ACQUIRING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE FROM TEXTBOOKS

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Graduation Thesis

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate to what extent foreign language textbooks can contribute to promoting students’ acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. Our primary goal was to explore whether and to what extent textbooks for learning English currently in use in Croatia help in promoting the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. The data was collected with respect to one particular indirect source of contact, namely foreign language textbooks. We combined quantitative and qualitative approaches in analyzing our data. We wish to determine whether Croatian secondary school English language textbooks include learning tasks that promote the development of intercultural communicative competence. The study was based on Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence.

Key words: culture, intercultural approach, intercultural communicative competence, English language textbooks
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1. Introduction

In multicultural societies members from different culture and speaking different languages meet. In order to develop mutual understanding and tolerance and to communicate successfully, they have to acquire intercultural competence. If we want to bridge the gap between cultures, we need to learn how to observe, interpret and understand the cultures we encounter. Recently, foreign language researchers, educators and teachers have moved their focus from teaching for communicative competence to teaching for intercultural communicative competence. The importance of teaching and acquiring intercultural competence has been acknowledged in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment and the National Curriculum Framework for Croatian schools. Both of these documents include objectives for teaching intercultural competence. In Croatia, learning English is an essential part of every secondary school student’s general education. In most schools it is considered as the first foreign language. Textbooks function as an agent for the process of learning and understanding a foreign cultural system.

The main aim of this thesis is to study in detail two textbooks that are commonly used in Croatian secondary schools for teaching English with respect to its role for developing learners’ intercultural communicative competence. In the first part of the thesis, a theoretical framework concerning the notion of intercultural communicative competence will be presented. The theoretical part will serve as a tool for the textbook analysis, which is the second part of this thesis.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. The notion of culture in foreign language teaching

Learners require the knowledge about foreign cultures in a multicultural society. Culture teaching should promote and develop critical social awareness. Culture is of fundamental importance to teaching a foreign language and the nature of language teaching and learning implies the presence of another culture and contact with otherness. One cannot teach language without also teaching culture. Language and culture reflect one another. Moran remarks: “The words of the language, its expressions, structures, sounds, and scripts reflect the culture, just as the cultural products and practices reflect the language. Language is
a window to the culture” (Moran, 2001, p. 35). Culture can be presented in the language classroom as reading a passage, watching a film, preparing or eating food, participating in a role-play, writing in a language journal, performing a folk dance, singing songs, listening to a guest speaker or teacher’s anecdotes about the culture, etc. Language learning cannot be separated from the cultural context of the language. John Corbett (2003, p. ix) remarks: “As a dense backdrop, culture is implicated in every instance of language in use”. The aim of foreign language teaching is to enable learners to communicate with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in a multicultural world. In acquiring language, children acquire culture as well. It needs to be emphasised that the teaching of a foreign language by no means can be separated from teaching culture. The aim of teaching culture is to increase students’ awareness. A student can learn the grammar and vocabulary, but will not be able to have a successful and functional conversation with native speakers without learning about the culture. Students will never fully grasp the language. Corbett (2003, p. 19) claims that: “to understand how a community uses language it is deemed necessary to understand the community: the dynamic system of its beliefs, values and dreams, and how it negotiates and articulates them”. It should be clear that the concept of culture is not necessarily related to nationalities. The treatment of culture in foreign language textbooks is relatively a new trend in English Language Teaching which is based on the conclusion that language textbooks should raise students' awareness of international culture as well as that of their own. As soon as second and foreign language learners become culturally aware, they start examining their own cultural norms, values and attitudes (Lazar, Huber-Kriegler, Lussier, Matei & Peck, 2007, p. 8). Two people in a conversation become aware of their national identities when they speak a language which is foreign for one of them or for the both of them, in which case they are using a lingua franca. There is a risk of relying on stereotypes and an individual is usually seen as a representative of a country or a culture (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, p. 9). Stereotyping is defined as “labelling or categorising particular groups of people, usually in a negative way, according to preconceived ideas or broad generalisations about them – and then assuming that all members of that group will think and behave identically” (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, p. 27). When meeting someone from a different culture, students become aware of their own culture that they have subconsciously acquired. They have also already acquired certain beliefs which can sometimes be wrong. Students need to consciously analyze their own culture and compare it to foreign cultures in order to avoid stereotypes. Thereby they can notice and accept cultural differences (Bagić & Vrhovac, 2012).
2.2. Communicative competence

