → real conversation
        → . anxious but directs
        → . peer - correction
        ↳ tries to look at the partner's pic .

B 201 - T
    ↳ he chooses T to be his partner
    ↳ answers T's questions and gives additional info.
    ↳ sits next to the picture .

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B206: I can see two man in the picture. You?

G203: I can see four man in the picture. Two on the bus.

B206: I can see one man on the bus. The driver.

G203: It is bus one, four, six, nine.

B206: This is twenty-two and ninety-nine. And I can see a bird. And the man is reading and eating.

G203: The man is drinking and the man is phoning.

B206: Is there a bird?

G203: No, there isn't.

B204: One man is eating. One man is reading.

G209: One man is drinking and one man is watching the phone.

B204: One bird is sitting.

G209: No, I can't see the bird.

B204: The bird is on the numbers.

G209: No.

B204: I can see the bus driver.

G209: No bus driver.

B205: I can see two men in the picture. In a bus stop.

B208: Yes. Two.

B205: I can see the bus. Yes?

B208: Yes. And the street.

B205: They are eating and reading.

B208: They are drinking and writing sms.

B205: There is a bird.

B208: No, there isn't.

G207: This is a bus stop with two men.

G202: Yes. One man is a tourist with a camera.

G207: No, my is not a tourist. An old worker and a soldier. They are going to work.

G202: The bus is going away.

G207: No, the bus is going to.

G202: I can see the bus numbers, two buses. Can you see the numbers?

B201: I can see a bird.

T: I can't see a bird in my picture. But there are two men in the middle of my picture.

B201:   Yes, there are two men in the middle.

T: One of them is drinking and the other is watching something on his cell-phone. What are the men doing in your picture?

B201:   One is eating a sandwich and one is reading a newspaper. He has a bag.

T: The bus in my picture is leaving.

B201:   This bus is coming.

Appendix D.2: Dairy notes and transcript of third graders' oral performance

Date: 06.05.2014.

App D2

3rd graders

06.05. 2014.
8 :00

(7 randomly chosen

① G 301 — B 305

↳ Question to ~~keep~~ maintain conversation

↳ Tries to direct.

↳ Bored.

② B 304 – G 311   → They ask questions.

↳ anxious,   → man**s** → stressing.

↳ Is it a joke ?

③ B 3°2 – G 30 3

↳ Not reall sentences.

— Similar utterances !? lack of verbs.

→ cooperation but critical.

→ stressed , turning to L1.

④ G 38 — B 307

↳. asks questions

→. peer - help.

→ much longer / more complex utterances.

⑤ B 309 — G 310 → reacts proper**ly**

↳ 'lists' words → asks questions

· fast / anxious ?

G301:   I can see a bus stop. And you?

B305:   Yes, I can see a bus stop. And two man are standing in the stop.

G301:   Yes, two man. The old man is watching the newspaper and the young man is eating.

B305:   I can see two young mans. One is playing with the mobile phone, the second is drinking coke or orange juice.

G301:   OK. There is a bird on the bus board.

B305:   No, no bird. It's bus one, four, six, nine

G301:   It's two, two, nine, nine

B305:   Mi? [What?] Looking at G301's picture. This is twenty-two and ninety-nine. There are two mans on the bus.

G301:   No just one.

B304:   There are two man and one on the bus. You?

G311:   Yes two mans. (Stressing the s) and two on the bus. What bus?

B304:   (Counting silently from one to 22) Twenty-two.

G311:   My is one, four, six, nine. They are eating or drinking or what?

B304:   Reading and eating a hamburger.

G311:   My is phoning and drinking.

B302:   I can see a bird on the board.

G303:   No, no bird. Two boys, and a bus.

B302:   Yes one old and one young and a bus. And a man on the bus.

G303:   Two boys on the bus.

B302:   One boy is reading and one boy is eating McDonalds.

G303:   Yes, no drinking and nem tudom [I don't know.]

B302:   And there is a bird.

G303:   Már mondtad. [You have already said it.]

G308:   I can see two men in the picture, they are waiting for a bus. Twenty/two or ninety-nine.

B307:   Yes, two men and bus.

G308:   What number?

B307:   One, four, six, nine.

G308:   Can you see the bus driver?

B307:   No. He is drinking and he is playing games. [Pointing to his picture.]

G308: It is different. The old man is reading a newspaper and the young man is eating a sandwich, he is a solder.

B307: Yes.

B309: There is a bird, a bus front, two man, a bag.

G310: No there isn't a bird in my picture. But there are two men. What are they doing in your picture?

B309: Reading a newspaper and eating. And you?

G310: One is drinking and the other is standing with a phone. And the one is, has a camera. Tourist.

B309: The bird sitting. And there is a bus driver.

G310: I can't see the driver. I can see two boys on the bus.

Appendix E: Spot-the-difference task 44 from test booklet 11

A

B
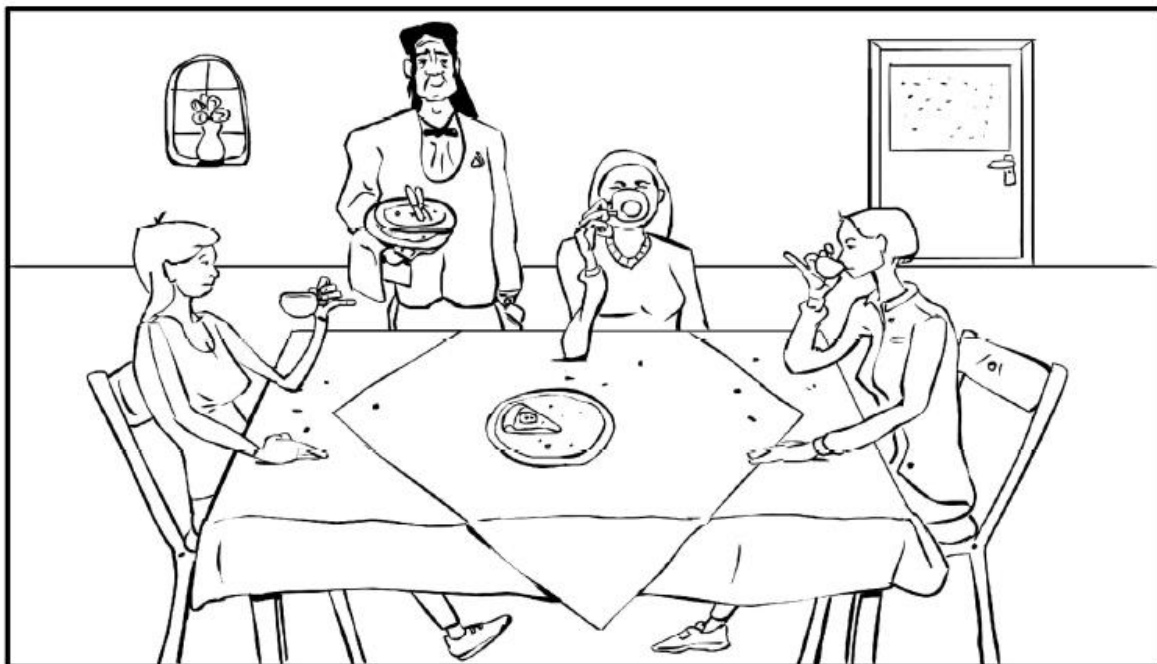
Appendix E.1: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 07.05.2014.

App E1   2nd grader g'   07.05.2014
                                                                  8ᵒᵒ

① B 201 — B 208
    ↳ Cooperation → asking questions
      ° Peer help.
      • Turning to L1.

② G 203 — G 207
      ↳ laughing → funny situ. about the dog
        ° communicate with ease.
    ↳ asking for help   no reaction.

③ G 209 — B 206
    • anxious
    • relying on previous knowledge → How many quests do
                                      you have?
    ↳ gets relaxed by the end.

④ B 204 — B 205
    Switch to L1 !!!.
    • embarassed / laugh
    • checking T's reaction
    • 'Say : and you?' → referring / relying on previous
                                        knowledge.

⑤
    G 202 — T → standing next to the teacher.
    ↳ very proficient.
    • Asking questions.
    • not s anxious

B201 (pic A): In my picture there is a man and two woman. And you?

B208:   In my picture there are four. They drinking tea. And you?

B201:   The man is standing and the woman are eating pizza. Is there pizza in your?

B208:   Yes, one szelet [slice].

B201:   Piece. In my picture there is a big pizza on the table and flowers. Have you got flowers?

B208:   No I haven't got flowers on the table. I have flowers on the window. Have you got a window?

B201:   Yes, 3 windows. Has the man long hair?

G203 (pic A): In my picture there is a table and there are two chairs. And in your?

G207 (pic B): In my picture There are three chairs and three girls and a waiter. Is there a dog in your picture?

G203:   No, there is no dog. You have a dog?

G207:   No. (Smiling)

G203:   Akkor miért kérdezed? [Why are you asking this?] There are three windows and there is a vase in one window. And you?

G207:   There is only one window in my picture and one door. Is there a door in your picture?

G203:   Yes, next to the window.

G207:   The waiter is sad and has long hair. Your waiter?

G203:   Mi az a waiter? [What is waiter?]

G209:   I can see two chairs, one table, three windows and one door in my picture. What can you see?

B206:   I can see a restaurant, three guests and a waiter. How many guests do you have?

G209:   I don't know. Can you see pizza?

B206:   Yes, I can see a pizza. And three teachers are drinking tea. Are there teachers in your picture?

G209:   Teachers? Yes, two. They eating pizza. Can you see the door?

B206:   Yes I can. And one window with flowers. Are there flowers in your picture?

G209:   Na ez egy különbség. [This is a difference].

B204 (pic A): I can see an unhappy man, azt hiszem egy pincér [I think he is a waiter]

B205 (pic B): A pincér a waiter. [waiter is waiter in English]. My waiter has long hair and he is sad too.

B204: Two girls happy. They eats.

B205: Kérdezned kéne. [You should ask something.]

B204: Hogy? [How?]

B205: Mondd, hogy and you? [Say: and you?]

B204: And you? (They laugh)

B205: I can see three girls, they are drinking coffee. What are they dinking?

B204: They not drinking. And you? (laughing)

B205: They are after the pizza because the waiter bringing the plates. Is the restaurant nice? The girls are eating pizza. What they eating in your picture?

G202 (pic A): (doing the task with the teacher)

I can see a restaurant. There is waiter.

He has something in his hands. What is in the waiter hand in your picture?

They are not drinking. They are talking and eating. How many tables are there?

Appendix E.2: Dairy notes and transcript of third graders' oral performance

Date: 08.01.2014.

AppE2   3rd graders   08.01.2014
                                        9:15

① 6301 – B305
    → Yes?
    → Turning to L1.
      → a peer - help
        → self - correction

② B 304 – B302
    → anxious
    → short, very similar sentences ??
    → end utterances with questions.

③ B 306 → Tries to take part, but he refuses.

④ 6311 – 6303 → Stand up while working
    · Strategy: Start with the object.
    · Turning to L1 to overcome difficulties.
    · Listen to each-other.

⑤ 6308 – 6310 → peer - correction   → Looking at each other's
    → keeping & holding   → conversation   picture.
      → translation !
    → deeply engaged → 6308 → writes down every thing. ??

⑥ B 309 – B307 → asks questions as well.
    → Tries to direct
    → bored !   → heavily rely on previous knowledge.
                 · looks at the teacher for support.
                 · Took notes while listining to the
                   other pairs. → But doesn't use it
                   later.

G301 (pic A): There is a table in the middle. Yes?

B305 (pic B): Yes. There are three chairs. Yes?

G301: No, there are two chairs. There are two girls near the table. Your picture?

B305: No there are three girls at the table. Near or at?

G301: Mi a különbség? [What's the difference?]

B305: (Miming near and at)

G301: Akkor at az enyém is. [Then mine is at too].

G301: They are eating pizza and there is pizza on the table. What about you?

G305: There is one pizza piece in the middle and the girls are drinking tea. Is there drinking in your picture?

G301: No drink. The man is standing near the table, (correcting herself) at.

B305: The man has long hair.

B304 (pic A): They are eating pizza. And you?

B302 (pic B): They are drinking tea. They are three are sitting. And you?

B304: They are two. One man. And you?

B302: Yes one man. He has long hair. Yes? Long?

B304: No, short. He unhappy. You?

B302: Yes, unhappy. Más nincs [There is nothing else.]

B306: (Refused to take part in the task because he didn't want to work with a partner.)

G311: Kezdjük a tárgyakkal! [Let's start with the objects.] There is a table, there are three windows and there is a door.