The term “communicative competence” became common among language professionals in the 1970s. Grammatical accuracy was no longer the main goal of language teaching and learning. Educators and researchers wanted to contextualise the target language and place it in real-life situations and make it authentic. The idea of communicative competence was developed in the work of a sociolinguist Dell Hymes (1972). The model of communicative competence in foreign language learning that was given by Canale and Swain (1980) consists of grammatical competence, discourse competence, strategic competence and sociolinguistic competence. Grammatical competence refers to the native speaker’s knowledge of the syntactic, lexical, morphological, and phonological features and rules of the language. Sociolinguistic competence, deals with the social rules of language use and the social context in which language is used. The last component is strategic competence which refers to the ability to handle an authentic communicative situation. Discourse competence is the ability to deal with the extended use of language in context. Van Ek (1986) added two components to the model of Canale and Swain: sociocultural competence, or the ability to function in several cultures, and social competence, or familiarity with differences in social customs, confidence, empathy and motivation to communicate with others. The Council of Europe (2001, p. 13) gives its own interpretation of what the notion of communicative language competence comprises. It includes several components: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. Linguistic competences include lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills, sociolinguistic competences refer to the sociocultural conditions of language use and pragmatic competences are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources. In his book An Intercultural Approach to English Language Teaching John Corbett criticizes the communicative approach to language learning and states that “current ‘communicative’ methods of second language teaching generally view language as a means of bridging an ‘information gap’ (2003, p. 1)”. The target language culture and the native speakers as models are crucial elements in the communicative approach. Learners are expected to acquire correct forms of the target language and learn how to use these forms in a social situation in order to transfer appropriate meaning. They learn a standard variety of the target language and study the cultural characteristics of the countries where the target language is spoken. This can lead to the development of many stereotypes and the trivialisation of cultural elements. Learning a foreign language becomes a kind of enculturation where one acquires a
new world view and perspective and new cultural framework that belong to the speakers of the target language. The focus is on the development of four skills of communication (Alptekin, 2002, p. 58). The communicative approach does not take into consideration the lingua franca status of English. English has become the language of international communication and it is likely to remain a means of transferring information in the twenty-first century. English is most of the time used in the interaction between non-native speakers (Alptekin, 2002, p. 60). Communicative language learning assumes that learners will naturally develop their linguistic knowledge and skills and acquire native-like competence if they bridge an information gap. This view has tended to underrate culture. Cultural content was often omitted and marginalised in learning materials. Cem Alptekin (2002) in his article casts a critical eye on the pedagogic model based in the native speaker-based notion of communicative competence. He argues that the model is utopian and unrealistic because to achieve a native-like proficiency is a linguistic myth and the model refers only to mainstream ways of thinking and behaving. A new pedagogic model should be developed since English has become a means of international and intercultural communication.