G303: Carpet. You?

G311: No. There are two mothers and a old boy. (hesitating)

G303: People, nem tudom a férfit. [no, no I don't know man] De van nekem is. But I have one too.

T: In English, please. That is a man. A waiter who works in a restaurant.

G303: The mothers are sit and the man standing. Mothers drinking tea. And you?

G311: The mothers are eating pizza. They aren't drinking. The man, yes, is standing and watching. And in your picture?

G303: Yes, he watching. There is a flower. And you?

G308: There are two womans in my picture. They are eating pizza. And there is a man. He is keeping the dessert.

G310:	Várjál már! Én jövök. [Wait, it's my turn.] There are three women, no womans! (correcting SG308) And they are drinking tea. What are your women drinking?
G308:	Nothing. Is there flower on you table?
G310:	Yes. There is. And in the window. And the man has long hair. And your picture?
G308:	He has short hair. And he is old. Is you young?
G310:	Old and angry. The women are nice?
B309:	There are two girls. Are there two girls?
B307:	No. There are three girls. Are there chairs?
B309:	Yes. Two. Are there tables?
B307:	Yes. One. There are one window. Are there windows?
B309:	Yes, three. Are they eating pizza?
B307:	Yes. And drink coffee. Drink they coffee?

Appendix F: Set of quiz questions A

1. What's your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your address?
4. What is your favourite food?
5. What food do you dislike?
6. What is your favourite colour?
7. What colour do you dislike?
8. What is your favourite school subject?
9. What is your favourite sport?
10. Which sport don't you like?
11. Who is your favourite sportsman?
12. Who is your favourite singer?
13. Who is your favourite film star?
14. When do you go to bed on weekends?
15. What do you have for breakfast on Sundays?
16. What clothes do you wear in the summer?
17. What clothes do you wear in the winter?
18. How many lessons do you have a day?
19. Where do you have lunch on weekdays?
20. What kind of books do you read?
21. What kind of music do you listen to?
22. What's your hobby?
23. What sports do you do?
24. How many people are there in your family?

25. What's your friend's name?
26. What's your father's name?
27. What's your mother's name?
28. How many sisters do you have?
29. How many brothers do you have?
30. How many friends do you have?
31. Think of something red.
32. Think of something black.
33. Think of something yellow.
34. Think of something green.
35. Think of something pink.
36. Think of something white.
37. Think of something black and white.
38. Think of something blue.
39. Think of something orange.
40. Think of something brown.
41. Think of something purple.
42. What colour is your favourite T-shirt?
43. What colour are your eyes?
44. What colour is your hair?
45. What colour are ducks?
46. What colour are foxes?
47. What colour are pigs?
48. What is the colour of frogs and of alligators?
49. What is the colour of snow?
50. What is the colour of mice and donkeys?
51. What colour are zebras?

52. What colour is your favourite animal?
53. What is your favourite ice cream?
54. What is your favourite fruit?
55. What fruits don't you like?
56. What is your favourite drink?
57. What is your favourite farm animal?
58. What is your favourite domestic animal?
59. What is your favourite wild animal?
60. What is your favourite zoo animal?
61. What is your favourite story?
62. What is your favourite film?
63. What is your favourite TV programme?
64. What is your favourite nursery rhyme?
65. What is your favourite song?
66. Who is your favourite teacher?
67. Which animal has four legs?
68. Which animal has two legs?
69. Which animal has no legs?
70. Which is a wild animal?
71. Which is a domestic animal?
72. Which animal can fly?
73. Which animal can swim well?
74. Which animal can sing well?
75. Which animal can run fast?
76. Which animal can live in water?
77. Which animal is very big?
78. Which animal is very small?
79. Which animal can you see in the Zoo?
80. Which animal is very long?
81. Which animal lives in trees?
82. When do you get up on weekdays?
83. When do you get up on weekends?
84. When do you go to bed on weekdays?
85. How many hours do you usually sleep at night?
86. What do you eat for lunch on Wednesdays?
87. What do you have for dinner on Tuesdays?
88. What clothes do you wear in the spring?
89. When do you brush your teeth?
90. What clothes do you wear in the autumn?
91. How do you go to school?
92. What TV programmes do you watch?
93. What do you do in the afternoon on weekdays?
94. Who helps you with your homework?
95. Who cooks lunch on Sundays?
96. What do you like to do in the summer?
97. What do you like to do in the autumn?
98. What do you like to do in the winter?
99. What do you like to do in the spring?

Appendix F.1: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 09.10.2013.

App F1   Quizz   09.10.2013
                   2nd graders   8⁰⁰
                   IT room → sitting in a circle

  • T. reads the questions
  • number of questions are picked out from a box on pieces
    of paper.

  B 201 → shaking his head for a answer.
              dislike x don't like

  G 202 → looking at me for help → rephrasing
                    ↳ asking for clarification

  G 203 ⇒ Asking for clarification in English
              self - correction

  B204 → ~~top~~ eagerly waiting for the questions. Stands up.

  B 205 → bored (seemingly) but takes part

  G 207 → Quickly answers

  B 206 → asking for help in L1,
              laughing in the end.

  B 208 → confidently speaks

  ⍉ G 209 → hesitant, does not dare to answer.
                   ⌒

Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.

B201:   18: no answer

7: (rephrasing dislike to don't like) brown

43: brown

G202:   59: dog

63: (program is mixed up with channel, clarified in English) RTL

T: RTL Club is a channel, Barátok közt [Among friends (Hungarian soap opera)] is a program.

G202:   Aha, X factor is my program.

G203:   88: What is clothes?

T: showing to her clothes.

23: farmer and T-shirt

50: green, no grey

10: football

B204:   52: dog

T: Yes, and what color is your dog?

black or white.

54: no favorite fruit

57: dog

B205:   31: apples

49: white

18: 5 or 6

G207:   40: a tree

46: red and brown

51: black and white

B206:   15: hot chocolate and sandwich

46: I don't know

17: coat and scarf and boots and kittens, no kittens. Mi is a kesztyű? [What is mittens in English?]

T: You mean mittens?

26: Yes mittens

68: children (laughing)

B208:   56: Coke

77: Elephant

79: Elephant, zebra, rhino, gorillas

G209:   88: T-shirt

T: Yes, very good. And what else?

no answer

73: fish

71: no answer

Appendix F.2: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 08.01.2014.

App F2. Quizz   2nd graders. (IT room)   08.01. 2014.
10:15.

- Ss are asked to answer with longer sentences
- T asks the questions
- ~~A bottle is stirred to choose who will answer~~ is for the first turn.

B 201. → confidently answers with longer sentences

G 202 → relying on background knowledge.
↳ pig – 'wilde pig'

G 203 → anxious → turning to L1.
↳ concentrates on answering with longer sentences

B 204 → relaxed but uses only 1-word utterances

G 206 → confident.

B 207 → asking back (seeking for support)
↳ turning to L1.

B 208 → asking for help in English ⟩ not the same day (they were ill)

G 209 → highly anxious, answers with 1-word utterances.

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Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.
Students are asked by the teacher to give answers with long complete sentences.

B201:   27 My mother's name is Krisztina.

95 My mother and my father cook lunch.

37 zebra, newspaper and pencils

G202:   48 Pigs are pink and in the forest brown.

14: After the film, at 10 o'clock.

96: I like sleep, and meet my friends and go to Greek.

G203:   61: No favorite story.

17: Jaj ez már volt egyszer. [o, we'have already had it] Coat, jeans, boots and scarf. (Saying quickly with a sigh of relief)

25: Zsófi. Ez hogy mondjam hosszabban? [How could I say it longer?]

B204:   78: mouse, spider and ant

11: Jose Carlos.

T: What sport?

B204:   He play football.

20: Jeronimo. It a mouse detective.

B205:   23: At school I have PE, after school I play tennis and walk my dog.

48: Green and brown. They live near rivers. Elég ennyi? [Is it enough?]

7: Brown and pink. And I like blue.

G206:   26: Zsolt. My father's name is Zsolt Kiss (pseudo-name)

89: In the morning, after lunch and in the evening.

38: My pencil-case. My eyes are blue too.

B207:   43: My eyes are green. Not blue.

81: In trees? Birds and monkeys in the jungle.

15: On Sundays? Sometimes pancakes or lángos [scone] at the market at my grandmother.

B208:   28: no sisters and no brothers. Hogy is van? [how is it in English?] valamilyen [some kind of] child. Egyedüli gyerek. [only-child]

19: Here, school

22: computer games. I play computer games.

G209:   1: Kate [pseudo-name]

21: Rock music

91: I don't understand.

Appendix F.3: Dairy notes and transcript of third graders' oral performance

Date: 08.10.2013.

App F3.   3rd graders   Date: 08.10.2013.
                                                                10:30.

• T reads the questions, Ss pick them out of a box
                        number of questions are on slips of
                        paper.

＋ G3M → confident, reads the questions to herself.

  B 301: relaxed, Tries to read his question. → manages ☺
            B 309 → peer correction with some L1.
                 ↳ (always talks to the others and to the
                        Teacher) → anxious ?
                   ↳ when it is testing

  B 302 → Needs help,
            but doesn't ask for. Very embarassed !!
          → Rephrasing helps.   ↳ (I'll ask, why)!!

  G 303 → & answer.
            Misunderstands help. → drinking (T mimes, she thinks
            • Points to the pencilcase   it's an offer.)
                   ↳ understands the question.
            ?? → anxious.

  B 304. → & ask for help.
            • 2 short answers. → Waits for help as he looks
                                 around. Noone helps.
                        all of them.

  B: 305 → 1 word utterances.

  B 306 → frustrated, Doesn't answer. Looks at the desk.
            Doesn't even look at me. (Something to do !!!)

  G - 303 → confident, speaks very fast (maybe not that confident)
            ↳ smile.

  B - 309 → Turns to L1. → Tries to show background knowledge
            to the topic.

  G - 310 → anxious. concentrates tries to do her best. Cracking her fingers ✳

Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.

G301:   99: In Spring?

T: Yes.

G301:   Swim.

        69: Caterpillar.

B309:   A caterpillar-nek van lába. Lots of lába. [Caterpillars have legs, lots of legs]

        73: Fish and dolphin.

B302:   61:(Making faces. Laughing.) Little Red Riding Hood.

        14: (No answer, hesitating)

(Rephrasing and miming by the T: When do you go to sleep on Sundays?)

B302:   Aha, at night.

        34: Green apple

G303:   12: No answer

        56: No answer (T mimes drinking)

G303:   No thank you.

        35: (Points to her pencilcase)

B304:   1: (Answers well.)

        20: No answer

        44: Short

B305:   4: Spaghetti

        37: Zebra

        89: morning and evening

B306:   68: no answer

        87: no answer

        94: no answer

(He doesn't let T help. Frustrated by the situation.)

B307:   76: fish

        53: chocolate

        96: ice-cream

G308:   2: eight

T: Are you sure?

G308:   No, no nine. Sorry.

12: I have no favorite singer.

24: Four; I, my mother, my father and my sister.

B309:   10: No sport

47: Pink. Attól függ, hogy vad-e. [it depends, whether it is wild.]

62: Star Wars.

G310:   95: öööööö [well]

T: Your mother? Your father? Your sister?

G310:   Your mother.

93: Home work

86: I don't remember. Nothing.

G311:   59: Tiger

72: Bird (asking)

60: Tiger (smiling)

Date: 10.10.2013.

App F4   4th grade

10.10.2013. IT room.   Ss asked me to read the questions.
  11:00   They pick the pieces of paper with number.
                            Say the number, Treads the questions.

  ○ They all ! answer   quickly, confidently with ease.
        But they use 'only' one - word utterances.
                                    ↳ (Talk about it).

                        ‿ ˙˙

Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.

B401:   82: at six thirty

54: bananas

63: I don't have.

G403:   80: snake

88: jeans, T-shirt and Converse shoes

13: no favourite

B406:   7 pink

28: one

95: my mum

B407:   90: jeans

89: morning

4: ice-cream

B408:   24:three velem four [with me]

37: book (thinking for a few seconds)

2: ten leszek [I will be]

B404:   9: waterball

23: swim

72: bird

G402:   94: my mum and you (laughing)

74: birds, small birds not chickens

20: school book

G405:   44: I don't know.

15: At 8.

T: OK. At 8, but What do you eat?

G405:   nothing.

53: chocolate

Appendix G: Set of quiz questions B

99 Questions

1. What's your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your address?
4. What is your favourite food?
5. What food do you dislike?
6. What is your favourite colour?
7. What colour do you dislike?
8. What is your favourite school subject?
9. What is your favourite sport?
10. Which sport don't you like?
11. Who is your favourite sportsman?
12. Who is your favourite singer?
13. Who is your favourite film star?
14. When do you go to bed on weekends?
15. What do you have for breakfast on Sundays?
16. What clothes do you wear in the summer?
17. What clothes do you wear in the winter?
18. How many lessons do you have a day?
19. Where do you have lunch on weekdays?
20. What kind of books do you read?
21. What kind of music do you listen to?
22. What's your hobby?
23. What sports do you do?
24. How many people are there in your family?

25. What's your best friend's hobby?
26. What does your father do?
27. What does your mother like to do on weekends?
28. How old is your grandfather or grandmother?
29. What is your father's hobby?
30. How many friends do you have at school?
31. What are your two favourite colours?
32. What colour are your friends' eyes?
33. What colour is your mother's hair?
34. What is the colour of the sky and the sea?
35. What is the colour of your favourite ice cream?
36. What colour are leaves in the spring and in the autumn?
37. What colour are your three favourite animals?
38. What are your two favourite ice creams?
39. What are your three favourite fruits?
40. What fruits don't you like?
41. What are your two favourite drinks?
42. What are your three favourite farm animals?
43. What are your three favourite domestic animals?
44. What are your three favourite wild animals?
45. What are your three favourite zoo animals?
46. What are your two favourite stories?
47. What are your two favourite films?
48. What are your three favourite TV programmes?
49. What are your two favourite songs?
50. What does your favourite teacher teach?
51. When do you get up on weekdays?
52. When do you get up on weekends?
53. When do you go to bed on weekdays?
54. When do you go to bed on weekends?
55. How many hours do you usually sleep at night?

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56. What do you eat for lunch on Wednesdays?
57. What do you have for dinner on Tuesdays?
58. What clothes do you usually wear in the spring?
59. How often do you brush your teeth?
60. What clothes do you usually wear in the autumn?
61. How do you go to school every day?
62. How do you go home after school?
63. What TV programmes do you watch?
64. What do you do in the afternoon after school on weekdays?
65. Who helps you with your homework at home?
66. Who cooks lunch in your family on Sundays?
67. What do you like to do in the summer holidays?
68. What do you like to do on weekends in the autumn?
69. What do you like to do in the winter holidays?
70. What do you like to do on Saturdays in the spring?
71. How often do you visit your grandparents?
72. How often do you go to the cinema?
73. How often do you go shopping?
74. Where do you do your shopping?
75. How often do you do shopping?
76. How often do you go to the market?
77. Where do you usually buy food?
78. Where do you buy new clothes?
79. What shops do you usually go to at a shopping centre?
80. How often do you travel by train?
81. How often do you travel by bus?
82. How often do you ride a bicycle?
83. How often do you play games on a computer?
84. How often do you send email messages?
85. How often do you look at websites?
86. What food can you cook?
87. What musical instruments do you play?
88. What sports do you like to watch on TV?
89. Where do you like to go on a Saturday or Sunday?
90. Where can you go to fish?
91. Where can you go to a museum?
92. Where can you go to a zoo?
93. How can you travel from your place (village or town) to a big town?
94. What is the nicest building in your place (village or town)?
95. What is the largest building in your place (village or town)?
96. How many years have you learnt English?
97. What is your favourite word in English?
98. What is the most difficult word for you to spell in English?
99. What is the easiest word for you in English to spell?

Appendix G.1: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 06.05.2014.

App G1.   2nd   06.05.2014.
                                                                            9:00

Classroom, traditionally arranged
        Ss sit two-by-two → volunteers to start.
        They pick the numbers, T reads the questions. List B
        Tasks them to use longer utterances.   ↳ more diff.

B 204 → Asks for help in L2 !!!
        Looks around for ⊕ feedback. Looks proud
                    → Turns to L1. in relief. ☺

B 201 → Confident, concentrates on using longer utterances.
        Smiles.

; 202 → Looks worried. Teach pats her head - helps.
        She doesn't need help.

G 203 → Stands up to answer. fidgeting a bit.

3 205 — Very confident, even seemingly bored.
            Asks T to ask more questions ☺

; 206 — Slowly pronouncing to words. + feedback helps.

3 207 — Smiles at the question about his brother / sister.
        As she is in the group (twins)
        Smiles at all his answers.

3 208. Turns to L1 for unfamiliar words.

G 209   Gives short answers. Not confident. But not
        that anxious as usual.

Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.
Students are asked by the teacher to give answers with long complete sentences.

B201:   15: Hot chocolate and sandwich. And at home.

           32: I don't know. Blue or green or brawn.

           42: I like dogs, cats and pigs.

G202:   77: I, my mum buy food in Tesco.

           93: By car and bus. I can go by car.

           61: I go to school by car.

G203:   22: No hobby.

           89: I go to my grandmother.

           78: I buy clothes in H&M and Zara.

B204:   93: By car, I go to school by car. Car is fast.

           81: I don't know. How often?

T: Yes. How often? Every day?

B204:   No, never.

           54: 10. I watch a film aztán [then].

B205:   83: I get up at 8 or 9 because my father gets up.

           88: I always wear trousers and T-shirt.

           44: My hair is brown and short.

G206:   16: I wear bikini, skirt and sandals.

           25: My friends name is Villő.

           45: White or brown. And the legs are orange.

B207:   21: I listen to pop music, because my mother likes it.

           29: (Smiling) I have one brother. His name is L.

           49: Snow is white and dirty snow is brown.

B208:   24: Three, My mum, my dad.

           31: Blood is red. In Games.

           84: I go to bed at 9.

T: What time do you have dinner?

B208:   At 7.

T: What do you do after dinner?

B208:   A play computer games. (smiling).

           66: You. A fejlesztés miatt. [Because of the SEN lessons]

G209:   70: Lion and tiger.

           94: My mother.

           5: Fish.

Appendix G.2: Dairy notes and transcript of third graders' oral performance

Date: 06.01.2014.

IT room.   3rd graders   06.01.2014

                    List B.   11:00

If question is not understood, a new one is given to
   assess speaking, not listening.

Ss are asked to answer with longer utterances.

Lot of noise from outside.

G 301.   Confidently answers.

B 302   Turning to L1. Refers to a song from Grade 1.
         Tries to be funny (he is actually)
         Smiles when stating that 'English' is his favourite

G 303 .   short utterances but appropriate reaction when she
            does not understand the question.
         'New question is given.   } Similar.

B 304 →   short utterances, maybe because of G 303 copying

B 305 →   relaxed.

B 306 →   No reaction at the lesson. Later in the break in
            one-to-one situation, he answers.
         . Asks for help in L1. (never asks for help at the
         . Comments on the topic lesons)
                in L1.

G 308 - 309 - 310 - 311.   (following week, they were ill
         ‿‿‿‿‿‿‿   06.01.2014.)
            use one-word-utterances.
         ↳ They wanted to finish quickly as they had
                a test after our lesson.
         Later it turns out that it was not true.
         Confusing info!

App G2

Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.

G301:   39: My favourite fruits are apples, bananas and strawberries.

19: I have lunch at school canteen.

62: I go home by car.

B302:   43: My favorite domestic animals are dogs, hamsters and tortoises.

49: My songs are (waiting) nem tudom [I don't know] Lehet magyar? [Can it be Hungarian].

T: Yes, of course.

B302:   Ja nem, Patty Shukla színes. [Oh, no. Patty Shukla , color song] (a song from the English lessons.)

T: Thank you. (smiling)

B302:   50: Maths, no, no English. (laughing)

T: Thank you, thank you. (laughing)

G303:   18: Five or six lessons.

94: I don't understand.

82: Sometimes.

67: I like to go to my grandmother.

B304:   89: I like no go.

56: I don't know. Soup and meat.

22: Tennis and computer games.

B305:   25: He plays computer games always. And we watch TV.

77: My mum buys at TESCO.

81: I never. No, with school I travel to school camp.

B306:   (He refused to answer in front of the class, so I asked the questions in the break in a one-to-one situation.)

11: Messy.

48: Discovery and Da Vinci.

69: Nem értem ezt a hosszút. [I don't understand this long one]

T: In the winter?

B306:   (He nods.)

T: What do you like to do in the winter?

B306:   Nem, nem szeretem a telet. [No, I don't like winter] Ezt hagyjuk, ezt nem tudom. [Let's leave it, I don't know it.] Kérdezz egy újat! [Ask another one]

94: Building? Magyar? [Hungarian]

T: Yes, in Budapest.

Parliament and Erzsébet bridge?

B307:   96: Nem értem. [I don't understand]

35: Brown, chocolate brown.

23: Judo.

G308:   22: Music.

29: Read newspaper.

54: Ten.

B309:   10: No sport.

47: Star Wars.

62: With car.

G310:   95: Parliament.

71: Every day.

87: I play piano.

G311:   59: Two.

74: Tesco.

60: In river.

Appendix G.3: Dairy notes and transcript of third graders' oral performance

Date: 07.05.2014.

App 63   (3rd)   M°°   07.05. 2014
                          Trends the questions . Observed by a colleague.

G 301 · very confident.
        She asks if there are new questions.

B 302 – ill on 07.05.

G 303 → Although confident, uses just one-word utterances.
        She is sad. (?)

B 306 – gets 2 very similar questions, laughs, and asks
        for a new questions just to be just.

B 304 –   Appropriate answers.

B 305   –   – '' –   ⟩ Seems that the
                                          task is a 'routine'
B 307   – '' –   for them. (?)

G 308   – '' –

B 309 → Asks for help by repeating the question-word,
        indicating that he does not understand the
        question.

G 310. → ' Strategy for learning the word →
            cupcake → It's a cake, like a cup.
        → She gave and answer without understanding
          the question . ' I don't know, I just said something'
                              ☺

G ⊞ 34 → Conversation with ease.

G 303 a week later . → Smiling. Confident .

232

Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.

G301:   13: I don't.

T: What kind of films do you watch?

G301:   We don't have a TV. I don't watch.

        10: I don't like football, because boring and box because dangerous.

        34: The sky and the see is blue and green.

B302:   2: Nine. And you?

        29: Reading newspaper.

        41: I like water and water. Water is healthy.

G303:   59: Every day.

T: When?

G303:   In the morning and evening.

        82: Every day. (Smiling)

T: Where do you ride your bike?

G303:   The garden.

        24: Three; mother, father and I.

B304:   71: My grandparents dead.

        65: My brother helps at home.

        4: Spaghetti.

B305:   5: Fish. I hate fish. It's smelly.

        23: Hockey and I work out with my private trainer.

        37: I like dogs, only dogs.

B306:   74: Bird.

        36: Snow.

        49: White. (laughing because the previous question was very similar)

        Adhatsz még egy másikat (You can ask another one)

        16: Shorts and T-shirt.

B307:   73: Every weekend I go shopping to Tesco.

        26: He is a businessman.

        43: Dogs, cats and hamsters.

G308:   22: Music. I play the guitar and the piano.

        35: Brown, because I like chocolate ice-cream.

        53: At 8 o'clock and I read in the bed.

T: What do you read?

        Mary Poppins.

B309:   32: Brown.

21: I listen to rock.

93: How?

T: Yes. How can you travel from, let's say, Visegrad to Budapest?

G310:   By train, by car and by boat… And by bus.

97: Cupcake. Mert van értelme. [Cause it is telling name].

T: What do you mean?

G310:   Olyan süti, mint egy csésze. [It's a cake, like a cup].

28: Fifty.

T: Sure? (Writing the number on the board)

G310:   No, sixty. Vagy nem tudom, csak úgy válaszoltam valamit. [Or I don't know. I just said something.]

40: I don't like grapefruit.

G311:   89: Tordas.

T: Why do you like going there?

G311:   Because the cats are there.

30: I have three best friends and four good friends.

72: My birthday and sometimes at the weekend.

T: What did you last see?

G311:   Rio.

Appendix G.4: Dairy notes and transcript of fourth graders' oral performance

Date: 10.01.2014.

Classroom   fourth graders   10.01.2014. 10⁰⁰

B 401   ✓

G 403   Asks for help by stating no to ~~answer~~ understand the
                question. New question is given.

B 404   sick on 10.01.

B 406   ✓
                Ss listen to each other casefully, smiles at each
                other. ☺

B 407   asks back for support. Anxious first and
                gets relaxed.

B 408   asking for clarification || repeating the question.

G 402
B 404 } other day. (they were ill on 10.01.
G 405

        G 402   → asks for help in English.
                turns to L1 with unfamiliar expression

        Although they listen to peers, they
                        do not help.
                            ↳ peer - help.

235

Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.

B401:   26: My father is a doctor.