2.3. Defining intercultural communicative competence

In the last two decades many language educators and researchers have stated that the aim of language learning is to enable learners to communicate successfully with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in a globalised and multicultural world. Therefore, students need to acquire intercultural communicative competence in order to deal effectively and appropriately with cultural diversity. Some researchers, like John Corbett (2003), believe that a long-established goal of language teaching needs to be reconsidered and they offer a new perspective on learning language as a continuing process. An intercultural approach to foreign language learning and teaching should be introduced. Grammatical and lexical competence, memorised speech acts and cultural facts are not sufficient to help non-native speakers of a foreign language to communicate, socialise or negotiate in the foreign language. (Lazar, Huber-Kriegler, Lussier, Matei, & Peck, 2007). In his book *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence* Michael Byram (1997) describes and defines intercultural communicative competence as it relates to foreign language teaching. It is now clear that learning a language should not just involve linguistic competence or native or near native fluency but also intercultural competence. Byram (1997, p. 11) discusses the tendency to view the learner as an incomplete native speaker. The aim of
language teaching has been to imitate a native speaker in linguistic competence and in cultural knowledge. Byram criticises this view and the use of the native speaker as a model because it creates an impossible target and an inevitable failure. He states that it would create a wrong kind of competence in which a learner should blend completely into another linguistic environment, abandon one’s own culture and acquire a new sociocultural identity. Byram believes that the more desirable outcome is “a learner with the ability to see and manage the relationship between themselves and their own cultural beliefs, behaviours and meanings, as expressed in a foreign language, and those of their interlocutors” (1997, p. 12). Few learners achieve native like proficiency, but many can acquire the skills of observation, comparison, analysis and mediation that help in the development of intercultural communicative competence. The native speaker is replaced by the intercultural speaker or the mediator, a person that successfully functions in different cultural settings. The intercultural speaker is able to avoid the stereotyping which results from seeing an individual as a representative of a country or a culture. Interculturally competent language users are able to establish and maintain communication with representatives from their own and other cultures. They have the ability to show understanding of foreign culture without losing their national identity. Michael Byram (1991, p. 19) explains how monocultural awareness becomes modified. Learners are no longer ethnocentric and they acquire an intercultural awareness which assists them to see cultural phenomena from a different perspective, and not only from their existing viewpoint. Byram (1991, p. 25) believes that cultural awareness teaching should involve both viewpoints and that learners should become both ethnographers and informants which would allow them to gain a new perspective through comparison. Learners should adopt the attitude of the ethnographer who wants to understand and explain the culture and thus acquire intercultural competence. The learner is seen as a kind of ethnographer, in other words, a cultural observer and an analyst. This skill can help in dealing with misunderstanding and it can promote tolerance (Corbett, 2003, p. 36). However, to become a successful intercultural speaker or mediator complete and perfect intercultural competence is not required. It is not possible to acquire all the knowledge one might need when interacting with people from different cultures. Cultures are constantly changing. This means that there is no perfect model of a native speaker that should be imitated and there is no perfect social and national identity that should be acquired in order to resemble a native speaker (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, p. 11).

A language course which deals with culture broadens its focus on improving the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in order to enable learners to acquire cultural
skills. Learners should also be encouraged to reflect on the ways in which their own language and community function. The intercultural speaker is a mediator between different social groups that use different languages and language varieties. The aim of language learning is no longer to attain native speaker proficiency although one of the key goals of an intercultural approach remains language development and improvement. Equally important is to attain intercultural understanding and mediation (Corbett, 2003, p. 2). Teachers and learners have to develop an ability to move between the home and target cultures. They are in the position of someone who is outside the target language group and looking in. They do not need to adopt the practices and beliefs of the target culture, but they should comprehend these practices and beliefs if they want to understand the language that is used in the target culture. The view that language is more than the transfer of information has led to the development of an intercultural approach to language learning (Corbett, 2003, p. 20). An intercultural approach adopts the view that cultural topics are interesting and motivating. Acculturation, i.e. the ability to function in a different culture while maintaining one’s own identity, and cultural-awareness-raising are important. Intercultural knowledge and skills have to become an integral part of the curriculum. Cultural content in language teaching is inevitable and as such should be one of the central parts of language learning. Strategies from ethnography and linguistics should be adopted, and intercultural knowledge and skills, as well as language skills, should be defined, taught and tested. The aims of language education are redefined and the ultimate goal of language education is the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence, rather than native-like proficiency (Corbett, 2003, p. 30). The learner still has to accumulate information and facts about the target culture, and know something about the behaviour of people from the target culture. In addition, the learner is expected to adopt an ethnographic and critical perspective, to attain the skills of decentring, comparison and reflection. There should be enough opportunities to reflect upon how the information about culture is exchanged. Teachers should incorporate learning tasks that will in the same time promote fluency and increase awareness of culture (Corbett, 2003, p. 32). The intercultural approach also acknowledges the fact that different learners have different needs and motives for language learning and that should be taken into consideration since they impact upon the type of input in materials and the goals of the course.
2.4. Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence and its components

Intercultural communicative competence is a complex combination of valuable knowledge and skills. According to Byram’s model (1997) intercultural communicative competence implies certain attitudes, knowledge and skills in addition to linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence. Byram doesn’t abandon the objectives of the communicative approach but rather expands it. Byram’s model provides a detailed outline of what intercultural competence is and what kind of skills need to be taken into account when teaching language according to the intercultural approach. He formulated five savoirs which refer to five kind of knowledge and skills which a successful intercultural speaker needs in order to understand and mediate between the home culture and the target culture. Language learners should acquire knowledge of a particular culture or country and develop skills, attitudes and awareness of values. The question is not how much information about a country and its cultures should be included in the syllabus, but how can one develop competences which will help learners to interact successfully with people of other cultures and identities (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, p. 17). Developing critical thinking and analytical skills as a part of intercultural competence is essential because it allows learners to take into consideration positive and negative sides of different cultures, including their own. Generalisations and stereotypes should be challenged, other viewpoints should be suggested and presented, and skills of critical discourse analysis and critical cultural awareness should be developed (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, p. 27). Learners should interact with parts of another society and culture in order to relativise understanding of their own cultural values, beliefs and behaviours, and to encourage them to investigate the otherness around them. (Byram, Nichols & Stevens, 2001, p. 3)

The components of intercultural communicative competence are (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, pp. 12-13):

- **Knowledge (savoirs)**

  This component includes the knowledge of how social groups and identities function and what is involved in intercultural interaction. It involves the knowledge of social processes, and knowledge of illustrations of those processes and products. It includes factual knowledge about culture and their products, knowledge about daily life and the history of a culture.
• **Intercultural attitudes (savoir être)**

Intercultural attitudes involve curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own. One is willing to relativise his own values, beliefs and behaviours. One is aware how they might look from an outsider’s perspective. It means that one can decentre. It can be developed in class by using texts written by or about learners from other cultures telling about their lives.

• **Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre)**

Skills of interpreting and relating imply the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one’s own. These skills are crucial because they enable intercultural speakers or mediators to see how misunderstandings can arise and how they can resolve them. By comparing ideas, events, documents from two or more cultures and seeing how each might look from another perspective, intercultural speakers or mediators can see how people might misunderstand what is said or written or done by someone with a different social identity. It can be developed in class by tasks that allow careful reading, analysis and interpretation of texts by using creative tasks when working with literary texts.

• **Skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendrefaire)**

Skills of discovery and interaction refer to the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction. These are the skills of finding out new knowledge and integrating it with what they already have. It can be developed by writing imaginary e-mails, participating in a project, doing role plays, etc.

• **Critical cultural awareness (savoir s'engager)**

Critical cultural awareness refers to the ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries. Intercultural speakers or mediators need to become aware of their own values and how these influence their views of other people’s values. It can be developed by comparing a foreign culture with one’s own culture.
2.5. Intercultural communicative competence in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Among the guidelines for teaching, learning and assessment the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment includes objectives for teaching intercultural communicative competence. This document published by the Council of Europe (2001, p. 6) promotes plurilingualism through the learning of a wider variety of European languages and acknowledges the advantages and the importance of intercultural communicative competence in foreign language teaching. Plurilingualism cannot be separated from the notion of pluriculturalism because language is a means of access to cultural manifestations. The Council of Europe sees foreign language learning as composed of linguistic performance and verbal communication, and also of intercultural consciousness and intercultural skills. Cultures interact with one another, they are compared and contrasted. The document also states that the knowledge of the shared values and belief in other countries and regions is essential to intercultural communication because of the increased international mobility. Mutual understanding and acceptance of differences in our multicultural and multilingual societies should be promoted. The language learner develops interculturality and becomes open to new cultural experiences. Intercultural awareness includes an awareness of regional and social diversity. It is stated in the document that intercultural skills include:

• the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with each other;
• cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures;
• the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one’s own culture and the foreign culture and to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations;
• the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships. (The Council of Europe, 2001, p. 104)
2.6. Intercultural communicative competence in the National Curriculum Framework