41: I like coke and orange juice.

53: I go to bed at 10 or 11. After a film.

G403:   96: I don't understand.

40: Red apples. And I don't like grapes.

23: I swim and walk to school.

73: I never go shopping, I hate.

B406:   9: I like football.

20: I don't like reading.

39: I like banana, apple and strawberry.

B407:   69: Sleeping and watching TV.

12: Avici.

42: Farm animals? Dogs, cat, chicken, pig, hose, cow.

T: What are your favorites?

B408:   Dog, cat and horse.

8: My favorite school subject is English (smiling) and PE.

84: SMS?

T: No, e-mails.

B408:   I sometimes e-mails.

92: Where is zoo?

T: Yes.

B408:   In Budapest and Margit sziget [Margit Island].

B404:   18: Six

38: I don't like ice-cream.

55: Nine

G402:   93: By car and by plane.

79: I don't understand.

T: What kind of shops do you go to?

G402:   I go to clothes shop and book shop.

       56: I don't know. Mindig mást. [It's always different].

G405:   30: Five.

       72: I rarely go to the cinema.

       81: I never travel by bus.

Appendix G.5: Dairy notes and transcript of fourth graders' oral performance

Date: 06.05.2014.

Ss are asked to use longish utterances.

06.05.2014.
4th graders
10.00
IT room.

B 401 → real conversation.
Turns to L1 for unfamiliar expression

G 403 → Relying on background knowledge of the topic
She is surprised to be able to recall Museum of Fine Arts

B 406 → anxious. gets more confident
questions help.

B 407 → Repeats the questions. He is & confident.

B 408 → Asks for help in L2.
Peers do not help. Only the teacher.

B 404 ✓ ☺

G 402 — 'I know this.'
↳ shows that she remember the question
from the classroom practice.
— asking for help by repeating the question

G 405 few days later in the break (she was ill)
✓

App G5

238

Numbers before the answers indicate the number of the questions.

B401: 5: My mother.

T: How does she help you?

B401: She asks questions and I answer. She asks the words. Ellenőrzi a helyesírást. [Checks the spelling].

  80: I never travel by plane because we have a car.

  83: Every weekend I play computer games because no school at the weekend.

T: So you can't play computer games on weekdays.

B401: No, I can't because the homework.

G403: 62: I go home by car with my mum or dad because we live in B not in Bp.

  91: In Budapest there are museums. Museum of Fine Arts and National Museum.

  86: I can make pancake and hot sandwich and tea and pasta.

B406: 21: I listen to rock because I like it.

  47: Films?

T: Yes.

B406: I don't have.

T: What kind of films do you like?

B406: I don't know. Not romantic.

  50: She teaches music and piano.

T: Why do you like her?

B406: Because she is nice and friendly.

B407: 90: In a lake.

T: Can you name any lakes?

B407: Yes. Balaton. Velencei lake. And Danu [Danube].

T: Is Danube a lake?

B407: No, a river.

  94: Building?

T: Yes.

B407: Nice?

T: Yes, the nicest building?

B407: The Parliament, because it is big and white.

  68: I like sleeping because I am always sleepy.

B408: 85: I don't understand the question.

T: How often do you use the internet?

B408: At the weekend and the English homework.

T: What sites do you use on the internet?

B408: Google and gmail, and jokes.

33: She has brown hair.

19: I have lunch at school. I don't like it. It's disgusting

B404: 51: At 7 o'clock because azt nem tudom [I don't know], I go to school.

16: I wear T-shirt and swimming trunks because I go swimming in the sea.

76: I never go to the market.

G402: 88: Ezt tudom. [I know this.] I like to watch water polo because it is interesting.

63: I watch fashion programs and music.

T: Such as?

G402: X factor and MegaStar.

95: Largest? (hesitating about the meaning)

T: Yes, the biggest.

G402: Parliament.

G405: 97: Pillow, because it's nice.

77: In Tesco with my mum or in Auchan.

61: I go to school by car. And I am always late.

Appendix H: Picture description task 44 from test booklet 1

Task 44: Students' Sheet

Appendix H.1: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 08.10.2013

Sally's diary

original date was changed – too many sick kids absent →

08.10.2013.
11.00 IT room
2nd gr.

- No easy to explain what to do.
- T turns to L1 to be sure that everyone understands the task.

- pairs are chosen by the T.
- curious to work with the picture.

B 201 – g. 203   listening to each-other
& peer-correction.
they are happy to work effectively

B 208 – 6 209 →   use similar structures.

B 206 – B 204 →
↳ one-word utterances, still when the partner uses longer utterances.
↳ self-correction. (is)
& peer - correction.

6 207 – B 205 ✓

6 202 with the teacher.
↳ does not describe picture not to influence
↳ feels privileged, happily taking part.

App H1.

B201:   Playing tennis, she singing, going dog, reading book.

G203:   Guitar, singing, eat dog.

B208:   She dancing, eat dog, she bicycling.

G209:   She reading a book, she playing the guitar, she singing, she eating the dog.

B206:   She playing basketball, she swimming pool is.

B204:   Tennis, music, computer.

G207:   She is dancing, she is roding, she is sitting on horse.

B205:   She is walking, hands in pocket, she is seeing shoes, she is playing card.

G202:   She is play guitar, she is are sing, she is hamster.

Appendix H.2: Dairy notes and transcript of third graders' oral performance

Date: 10.10.2013.

App H2   3rd gr.   10.10.2013.   12⁰⁰

• Sally's diary | Randomly chosen pair.

G 301 – B 304. They are in a hurry, making faces showing
that they are not happy either with the task or
their partner.

We have to change the room as there is a choir rehearsal
next room, Ss can't concentrate.

B 305 — B 306
        ↳ refused to take part)
(↳ Asking for help in Hungarian. Works with the T.

B 302 – G 311
✓
       ↳ does not understand the task, does not
       concentrate to her partner. They start again
       after clarification

G 311 — G 303   G 308 – G 310
   ∨   ∨   ↳ self-correction →
                      repeats the structure used by G 308.

B 309 → keeps on repeating in L1 : 'I can't make
                 English sentences'.
            asks for the worst grade. (1)
        T lets him not take part. & 1.

G301:   Monday Sally is playing tennis. No Sunday.

Monday Sally is dances.

Wednesday Sally is horsing.

B304:   Monday, Sally and guitar.

Tuesday, Sally and cards.

Wednesday Sally and dog. Small.

B305:   Sally is walking in the park.

Sally is eating the dog. No not eating. Eteti, de mi az? [Feeding, but what's that?]

Sally is hiking in mountains.

B306:   (He does not take part in the task. He does not point to the pictures. He seemingly cannot concentrate.)

B302:   Sally photo.

Sally arts and crafts.

Sally read book.

G311:   Sally singing.

Sally drawing flower.

Sally computer games.

G 303:   She dance.

She playing cat.

She playing computer games is.

G308:   Sally is playing the flute.

Sally is running very fast.

Sally is swimming in water.

G310:   She playing rock.

Sally is reading a magazine.

Sally is riding a horse. I is riding a horse every day.

B307:   Sally basketball.

Sally camera.

Sally riding a horse. (Answering T's question: What is she doing?)

B309:   He doesn't say sentences. Keeps repeating that he can make English sentences.

Inkább kérek egy egyest. [I would rather have a 1(worst grade in Hungary)]

Appendix H.3: Dairy notes and transcript of third graders' oral performance

Date: 08.05.2014.

3rd gr.

08.05.2014. 10⁰⁰

IT Room

Randomly chosen sentences

Pairs come to the teacher's desk

T listens and takes notes

G301 – B304   by accident same pair as in Oct. They

remember :)

Confident!

B 306   Works with T. Points to the picture T (me)

talks about. → Listening skill.

& speaking

B 309 – B 302   Work with ease.

↳ bit anxious in the beginning.

B 305 – G 311 ╫ G 303 – G 308

✓   ✓   Do not enjoy the task,

Looking at T for   but do it without critical

support to go on.   comments.

G 310 – B 307

enjoy the task. Real conversation.

App H3

G301:   Sally is playing tennis.
        Sally is doing the dishes.
        Sally is reading a magazine.
B304:   Sally is playing the piano.
        Sally is playing the dog, no cat.
        Sally is reading a book.

B306:   Only points to the pictures I talk about.

B309:   Sally reading a white book.
        Sally watching TV.
        Sally playing computer games.
B302:   Sally is playing computer games.
        Sally is draw.
        Sally is walking the dog.

B305:   Sally is playing basketball.
        She is singing with girls.
        She is horse-riding.
G311:   Sally is playing the guitar.
        Sally is playing the piano.
        Sally is playing the violin.
G303:   Sally playing cards.
        Sally feeding the dog.
        Sally walking in the park.
G308:   Sally is watering her flowers.
        She is watching an old TV.
        She is playing with a ball with a hamster.

G310:   Sally is watching a film.
B307:   Hol? [Where?]
G310:   In cinema.
        Sally is taking a photo.
        Sally is listening to MP4.
B307:   Sally riding a horse.
        Sally riding a bike.

Appendix H.4: Dairy notes and transcript of fourth graders' oral performance

Date: 10.10.2013.

4 th grader.   10.10. 2013.
                                                              10:50   Classroom

English is after History lesson.
Ss had an argument about something with their
History teacher. They are tense. → They can
decide about the partner no.

B401 — G402
       ↳ Turns to L1. but it's not asking for help.

G403 — G405 → uses short utterances. Doesn't really listen to
       ↳ offer peer - help (L1), turns to L1.)   the others.
                                    & real cooperation

B404 — B406   Real   cooperation.
                 Questions to help.

B407 — B408   (not the same day, they were absent)
    ↳ Turns to L1. as self correction

App H 4

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B401:   She is playing guitar.

She is singing, very open mouth.

She is paint a picture.

G402:   She is playing violin.

She is playing the dog.

She is playing ball. Valami ball [some kind of] ball.

G403:   She is riding not a horse. Segítsek, hogy mondom, hogy min? [Should I help by saying what she is riding]

T: Yes, please.

G403:   I see. She is riding a bike. Her hair is short.

She is choosing pictures. Vagy a falra rakja. [Or she is putting them on the wall]

G405:   The tennis.

She guitar.

She is in the park.

B404:   She is playing music.

B406:   Music? Song?

B404:   Yes. Song

She horse riding.

She swimming.

B406:   She is listening to music on MP3.

She is playing with the dog. The dog is dancing.

She is dancing, classic dance.

B407:   I am playing computer games. Nem én hanem she. [not me but she].

She reading.

B408:   What?

B407:   A white book.

She eating with dog.

B408:   She walking in park, near chair.

She walking up mountain.

She walking in street, watch shoes.

Appendix I.1: Dairy notes and transcript of third graders' oral performance

Date: 07.01.2014.

App I.1.   Xmas tree story.   07.01.2014.
                                                      8⁰⁰ — 3rd g.
  Randomly chosen pairs, sitting next to each-other.
        Easy to administer.

  G301 — B305 → joking   G301 gets confused, T helps.
    ↳ needs ⊕ feedback from T. Constantly looking at me (T)
      asking for -n- in L1.

  B 304 — B302
      ∼ᒣ Turning to L1.
         ↳ Peer correction   B 304 gets angry.
            T's help is needed for cooperation

  B 306 — refused to take part / work with a partner.

  G 311 — G 308
    ↳ Asks for help in L1.
       G 308 and T say they will help.   G 311. keeps
       saying that she can't speak English.
       T. calms her down in L1.
       conversation goes on with T's ⊕ feedback.
       G 311 - hesitating, very shy but quiate good !!!
                           (?)

  G 303 — G 310 ⟶ turns to L1.
          | ⊘ cooperation
          (- criticising each-other.
          ⟶ refers to previously studied structure. She does not
    ↳ Checking the T's reaction. use it, but recognizes in G303's
        ᒣ turns to L1 →   utterance,   lang.
    B 309 — B 307 → expects help from peer. Refers to already learnt word

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G301: The old man is cutting a tree. There is a house in the corner. The boy is making a snowball.

B305: A snowman.

G301: Yes, snowman. Ez most hiba? [Is it a mistake now?]

T: No, you are doing really well.

B305: The family is in the room. They are watching the tree. The tree is big and white. (Laughing. G301 does not understand why SB 305 is laughing, she is confused)

G301: Mi van? [What's that?]

B305: Nothing. (Looking at T's reaction)

T: Look at the picture. B305 said that the tree was white. Of course it is white as it is a black and white picture. (G301 nods)

G301: They are making gingerbread. The cats are sitting in the window. The cats are white. (They laugh)

B305: They are decorating the tree. The tree is tall. The cat is black and white. (They laugh).