The *National Curriculum Framework* (Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa RH, 2011) contains general guidelines concerning all subjects and the objectives and aims of courses for all subjects in Croatian schools. Learners should gain a deeper understanding of the foreign culture so that intercultural learning could become possible. A variety of cultural elements should be integrated in language lessons. The objectives for students to reach by the end of the secondary school education in relation to intercultural skills are described in the *National Curriculum Framework* published by the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. Students have to be prepared for appropriate intercultural activity. They need to learn how to apply knowledge, strategies, skills and attitudes for the purpose of successful intercultural communication. Students have to accept the need for tolerance and empathy, recognise and eliminate stereotypes and prejudices, become aware of the impact of culture on communication and of the potential for miscommunication in intercultural communication. Students have to be able to notice the similarities and differences between their own cultures and that/those of the foreign language in question, apply strategies for re-establishing broken communication and for avoiding and/or overcoming misunderstandings. Students also have to connect what they know about their own and foreign cultures with new situations and contexts, try to use what they have learned about culture and intercultural communication to interpret foreign phenomena, apply appropriate behaviour and react openly, curiously, and empathetically to foreign and unintelligible information, behaviour, and situations. (Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa RH, 2011, p. 105).

3. Previous research

There has not been much research focusing on intercultural communicative competence in textbooks. Nevertheless, we will mention two studies that are relevant to our study. Bilić-Štefan (2008) discusses the reasons for and the importance of introducing intercultural communicative competence into foreign language learning in primary schools in Croatia. She states that sociolinguistic and sociocultural aspects of language acquisition should be emphasized by the end of primary school. Students should be aware of their own linguistic and cultural identity. Textbook material was analysed in terms of the related presence of intercultural competence according to Byram’s model. The cultural content was mostly presented on separate pages, but in some textbooks cultural elements were integrated and
could not be treated separately. In the author’s opinion, the material consisted mainly of texts, communication patterns, activities and tasks by means of which students may acquire socio-cultural knowledge (*savoir*) and partially of activities more or less suitable for acquiring intercultural skills (*savoir-faire*). In order to gradually develop intercultural awareness, students should first acquire sociocultural knowledge (*savoir*) about the culture of the target group. The author believes that sociocultural knowledge is extremely important and it should be given special attention since students are generally under the influence of stereotypes. The textbooks that the author analysed covered different cultural topics and information. They contained primarily factual knowledge about Anglophone countries: geography, economy, political life, cultural and historical sites, famous people, festivities and daily life. Several tasks facilitated the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence through comparison and discussion. There was a story about a family that had moved to London and experienced cultural shock, stories about typical life in Great Britain, etc. The author noted that there was a lot of learning tasks that promoted communicative and sociolinguistic competences simultaneously. The author provided detailed descriptions of a number of activities and tasks which might serve the purpose of practising and acquiring intercultural skills and attitudes. However, the author is not sure if those learning tasks can stimulate the development of skills and attitudes that are necessary to function successfully in the target culture, to resolve potential intercultural misunderstandings and conflicts, and to communicate successfully. Contrary to expectations, students can develop simplified and stereotyped views of the target culture. In order to avoid this, it would be necessary to create more activities that would raise awareness of intercultural similarities and differences and that would provide examples of intercultural misunderstandings. Sometimes it would be enough to modify already existing tasks by adding other questions or authentic pictures. The author concluded that textbooks played a crucial role in learning foreign languages, the development of oral and written competence, sociocultural and intercultural communicative competence. Textbooks for primary school contained a lot of tasks with cultural elements, but they deal mostly with the introduction, repetition and expanding of sociocultural knowledge (*savoir*). In order to eventually become intercultural speakers and to learn how to overcome intercultural conflicts, students should also acquire skills (*savoir-faire*) and attitudes (*savoir-être*) that are required for successful intercultural communication.