G301: The family and the cats are singing.

B305: (interrupting) singing White Christmas. (Laughing)

T: (to G301) It is a famous song. (Smiling) Go on.

G 301: The tree is nice. There are gingerbread stars on the tree.

B305: The cats are attacking the tree. They are tigers now.

G301: The father is angry and sad. The cats are afraid. There is messy.

B305: Mess. (G301 does not understand the correction) The punishment... (thinking), no. The cats are out. Dad said: Get lost cats!

B304: The father cut the tree. It's cold.

B302: The boy csinál egy snowman-t. [is making a snowman]

B304: A sajátodról beszélj! [Talk about yours.]

B302: There is a family. And Christmas tree.

B304: Ezt nem tudom. Valamit néznem a macskák. A lány meg kezet mos [I don't know this. The cats are watching something. The girl is washing her hands]. Wash hands. És a fiú játszik. [The boy is playing]. Plays.

B302: Ne beszélj magyarul! [Don't use Hungarian.]

B304: Hagyjál már. [Leave me alone]

B302: The mother and the father …. (looking at T for help)

T: Are decorating.

B302: The tree. The cat sitting near the tree.

B304: Christmas tree and presents. They is, no, (correcting himself) are singing.

B302: The cats (looking at T for help)

T:	What are they doing? Are they sleeping, eating, jumping or playing?
B302:	Playing.
B304:	The father afraid… (looking at T for help)
T:	(miming being afraid by chewing her finger nails) Afraid? Are you sure?
B304:	No. Akkor nem tudom. [I don't know then] The cats afraid.
T:	Yes, they are. The man is angry.
B302:	Happy end. Tree is nice.
B306:	(Refused to take part in the task because he didn't want to work with a partner.)
G311:	Nem fogom tudni. Majd segítetek, ha nem tudom mondani. [I won't be able to do this. Will you help me if I can't say it?]
G308:	Yes.
T:	Yes, of course. Don't worry. (T smiling supportively)
G308:	Can I start? (she starts without waiting for the answer.) The man in the forest is cut a tree. He son is making a snowman.
G311:	Én nem tudok ilyen gyorsan beszélni. [I can't speak that fast]
T:	Semmi gond nincsen. Nem kell gyorsan beszélni. Az sem baj ha hibázol. G308 is vétett egy kis hibát. (Smiling) Csak mondd el, amit tudsz és látsz. [there is nothing to worry about. You do not have to speak fast. It is not a problem if you make mistakes. Even SG308 has made a little mistake. Just say what you can and what you can see.] Are you OK?
G311:	Yes. I can see, így jó? [is it good?]
T:	Yes, perfect.
G311:	(Smiling faintly) I can see a room. There is a tree and a window in the room. I can see a family.
T:	Well done. No mistake! Congratulations.
G308:	Mum and the son are making cakes. Star-cakes.
G311:	I can see a cat in the corner. Mum help me the father.
T:	Yes. And what is the father doing?
G311:	The father is standing on a chair. Tudom, hogy nem chair. [I know it isn't a].
G308:	(Quickly) The father is decorating the tree. De a létrát én sem tudom. [But I don't know ladder either]. Then, they are singing with the cats and they are watching the tree and the presents.
G311:	I can see the cats are playing with the tree. It isn't good. (Speaking very slowly, hesitating).
G308:	The father is angry because the tree is on the floor. Cats are behind the tree.
G311:	I can see a new tree and two cats.

T: Perfect, thank you.

G303: There is a man. There is a boy. There is a house.

G310: Azt is mondd, hogy mit csinálnak. [Say what they are doing!]

G303: Nem mondom. [I won't]

G310: De ez a feladat. [But this is what we have to do]

G303: A képről kell beszélni, az a feladat. [We have to talk about the picture, that's the task]

G310: Nekem akkor mindegy. [All the same for me then]. The family is in the living room.

G303: És mit csinálnak? (Making faces)

T: Girls would you stop arguing, please. Say as many things about the picture as you can; what they are doing, where they are, what they feel etc. Thank you.

G303: There is the mother and the son in the kitchen. And there are cats in the window.

G310: They decorate the Christmas tree. Akkor az nem az anyuka a konyhában. [Then it is not the mother in the kitchen]

G303: De [Yes, she is] there are four, no there is a family in the room. There is a tree in the room. And there are two cats in the room.

G310: A lecke miatt mondod a there is-eket? Más is lehet mondani. [Are you saying there is sentences because of the homework (they had a piece of homework focusing on there is / there are prior to this lesson)? You can say different ones.]

G303: (Making faces without answering.)

G310: (She doesn't care about not getting an answer, keeps on talking) The bad cats are playing.

G303: The room is messy. (Smiling at T as T often tells her that her desk is messy.)

T: (Smiles)

G310: (Doesn't understand the situation) Min nevettek? Rosszul mondta? [What are you laughing at? Did I say something wrong?]

T: No. Don't worry. We smiled at the word messy.

G310: The room is not messy. (Smiling) The cats are outside.

B309: Father is cutting woods.

B307: Egy mondat elég? [Is one sentence enough?]

T: Not really. More would be better.

B307: In the corner is the tree. The family is between the window and the tree.

B309: The mother and the boy in the kitchen and between the cats.

B307: Mother and father stand up. The cat sit down.

B309: The family stand up and sing. There is candle in a kezében. [his hand].

T: Their hands, you mean?

B309:   Yes, their hands. Ez nem jutott az eszembe. [I couldn't recall this].

B307:   The cats are playing computer games. (laughing) No computer games (correcting himself) the tree (correcting himself) with.

B309:   Father is fúria vagy mi? [Fury or what?]

T: Furious, very angry?

B309:   Yes. The tree is sleeping on the floor. (Laughing)

B307:   The cats are sitting in the window. They are sad.

Appendix I.2: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 07.01.2014.

App 12.   2nd gr.   07.01.2014.   9:40

B 201 — G209. constantly turning to L1.
               they enjoy working on the task.
               peer-help is present in L1,

B 206 — B 204
               ∨∠   OK!

G 207 — G 202
        ↳ listened to the previous pairs very carefully
          although she had other task to do

   both anxious, not looking at each-other

   ⁊ few days later as
B 205 — G 203   G 203 was absent
        | ↳ less proficient   Good atmosphere !!!
        ↳ makes faces for G 203's mistakes
          ⁊ feels embarassed !

B 203 — T
   ↳ bit shy but works effectively
     turns to L1, for T's help, tries to make excuse.

B201: Dad cutting the Christmas tree. Boy building gingerbread man.

G209: Gingerbread? Az a mézeskalács. [That's gingerbread]

B201: Snowman-t mondtam. [I said snowman]

G209: Nem. [no] Na mondom az enyém [So I'am saying mine.] Father, mother and children in the living room, and the tree.

B201: Mother and boy making vagy [or] cooking gingerbread house. (Both laughing)

G209: Decorate the tree. Stars and ... stars. (Smiling) Ezt nem tudom [I don't know this] Pointing to the decoration].

B201: They singing, and the cat meowing. I can see presents under the tree.

G209: Meowing ez nem angol. [Meowing is not in English].

B201: Akkor mi? [Then what?]

G209: Nem tudom. [I don't know]. One cat on the box, they jump on the tree.

B201: Father is very angry. Tree eldőlt [fell off].

G209: Cats are in the garden. It is cold.

B206: The father is cutting down the tree and the son is making a snowman.

B204: I can see the family in the living room.

B206: The cats are watching the mother and the son. They are baking cakes. There is a Christmas tree on the wall.

B204: They decorate the tree.

B206: The family is singing. And the cats are singing too. Everybody is happy. Még [yet]. (he is laughing).

B204: Cats jumping is.

B206: The father is very angry because the cats bombed (laughing) the tree.

B204: The cats in the garden, not happy.

G207: It is in winter. A man is cutting the tree with an axe. His son is building a snowman.

G202: The family is watching the Christmas tree.

G207: They are making gingerbread stars. The cats are watching.

G202: The mother and the father decorating the tree. One cat is sitting.

G207: The family and one cat is singing a Christmas carol. (Smiling proudly) and I can see presents under the tree.

G202: Ops, the cats are bad. They jumping, eating the stars.

G207: The father is very angry.

G202: Cats are in garden.

B205: The father and the son are in the garden. The father is cutting down the tree and a son is making a snowman.

G203: This is living room. Family.

B205: They are in the kitchen and they are making cake stars, cookies.

G203: Decorate the tree.

B205: The family with the cats are singing and waiting for the presents.

B203: Cats play.

B205: The father is angry, and he is holding his head.

G203: The cats in window, on window.

B205: Making faces for each mistake

B208: Cut a tree and the boy snowman. Nem tudom mondatban. [I can't make them as a sentence]

T: No problem. Just go on. No the family is in the living room and the Christmas tree is standing in the corner.

B208: Mother and boy kitchen. Make gingerbread man.

T: The parents are decorating the Christmas tree. One cat is watching them. The cat likes the decoration very much.

B208: They sing, the cat sing. (Smiling faintly).

T: Yes, you are right. Very good. Now the cats are naughty. They are playing and trying to reach the stars. The gingerbread stars are really yummy.

B208: Father unhappy. The tree…..a földön van. [on the floor]

T: on the floor.

B208: Jaj ezt tudtam. [oh, I know it].

T: And now the cats Can't play in the living room. They are watching the beautiful tree from the windowsill. Poor cats, they must be cold.

Appendix I.3: Dairy notes and transcript of fourth graders' oral performance

Date: 08.05.2014

4th gr.   08. 05. 2014 9⁰⁰

I asked students to use adjectives and
        adverbs and to talk about as many ~~de~~
details as they can.

B401 — B406
    ↳ * using background knowledge ~~of t~~ Switzerland.
        both confident. Speaking with ease.
            & conversation like! Real picture description

B 407 — B 403
    ↳ enjoys the task a lot. Starts singing when the
        family is singing in the pic. (It's OK)
    ↳ speaks fast!   ↳ The group starts singing
    ↳ feels embarassed, gets confused.

B 408 — G 402
    ↳   ↳ self-correction
    ↳ starts talking about the story, doesn't take Turns.
        Tries to dominate. → Slightly corrects G402 constantly
        referring to her pic.
            ↳ Finally refuses to be criticized. ☺

G 405 — B 404
    T.'s ~~no~~ help is needed to start. Then it's OK.

App 13.

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(Students were asked to talk about as many details as they find, and to use adjectives and adverbs as well.)

B401: I can see a small house on the picture. There is a small snowman next to the house and a black fox. It is in Switzerland.

T: Why do you think so?

Because there are big mountains.

B406: The man is old, he is cutting a tree. He is strong. The boy is making a snowman.

B401: The family is in the empty room. The Christmas tree is empty too.

B406: The girl and the boy are making small stars. The boy is chubby.

B401: The parents are decorating the tree. The cat is black and white. And small.

B406: The family are singing and the cats are meowing. They are happy.

B401: The cats are playing and jumping. They are happy. One cat is standing on a big box.

B406: The man is furious. The tree is on the floor. The stars broke.

B401: There is a new tree in the room. The cats are out.

G403: This is a small house in winter. The heating is going because the chimney smokes.

B407: The man is slicing the tree. The boy is making a snowman.

B403 The family is watching the tree in the corner. There aren't any nice things.

B407: The girl and the boy are in the kitchen. They are cooking.

B403: The father and the mother are putting a decoration on the tree. The cat is sitting. And watching.

B407: Everybody singing. We wish you a merry (singing and laughing, the whole group is singing)

B403: Na hagyjátok már abba! [Stop it.] The cats are ruining the tree. (they start taking turns very fast.)

B407: This is chaos. The father is very angry. (speaking very fast)

B403: The cats are watching the tree from the cold garden.

B408: It is a story about a family and the bad cats and the Christmas tree.

T: Hold on! The task is to talk about the pictures one by one. You will start with the first one and then comes SG402. Is it OK?

B408: OK. There is a house, there is a tree and there is a snowman in the picture. There are footsteps in the snow.

G402: The father is working with the tree. The boy is playing. He isn't help. (correcting herself) He isn't helping.

B408:   The family is in the nice room.

G402:   The children are in the kitchen. They are working on the desk.

B408:   (Referring to the previous picture) There are two cats in the picture. And The mother and the father taking vagy [or] putting on the tree. One cat is next to the mother.

G402:   This is Christmas evening. They are happy, and they are singing.

B408:   And the cats are singing.

G402:   Én is akartam mondani [I wanted to say this].

B408:   De nem mondtad [but you didn't say it] And the cats are skipping (looking at T for help)

T: Yes, they are jumping.

G402:   The father is very angry for the cats. And he is fixing the tree.

B408:   Fixing? Ez rossz szó. [this is a wrong word]. The cat are watching from the window the tree.

G405:   This story is about a family. Now the father is cutting out the tree.

B404:   The family is seeing the tree. (Waiting)

T: Where are they?

B404:   They are in the living room.

G405:   The sister and the brother are cooking in the kitchen. The cat is in the garden.

B404:   The mother and the father are decorating the tree.
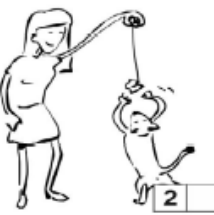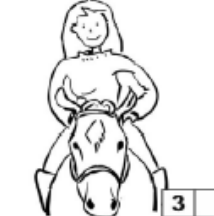
G405:   The family are singing under the tree. This is Christmas Eve.

B404:   After dinner the cats are playing.

G405:   The father is furious because (waiting) the tree is on the floor.

B404:   The new tree is nice. The cats are in punish.

Appendix J: Picture description task 44 from test booklet 4

Appendix J.1: Dairy notes and transcript of second graders' oral performance

Date: 08.05.2014.

2nd graders   08.05.2014. 8⁰⁰

All the students easily works with
   the task.
They do not really enjoy it but work
         patiently listening to each other.

Noone makes faces . Noone joles.

They choose their partners for themselves.
                & quarell.

B201: Sally is dancing.

Sally is playing cards.

Sally is going.

G209: Sally is riding the horse.

Sally is watching TV.

Sally is playing computer games.

B204: Sally playing piano.

Sally reading a book.

Sally playing the cat.

G207: Sally is playing basketball.

Sally is giving apple to the hamster.

Sally is painting flowers.

B205: Sally is playing tennis.

Sally is doing the dishes in the kitchen, she is washing a plate.

Sally is watching a romantic film.

B208: Sally is reading a newspaper.

Sally is playing the guitar.

Sally is singing.

B206: Sally is taking the dog for a walk.

She is walking in a park.

She is singing in a choir.

G203: Sally is playing computer.

Sally is watching TV.

Sally is play tennis.

G202: Sally is giving a bone to the dog.

Sally is riding a bike.

Sally is shooting with the camera.
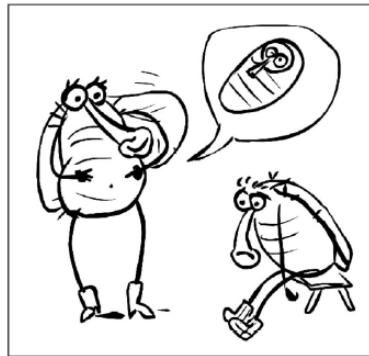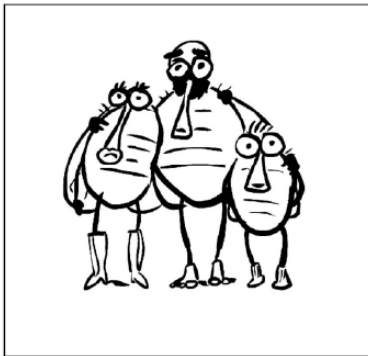
Appendix K.1: Dairy notes and transcript of fourth graders' oral performance

Date: 09.01.2014.

4th graders   09.01.2014.   9⁰⁰

Fly   story   IT room

Randomly   chosen   pairs

B401 — G403
        ⇝ turns to L1 just to make fun.
                              2
    simple ~~sen~~ utterances.

$G 402 — B 404 → difficulty with 'understanding'
                          the story.
            ⤷ & turning to L1 , on asking for help.

3 406 — B 408   They enjoy the task.
                They decide not to make any mistakes in
                the beginning. Nearly manage.

3 407 — G 405
            ⤷ self-correction
    cooperating .   Turning to L1 for spontaneous
                              utterances

They do not sit next to their partner, they want
              to listen to each other.

I ask them to sit close to their partner. While
    the others speak, they have different tasks.
    Thus, they do not influence each-other

App K 1

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B401: Sam is sad. Mama fly wants a baby.

G403: Sam is sad. Mum loves the baby. Sam think vagy [or] thought. Jaj mi is az? Tudom, tudom, várj! [What's that? I know, I know wait!] Jelous.

B401: Jelous? Ékszer? [Jewel?]

G403: Not ékszer, féltékeny. [jewel, jealous]

B401: Mama goes to shop. Good bye. Airplane on the wall.

G403: Dad drives the car. Sam is in the car. They go to school.

B401: Papa is phone, Sam watch. Call from hospital.

G403: They go to hospital. They go fast.

B401: Baby born. They are happy.

G403: Sam is a happy good brother. Frog is hungry.

G402: Small fly is sad and sit. Mum think about a baby.

B404: Sam thinks about mum and the baby and Sam is not smiley.

G402: Mum good bye. Sam sad.

B404: Father and Sam in the car.

G402: Father calls telephone near the table. Sam watches.

B404: They go to hospital.

G402: Mum, dad and baby are in hospital. Sam isn't in hospital. They are in bed.

B404: Sam is happy. There is a frog.

B406: Mother fly talks about the baby. Sam is sad because the baby.

B408: Sam thinking. He is sad, mother is happy.

B406: Mother fly goes to hospital with a bag.

B408: Sam and father drive a car.

B406: Father fly calls the hospital. He is interested, Sam waits.

B408: They go to hospital.

B406: The family is happy. Poor Sam.

B408: Not poor. Sam is happy. Unhappy-end because a frog there.

B407: This is mother and Sam. And a baby in the buborék [bubble].

G405: Sam is sad.

B407: This is mother. There is a bag in the hand. Good bye. (He is waving to G405)

G405: (Pointing to the high-heels.) She has high-heels. (They are laughing.)

G405: This a car. Sam and father is in the car. This is Porsche. (They are laughing)

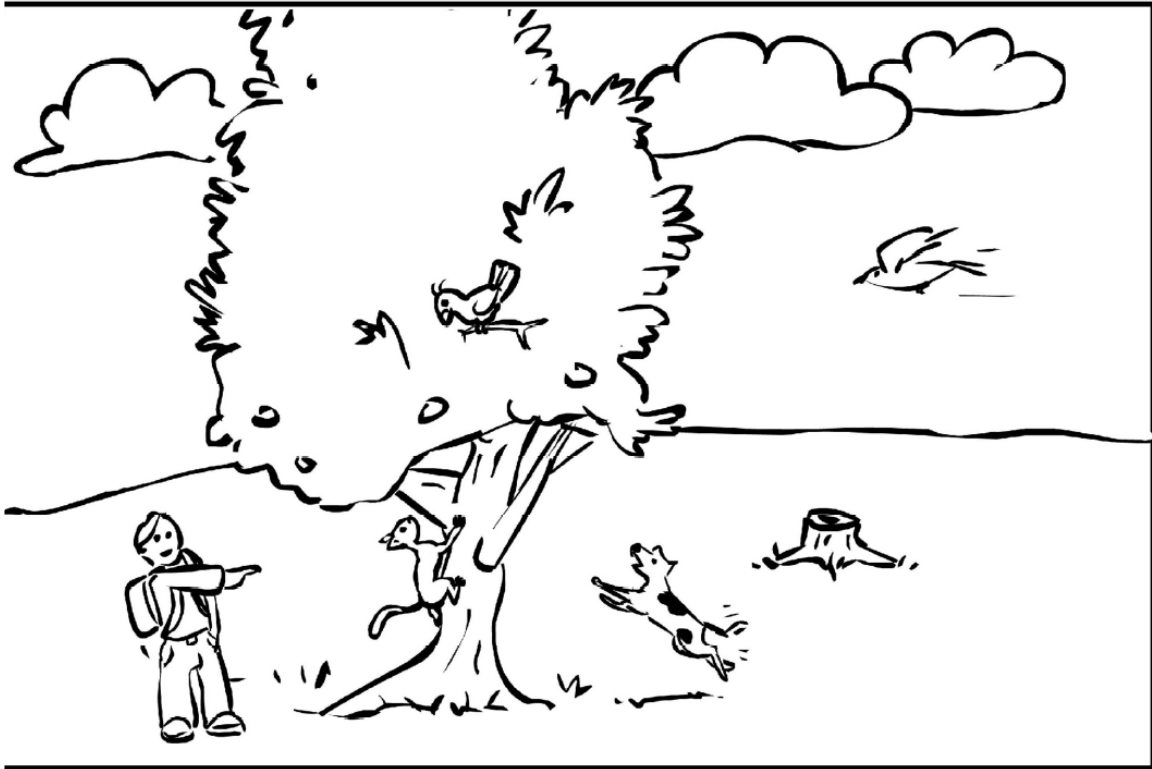B407: They telephone, nem [no] call vagy [or] talk.

G405:   Talk with telephone. Vagy [or] on. Mindegy [Doesn't matter] Next. They go to hospital.

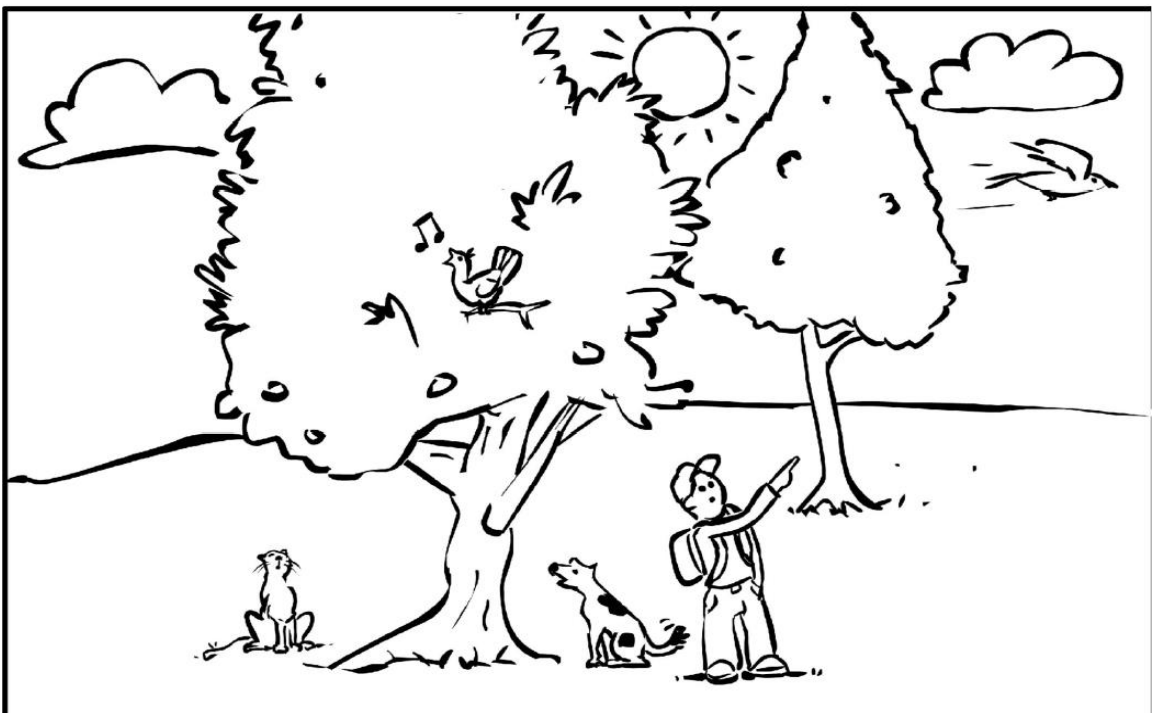B407:   Mother, Father and the baby in the hospital. Sam not in the picture.

G405:   Sam take the baby and happy.

A

B

Appendix L.1: Dairy notes and transcript of fourth graders' oral performance

Date: 12.05.2014.

App L1

4th

Fishing pic.

12.05.2014.   9⁰⁰
iT.room

B 401 - B406
. Finish their utterance with a question to keep up conversation.
. Real cooperation
. no L1.

G 403 - B 408
↳ Tries to ask questions as well.
. Listen to each-other carefully.

B 407 - G 402
(They ask questions.
↳ asks for help in L1. → G 402 helps in L1.
They seem to be bored/tired.
(?)

B 404 - G 405
↳ next week (they were absent on 12.05)
↳ after 2 turns they turn to L1. Then they turn to L2.
They ask if they can get another task, a story-telling one.   ☺

B401:   The weather is cloudy in my picture. What's the weather like in your picture?

B406:   The weather is sunny and cloudy. There are two birds in the picture.