In her book, Lies Sercu (2000) presents a detailed analysis of how six German textbooks that were used in Dutch-speaking secondary schools in Belgium affected the development of intercultural communicative competence in students. The author investigated the potential of
textbooks for promoting the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence and she provided recommendations for revising textbooks to enhance their potential. To investigate these questions, the author gathered data from six secondary schools in different areas of Flanders. Schools in different regions were selected because the proximity to Germany created different attitudes towards Germany and the importance of learning German. The students ranged in age from fifteen (4th-year students) to eighteen (6th-year students). The research methodology used in the study combined quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were obtained from a questionnaire and qualitative data included interviews with students and an analysis of the contents of the textbooks. Results of the study showed that attitudes towards Germans changed little from the 4th year to the 6th (final) year of schooling and that attitudes towards Germans were more negative than towards the British, French, or Walloons. The author stated that the prevailing negative image of Germans showed that textbooks did not have a sufficient impact on improving students' intercultural communicative competence. The author recommended that there should be more focus on contents aimed at developing the *savoirs* of intercultural communicative competence. Serceu addressed the issue of intercultural communicative competence in foreign language learning in the context of languages and cultures that have much in common and that share a common European identity. The author concluded that language teaching should be directed towards improving intercultural communicative competence and reducing negative stereotypes. She believed that textbooks had a central role to play in intercultural learning process and in preparing students for future contacts with foreign cultures and that the more culture a textbook contained, the greater the chances that students would perceive it as an essential component of learning how to communicate successfully with members of a foreign culture. Students should be encouraged to compare a foreign culture to their own, to find ways to establish and maintain intercultural contacts, and to independently analyse and solve intercultural conflicts because merely inviting them to memorise and reproduce cultural information does not suffice. The author emphasised that there was a need to re-evaluate foreign language teaching with a view to promoting intercultural communicative competence. If foreign language teaching intends to prepare young people for the future, it needs to promote students’ acquisition of the attitudes and skills required for interacting with people from differing cultural backgrounds.
4. **Study**

4.1. **Aim**

This study investigates to what extent foreign language textbooks can contribute to promoting adolescent students’ acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. The focus of the study is on textbooks in terms of the degree to which they contain intercultural learning tasks. Our purpose is to explore whether and to what extent English textbooks currently in use in Croatia help promote the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. Our main research question is as follows: What potential do textbooks have for promoting the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence?

4.2. **Sample**

Textbooks are considered as the primary source of foreign language teaching and have always been a part of language teaching in Croatian schools and in language classes in general. The objectives of intercultural communicative competence should be included in the foreign language textbooks that are currently used in secondary schools in Croatia. Textbooks play an important role in foreign language teaching in Croatia. We need to examine them critically in order to see how the objectives of intercultural communicative competence are realised. In this study we collected the data from two different English textbooks that are currently in use in Croatian secondary schools: *New Headway Intermediate Student's Book Fourth edition* and *Insight Intermediate Student's Book*. Both of these textbooks were approved and recommended for the school year 2014/2015 by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports in Croatia. We assessed the two textbooks in terms of the degree to which they contained intercultural learning tasks. We examined the ways in which foreign language textbooks presented cultural information and envisaged cultural learning.

4.3. **Procedure**

Having outlined the context of our study, the theoretical framework and the aim we wished to achieve, we can now turn to presenting the main principles on which our study was founded and the procedures adopted for collecting and analysing research data. The analysis took into account scientific and pedagogical developments in the field of foreign language
teaching. We combined quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. A quantitative approach to textbook data collection was complemented with a qualitative analysis of selected textbooks. Analysing, describing and evaluating the foreign language textbooks required relying on a particular theoretical framework. We used the definition of intercultural communicative competence developed by Byram (1997). This definition is based on five savoirs: savoirs, cultural references and explicit knowledge of cultures; savoir être, intercultural attitudes and respect and tolerance for other cultures; savoir comprendre, the skills of interpreting and relating; savoir apprendre/faire, the ability to discover and interact with other cultures and to apply skills to unknown situations, and savoir s'engager, critical cultural awareness. The next section introduces the data and the results of the study.

5. Results

5.1. Ratio of learning tasks promoting the acquisition of intercultural communicative to other learning task

The first criterion for analysing the tasks was whether they increased learner’s intercultural competence. Every cultural reference found in the textbooks was taken into consideration. The New Headway Intermediate Student's Book Fourth edition contains 580 learning tasks, out of which 163 (28.1 %) could be classified as learning tasks that promote development of intercultural communicative competence, whereas the Insight Intermediate Student's Book contains 699 out of which 314 (44.9 %) were classified as those that are likely to promote intercultural communicative competence.

Figure 1. Ratio of learning tasks promoting the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence to other learning tasks in the New Headway Intermediate Student's Book Fourth edition
In addition, the learning tasks that promote development of intercultural communicative competence were analysed according to the Byram’s model. All of the dimensions of intercultural communicative competence were found to be incorporated in the learning tasks of the two analysed textbooks. In the *New Headway Intermediate Student's Book Fourth edition* the majority of the tasks was aimed at increasing learner’s *Knowledge (savoirs)* (62 tasks, 38 %) and *Intercultural attitudes (savoir être)* (50 tasks, 30,7 %). The third largest dimension is *Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre)* (24 tasks, 14,7 %) that is addressed frequently. The two remaining dimensions were *Skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendre/faire)* (16 tasks, 9,8 %) and *Critical cultural awareness (savoir s'engager)* (11 tasks, 6,8 %).