B401:   Yes, there are two birds. One is scared on the tree. And one is flying.

B406:   Yes, one is flying but one is singing. Why scared?

B401:   Because under the tree is a dog and a cat is climbing on the tree. And do you have cats and dogs?

B406:   Yes, they are sitting. The dog is next to a man. Is there a man in your?

B401:   Yes, he is pointing to the dog.

B406:   No, he is pointing to the bird.

G403:   There is tree in the middle. It is big and there is a bird on. You?

B408:   Yes, there is a tree and a bird. And there is a dog and a cat under the tree.

G403:   In my picture The cat is climbing up on the tree. And there is a man.

B408:   Yes, there is a man. And he is watching a bird in the clouds.

G403:   My man is watching the dog and the dog is jumping.

B408:   My dog is sitting and the cat is sitting too. And what is the weather like?

G403:   Cloudy.

B407:   There is a man, a cat, a dog and a boy in my picture. And you?

G402:   There are two birds, that is different.

B407:   Yes, I have two birds. One on the tree and one in the air.

G402:   Yes. It isn't different. And the dog and the cat?

B407:   Yes, one dog and one cat.

G402:   And the man is stretching the arm.

B407:   Stretching? Az mi? [What's that?]

G402:   Hogy kinyújtja. [That he is stretching.]

B407:   Yes. Akkor nincs különbség. [Then there is no difference] Weather?

G402:   It is sunny.

B407:   It is cloudy. Na akkor ennyi [Then that's it.]

B404:   There is a bird on the tree. He is watching a dog and a cat under the tree. Yes?

G405:   No, the cat and the dog watching the bird. The bird is singing.

B404:   The cat and the dog are jumping. They want the bird.

G405:   No, the cat and the dog are sitting and listening to the bird.

B404:   Listening.

G405:   Yes, the birds is singing.

B404: Honnan tudod? [How do you know that?]

G405: Hangjegyek vannak a fejénél. [There are music notes around its head.]

B404: Mutasd! [Show me.] (Looking at the picture) You, you have two trees. And I have one.

G405: Yes, and it is sunny and it is spring. Your weather?

B404: Cloudy and maybe autumn.

Appendix M: Spot-the-difference task 44 from test booklet 15

A

B

Appendix M.1: Dairy notes and transcript of fourth graders' oral performance

Date: 09.01.2013.

B401:   This is a library.

G403:   Yes. There are four people, a woman, a girl and two boys. They are playing on the Net. How many people do you have?

B401:   No, there is one boy. The old woman has glasses. Your woman does have glasses?

G403:   I can't see the glasses. I see the woman back and the girl back. What does the woman?

B401:   The old woman playing on the Net. Not playing, working. Your woman?

G403:   The woman is standing opposite the books. What is the weather like?

G402:   I can see a nem tudom, mi ez [I don't know, what this is in English]. A room and books. You?

B404:   Yes, and it's sunny. And you.

G402:   It's rainy. How many students?

B404:   Three and a teacher. Is computer?

G402:   Yes. The teacher, de szerintem ez nem tanár. [but I don't think it is a teacher] has a computer and a boy play computer games.

B404:   Two boys

G402:   Várj, kérdezek! [Wait, I am asking!]. How many books.

B404:   Sok. A lot of. Is there picture on the wall?

G402:   Not picture, diary. How many windows?

B404:   One window. Has the teacher long hair?

B406:   This is a book shop and internet shop. (Laughing) What people do in your picture?

B408:   Boys are playing computer games. Woman is searching. The girl is standing. Nagy a feneke. [She has a big bottom]. (Laughing). Is Star Wars on your self?

B406:   No, I can't see. Is it sunny?

B408:   No. It is rainy. Is it modern?

B406:   Yes. Is there carpet?

B408:   No. two shelves, two ugly chairs and two tables. What clothes they are, have?

B407:   This is a school. Your?

G405:   Yes. This is a room in a school. De nem tudom, milyen [but I don't know, what room]. Szerintem ez egy könyvtár. [I think, it is a library.]

B407:   Jól van, akkor könyvtár. [OK, library then].

G405:   Who is in the room?

B407:   Woman, girl and a boy. Is the woman old?

G405: Yes. What dress the girl is?

B407: Mi van? A lány ruhája? [What? The girl's clothes?] Jeans and bag. Glasses on the woman?

G405: No glasses. The girl has boots and looks in the bag.

Appendix N: Questions of the group interview about proficiency, anxiety, self-confidence and motivation concerning L2 learning

1. Why do you find learning English important?
2. How do feel before the English lessons?
3. How do you feel before the tests?
4. How do you feel after the tests?
5. How do you feel when I ask you to speak in English?
6. What makes you anxious in connection with learning English?
7. How well do you speak English?
8. Could you speak in English with somebody who does not speak Hungarian?
9. In what ways have your feelings changed in connection with learning English this year?
10. In what ways have your feelings changed in connection with English tests?

(Carried out in October, 2013 and May, 2014.)

Doktori (PhD) értekezés tézisei

A LONGITUDINAL STUDY ON EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING DEVELOPMENT IN
THREE LOWER-PRIMARY GROUPS

Alsó Tagozatos Angolul Tanuló Diákok Beszédkészségének Fejlődése Három Csoportban

Turányi Zsófia

Témavezető: Dr. Nikolov Marianne

Pécsi Tudományegyetem, Bölcsészettudományi Kar
Nyelvtudományi Doktori Iskola
Alkalmazott Nyelvészeti Program

2o16.

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Az értekezés témája és kutatási céljai

Miközben Magyarországon az általános iskolák egyre korábban kezdődő angol nyelvi programokat ajánlanak a tanulóknak, folyamatos vita övezi a korai nyelvoktatás hatékonyságának kérdését (Cameron, 2001; Genesee, 1978; Muñoz, 2006; Nikolov, 2000, 2009a; Scovel, 1988). A nézetkülönbségek ellenére a szakértők egyetértenek abban, hogy a megfelelő módszereket alkalmazva, motiváló feladatokkal, barátságos légkörben a korai nyelvoktatás hasznos és hatékony lehet (Nikolov, 2009). Az általános iskola első hat évfolyamán a nyelvtanulás célját Nikolov (2011) hármas egységben határozza meg:

1. A nyelvtanulási motiváció, az új nyelv, a más kultúrák iránti érdeklődés felkeltése és folyamatos fenntartása, elmélyítése és a nyelvi szorongás kialakulásának megelőzése.
2. Az angol nyelvtudás megalapozása és fejlesztése.
3. A nyelvtanulási, nyelvhasználati és metakognitív stratégiák, a stratégiai kompetencia kialakítása és fejlesztése (Nikolov, 2011, p.24).

Gyerekek esetében a nyelvtanulás folyamata viszonylag lassú, így a tanulási motiváció felkeltése és fenntartása fontos tanári feladat. Érdekes, értelmes, változatos és a gyerekek kognitív fejlettségének megfelelő feladatokkal lehet érdeklődésüket felkelteni, valamint figyelmüket lekötni. A megfelelő feladatok kiválasztásakor figyelembe kell venni a tanulók közötti egyéni különbségeket. A kellően motiváló feladatok a tanulók tudásszintjét kissé meghaladják, azonban teljesíthetőek (Nikolov, 2011).

Mivel a gyerekek idegen nyelvi fejlődése jelentősen eltér az idősebb tanulókétól, a korosztályuk számára hatékony tanítási módszerek alkalmazása mellett a megfelelő értékelési módszer is elengedhetetlen. Annak ellenére, hogy a szakirodalom kiemeli az értékelés fontosságát a korai nyelvoktatás esetében, kevés tanulmány foglalkozik a témával. A *Nemzeti alaptanterv* (2007) ajánlása szerint Magyarországon az általános iskolákban az idegen nyelv oktatása a negyedik évfolyamtól kötelező, így korábbi évfolyamokra sem kimeneti követelmények, sem tantervi célkitűzések nincsenek megfogalmazva. Ezek hiányában az értékelés módja is helyi szinten, a tantermekben a nyelvtanárok egyéni elképzelési alapján dől el. A tanároknak figyelembe kell venniük azt, hogy a korai nyelvtanulás során az értékelés fontosabb hatást gyakorolhat a tanulók attitűdjére, motivációjára és szorongására, mint idősebb tanulók esetében (Nikolov és Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011).

A diagnosztikus mérések alkalmasak arra, hogy a nyelvtanárok képet kapjanak a gyerek fejlődéséről. A diagnosztikus értékelés az értékelésnek egy olyan formája, melynek célja, hogy a tanulási folyamatot pozitív irányba befolyásolja (Nikolov és Szabó, 2011). Alkalmazása során a tanárok nem csupán a tananyagot tudják diákjaik igényei szerint alakítani, hanem folyamatos visszajelzést tudnak adni tanítványaiknak, ezzel fenntartva azok motivációját. A diákok képet kapnak erősségeikről, valamit azokról a területekről, melyeket gyakorlással fejleszthetnek (Nikolov 2011). A diagnosztikus értékelés másik jellemzője az, hogy a diákoknak lehetőségük nyílik arra, hogy értékeljék saját teljesítményük mellett társaik teljesítményét is. Ezáltal cselekvő részesei lesznek az értékelés folyamatának. Az általános iskola alsó tagozatán a diagnosztikus értékelés alkalmazásánál fontos szempont, hogy fókuszában a hallási utáni szövegértés és a beszédkészség álljon. Az értékelés a feladatok elvégzése után közvetlenül történjen, figyelembe véve a diákok egyéni különbségeit, fenntartva motivációjukat. Az értékelés rendszeres legyen, a tanulók számára egyértelműen megfogalmazott követelményeknek megfelelően (Nikolov, 2016).

Dolgozatom elsődleges célja az, hogy az Európai Unió által támogatott TÁMOP 3.1.9 projekt keretében, a Szegedi Tudományegyetem, Képességkutató Csoportja által kidolgozott diagnosztikus tesztek beszédkészséget merő feladatainak alkalmazhatóságát megvizsgáljam (Nikolov, 2011; Nikolov és Szabó, 2011, 2012a, 2012b; Szabó és Nikolov, 2013). A teszteket osztálytermi körülmények között, három különböző korcsoporttal egy tanéven keresztül alkalmaztam. Kutatásom kiterjedt arra, hogy a tesztek alkalmazása milyen módon teszi lehetővé, hogy folyamatosan követni tudjam a gyerekek idegen nyelvi fejlődését. Megfigyeltem, hogy a tesztek használatával tudok-e a gyerekeknek visszajelzést adni fejlődésükre vonatkozóan. Amellett, hogy vizsgáltam a diagnosztikus eszközök alkalmazhatóságát, kutatásom kiterjedt a tanulók attitűdjének, motivációjának és nyelvtanuláshoz kapcsolódó szorongásának változásaira is. A páros, illetve csoportmunkához való hozzáállásuk változását is elemeztem. Gyógypedagógusként fontosnak tartottam megvizsgálni, hogy a tesztek alkalmasak-e sajátos nevelési igényű gyerekek nyelvtudásának érdeklésére is, ezért dolgozatom tartalmaz egy esettanulmányt egy Autizmus Spektrumzavarral élő fiúról.

A kutatás ismertetése és a disszertáció felépítése

A disszertáció két részre, ezen belül pedig hét fejezetre oszlik (lásd 1. sz. táblázat).

1. táblázat: A disszertáció felépítése

Bevezetés

- Témaválasztás indoklása
- Kutatási célok
- A disszertáció felépítése

ELSŐ RÉSZ

1. fejezet: Korai nyelvtanulás

- A kritikus periódus eltérő megközelítései
- Idegen nyelvi fejlődés szakaszai
- Egyéni különbségek jelentősége és hatásai

2. fejezet: A korai nyelvtanulók értékelése

- Az értékelés definíciójának és céljainak áttekintése
- A nyelvtudás felépítése vizsgáló tanulmányok áttekintése
- Értékelés szempontjából hatékony feladattípusok bemutatása

MÁSODIK RÉSZ

3. fejezet: Az empirikus tanulmányok háttere

- A kutatás kontextusának és résztvevőinek bemutatása
- A kutatási kérdések
- A kutatásmódszertan és az adatgyűjtő eszközök bemutatás

4. fejezet: A tanulók idegen nyelvi fejlődésének vizsgálata egy tanéven keresztül

- A diagnosztikus tesztek alkalmazásának bemutatása
- Kutatási kérdések és módszertan
- Az egyéni különbségek áttekintése
- Az eredmények részletes tárgyalása
- A diagnosztikus tesztekről alkotott vélemények elemző kutatás eredményeinek bemutatása

5. fejezet: Kvalitatív tanulmány a tanulók attitűdjének, motivációjának, magabiztosságának és nyelvtanuláshoz kapcsolódó szorongásának változásáról

- Kutatási kérdések és módszertan
- A kvalitatív kutatás eredményeinek tárgyalása

6. fejezet: Esettanulmány egy Autizmus Spektrumzavarral élő fiú idegen nyelvi fejlődéséről

- Az Autizmus Spektrumzavar és a kutatás alanyának bemutatása
- A kutatás kérdései és módszertana
- Az eredmények tárgyalása

7. fejezet: Konklúzió

- Az eredmények összefoglalása
- A vizsgálatok korlátinak és pedagógiai vonatkozásainak tárgyalása

Az első rész két fejezetében (1-2) a kutatáshoz kapcsolódó elméleti háttért bemutatásra törekszem. Az első fejezetben a korai nyelvtanulással kapcsolatos kutatások eredményeit vizsgálom, majd kitérek a nyelvtanulókat jellemző egyéni különbségek fontosságára a nyelvtanulással kapcsolatban. A második fejezetben a nyelvtudás mérésnek lehetőségeit mutatom be, különös hangsúlyt fektetve azokra a szempontokra, melyeket figyelembe kell venni az általános iskola alsó tagozatos korosztály teljesítményének értékelésekor. A fejezetben empirikus kutatások eredményeit is elemzem.

A disszertáció második része öt fejezetet (3-7) foglal magába. A harmadik fejezetben a kutatást helyezem kontextusba, bemutatom a résztvevőket, a kutatás körülményeit, annak szakaszait és a kutatáshoz alkalmazott módszertant (lásd 2. sz. táblázat). A kutatást egy budapesti alapítványi általános iskola három általam tanított évfolyamán végeztem, második, harmadik és negyedik osztályos gyerek bevonásával. A minél teljesebb kép elérése érdekében kevert kutatási módszert alkalmaztam (Creswell, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey és Gass, 2005).

A negyedik fejezetben azt vizsgálom, hogy milyen mértékben fejlődött a tanulók nyelvtudása a diagnosztikus tesztek beszédkészséget merő feladatai alapján. A tanév folyamán három alkalommal értékeltem a 28 tanuló fejlődését három féle feladat alkalmazásával. A kutatás során adatokat gyűjtöttem, majd elemeztem arról, hogy gyerekek miként vélekedtek az egyes feladattípusokról. Az adatokat feldolgozásánál a kvalitatív tartalomelemzés és a leíró statisztikai elemzés módszerét alkalmaztam. Választ kerestem arra is, hogy az alkalmazott diagnosztikus tesztek milyen hasznos információkkal szolgálnak a nyelvtanár számára a gyerekek idegen nyelvi fejlődésével kapcsolatban. A negyedeik fejezet három alfejezete részletes leírást tartalmaz a három

különböző korcsoport fejlődéséről. Megfigyeléseim és feljegyzéseim az értékelés során gazdag adatforrást jelentettek a gyerekek közötti együttműködés vizsgálatához.

Az ötödik fejezetben a tanulók attitűdjének, motivációjának, magabiztosságának és nyelvtanuláshoz kapcsolódó szorongásának változást mutatom be. Kitértem annak vizsgálatára, hogy a gyerekek, miért tartják fontosnak a nyelvtanulást, továbbá kérdéseket tettem fel arról, hogy milyen érzéseket kapcsolnak az angolórákhoz és diagnosztikus tesztekkel való munkához. Az adatgyűjtés csoportos interjú formájában zajlott magyar nyelven, a tanév elején (2013. október) és végén (2014. május). Az adatokat a kvalitatív tartalomelemzés módszerével dolgoztam fel.

A hatodik fejezt egy Autizmus Spektrumzavarral élő tanulóról szóló esettanulmányt mutat be, a diagnosztikus tesztek alkalmazhatóságára fókuszálva. A fejezetben elején bemutatom az Autizmus Spektrumzavar legfőbb jellemzőit, és hatását a tanulás folyamtára. A kutatás alanyának bemutatása után, a feltáró vizsgálat eredményeit részletesen tárgyalom.

A hetedik fejezet a kutatási eredmények összefoglalóját, a vizsgálatok korlátait és egy önreflexiós alfejezetet tartalmaz, kitérve a kutatás pedagógiai vonatkozásaira.

2. táblázat: A kutatás szakaszai

Kutatási kérdések	Adatgyűjtő eszközök	Az elemzés módszerei
Milyen módon nyújtanak a diagnosztikus tesztek lehetőséget arra, hogy a tanárok támogassák a gyerekek idegen nyelvi fejlődését?	• Tanári jegyzetek • Gyerekek spontán megjegyzései	Kvalitatív tartalomelemzés
Hogyan működnek a diagnosztikus tesztek?	• Tanári jegyzetek • Hangfelvételek, miközben a gyerekek a szóbeli feladatokat végzik • A tesztekhez tartozó értékelő skálák	Kvalitatív tartalomelemzés Leíró statisztikai elemzés
Milyen hasznos visszajelzést adnak a tesztek hasznos a tanárnak a gyerekek fejlődéséről?	• Tanári jegyzetek az óramegfigyelések közben	Kvalitatív tartalomelemzés
Hogyan változik a gyerekek idegen nyelv tudása egy tanév alatt?	• Diagnosztikus tesztek	Leíró statisztikai elemzés
Hogyan járulnak hozzá diagnosztikus tesztek a kooperációhoz páros és kiscsoportos munkában?	• Gyerekek megjegyzései • Megfigyelés	Kvalitatív tartalomelemzés
Milyen nézetek jelentek meg miközben a gyerekek a tesztek feladatain dolgoztak?	• Gyerekek jegyzetei és megjegyzései • Stimulált felidézés	Kvalitatív tartalomelemzés
Hogyan változott a gyerekek attitűdje, motivációja, szorongása és önbizalma egy tanév alatt?	• Csoportos interjú	Kvalitatív tartalomelemzés
Hogyan működnek a diagnosztikus tesztek egy Autizmus Spektrumzavarral élő diák esetében?	• Tanár jegyzetei • Gyerek megjegyzései • Tesztekhez tartozó értékelő skála	Esettanulmány

A kutatás eredményei

A következőkben a három kutatás legfontosabb eredményét mutatom be részletesen. Az első tanulmány kvalitatív és kvantitatív adatokat egyaránt feldolgozott. Kvantitatív adatokat a diagnosztikus tesztek értékeléséből nyertem. A kvalitatív adatok jegyzeteimből az osztálytermi megfigyelésekről, a diákok megjegyzéseiből feladatvégzés közben és a velük készített interjúkból származtak. Adatokat gyűjtöttem a tanulók fejlődéséről, valamint a tesztelés esetleges nehézségeiről. A feladatok lehetőséget nyújtottak arra, hogy nyomon kövessem a diákjaim idegen nyelvi fejlődését. Magabiztosabban kértek segítséget, gyakoribbá vált önmaguk javítása és a tudatosan használt hosszabb mondatok száma is. Fejlődést tapasztaltam a pontos és folyamatos nyelvhasználat területén is. A feladatok motiválták a gyerekeket a részvételre. A teszteket könnyen tudtam alkalmazni, mert az értékeléshez egyértelmű útmutatót tartalmaznak a tesztfüzetek. A tanulók különböző léptékű fejlődése jól követhető a feladatokra kapott pontok alapján. A feladatok közös értékelése alkalmat adott arra, hogy a gyerekeknek visszajelzést adjak azokról a területekről, ahol fejlődést tapasztaltam, és azokról is, ahol még további gyakorlásra volt szükség.

A második tanulmány a diákok önképének alakulását, az angol órákhoz és a teszteléshez kötődő érzelmeiket vizsgálta, kvalitatív adatokat elemezve. A tanulóknak határozott elképzeléseik voltak arról, hogy hogyan szeretnek angolul tanulni, valamint arról, hogy mik az előnyei a diagnosztikus tesztelésnek. Az idegen nyelvhez kötődő szorongásuk csökkent a tanév végére. 28 tanuló közül 23 állította azt magáról, hogy jól vagy nagyon jól beszél angolul. A diagnosztikus tesztek eredményei ezeket a kijelentéseket alátámasztották. A második osztályosok nyelvtanulása esetében főként külső motiváció volt megfigyelhető, míg a harmadik és negyedik osztályosok körében megjelent az intrinzikus, instrumentális és teljesítménymotiváció is. A tanulók többsége megerősítette, hogy az érdekes tananyag és a sikerek motiválják őket a tanulásra.

A harmadik tanulmányból kiderül, hogy a diagnosztikus tesztek szóbeli feladati nem tudtak árnyalt képet adni az Autizmus Spektrumzavarral élő tanuló esetében. Ennek ellenére az esettanulmány alanya motivált volt az értékelés folyamatában való részvételre, igényelte a visszajelzést fejlődésével kapcsolatban. Bár fejlődést tapasztaltam a tanév során a velem történő kommunikációra való nyitottságában és a megtanult szavak felidézésében, nem történt előrelépés a társakkal való együttműködés és a tudatos

stratégiahasználat területén. Az idegen nyelv tanulására való motiváltságot sikerült fenntartani a tanév során.

A kutatás korlátai

A hetedik fejezetben a kutatás korlátait mutatom be. A kutatás elsődleges korlátja a résztvevők alacsony száma (28). A kutatási eredmények így nem alkalmasak általánosításra. További kutatások szükségesek a diagnosztikus tesztek szóbeli feladatainak alkalmazhatóságáról más kontextusban, különböző iskolai háttérrel rendelkező diákok és tanáraik bevonásával.

A kutatás másik korlátja, a saját szerepemhez kötődik. Azzal, hogy kutatóként magam is résztvevő voltam, az eredmények interpretációja elfogult lehet, és az adatok torzulhatnak. Mindemellett a szoros tanár-diák kapcsolat köztem és a gyerekek között lehetővé tette, hogy a kutatás bensőséges barátságos közegben folyjék.

A kutatás pedagógiai vonatkozásai

A dolgozat záró alfejezete önreflexiót tartalmaz. Pedagógusként az egyik legfontosabb feladatomnak azt tartom, hogy diákjaim önálló, tanulásukkal és mindennapi életükkel kapcsolatban döntésképes emberekkel váljanak. A diagnosztikus tesztek alkalmazása több szempontból is hozzájárult ennek a célnak az eléréséhez. A folyamatos, egyértelműen megfogalmazott visszajelzés a tanulók fejlődéséről, tudatosabbá tette diákjaimat erősségeikkel és nehézségeikkel kapcsolatban egyaránt. A megbeszélések a további teendőkkel kapcsolatban hatékonyabbá tették az együttműködést diákok és diákok, valamint diákok és tanárok között.

Az adatok feldolgozása és elemzése során meglepő jelenségként szembesültem azzal, a nyelvtudást milyen erőteljesen kapcsolom össze a nyelvhelyességgel. A tanulók megjegyzései szintén azt tükrözték, hogy a pontos nyelvhasználat számukra is fontos mérője a jó teljesítménynek. Annak ellenére, hogy tisztában voltam azzal, hogy a diagnosztikus értékelés célja a tanulók erősségeinek és nehézségeinek visszajelzése a hatékony továbbhaladás érdekében, sokkal nagyobb hangsúlyt fektettem a nyelvtani hiányosságok elemzésére, mint az erősségekére. Ezen a gyakorlaton feltétlenül változtatni fogok.

Számos magyar korai nyelvoktatást vizsgáló kutatás hangsúlyozza, hogy Magyarországon iskolai keretek között a korai nyelvoktatást célzó programok hatékonysága nem megfelelő (Hild 2014; Morvai, Öveges és Ottó, 2009; Nikolov 1999, 2008; Nikolov és Nagy, 2003). A tanulmányok rámutatnak arra, hogy a kutatásában résztvevő angol nyelvtanárok értékelési rendszere és tanítási módszertana gyakran fejlesztésre szorul.

Annak érdekében, hogy a korai nyelvoktatás eredményessé váljék, a nyelvtanároknak alkalmazniuk kell azokat a módszereket, melyek hatékonyságát kutatások bizonyítják. Meggyőződésem, hogy a diagnosztikus tesztek alkalmazása olyan lehetőséget ad a nyelvtanárok kezébe, mely nem csak az értékelést teszi eredményesebbé, hanem átformálja a tanításhoz való hozzáállásukat is. Ezért tartom fontosnak, hogy további kutasok támasszák alá a diagnosztikus tesztek alkalmazhatóságát más kontextusban is.

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