In the *Insight Intermediate Student's Book* almost half of the tasks representing dimensions of intercultural communicative competence addressed the dimension...
Intercultural attitudes (savoir être) (146 tasks, 46,5 %). The second and the third largest number of tasks were classified under the dimensions Skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendre/faire) (64 tasks, 20,4 %) and Knowledge (savoirs) (61 tasks, 19,4 %). The two remaining dimensions were Critical cultural awareness (savoir s'engager) (30 tasks, 9,6 %) and Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre) (13 tasks, 4,1 %).

Figure 4. Distribution of dimensions of the intercultural communicative competence in the *Insight Intermediate Student's Book*

5.2. Analysis of the *New Headway Intermediate Student's Book Fourth edition* according to the Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence

There were twelve units in the *New Headway Intermediate Student's Book Fourth edition*. Each unit began with a Starter section which launched the grammar and the theme of the unit. Grammar, Reading, Vocabulary and Writing sections were combined with listening and speaking activities. At the back of the book there was a Writing section and a section dedicated to grammar with accompanying exercises. There were Grammar Spots in the body of the unit, which gave essential grammatical rules. The textbook came with a CD that contained classroom activities and articles to practice for the matura exam.

The dimension of Knowledge (savoirs) included factual knowledge and information about cultures, and general knowledge of the world. A reading text offered a profile of the life of Charles, Prince of Wales, providing an insight into his personal life and work. The text was in the form of a magazine article. A song by Ian Dury and the Blackheads was also included. Tasks about the education in Victorian England were incorporated in the lesson about past tenses. Some tasks were based on a biography of the missionary Mother Teresa. The text contained biographical details about her. The study of the Present Perfect was contextualized through a profile of the life of J. K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books,
and of the fashion designer Calvin Klein. A section dealt with one of the world’s most popular sports – football. The text outlined the development of football from its origins to the worldwide sport that it is today. The theme of fear and facing problems was covered in two texts on dangerous journeys in history. One text outlined the life of Hannibal and Mao Zedung, the journey they each undertook, and their later lives. The theme was linked to pre-writing work on the story of the Titanic. Students used pictures and text prompts to write the story of the Trojan horse. The technology theme was carried through a text about the St Pancras International Station in London. Reading and Speaking section highlighted a whole range of influential people across history. Two examples of the tasks categorised under the dimension of **Knowledge (savoirs)** are presented in Figure 5. and Figure 6. The task in Figure 5. included the biography of Van Gogh and the task in Figure 6. presented useful information about New York City. All of these tasks contributed to increasing students’ knowledge of culture specific products, significant individuals, private and public institutions and national memory.

![Figure 5. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Knowledge](image-url)
The dimension of *Intercultural attitudes (savoir être)* included the theme of the world and different nationalities, and brought in the concepts of nationality and heritage. One of the tasks that promoted this dimension was based on the description of two families from Kenya and China. There was an article on a modern family that spent two weeks living as if they were in the 1970s as part of a social experiment. The theme of teenage problems was carried through with a text in the form of a leaflet advertising a fictitious support agency called Kidcare, which offered help and advice to young people who were being bullied. The leaflet profiled a young teenage boy and the problems he experienced. In another unit students read and listened to emails sent home by young travellers to their parents and listened to an interview with a fictitious singer that talked about typical problems of high-profile entertainers. Two examples of the tasks categorised under the dimension of *Intercultural attitudes (savoir être)* are presented in Figure 7. and Figure 8. In the first task, a text highlighted the theme of the kitchen as the heart of a home and how this was the case across different cultures. The text itself was in the form of interviews with three women from around the world. Students discussed how the women lived and talked about the differences between them. However, one should be careful because this learning task can lead to stereotypical and generalized representation of women in different societies. The task in Figure 8. prompted the
students to think about multicultural families and growing up in such a family. Students were encouraged to look at things from a different perspective. This type of tasks invited students to change perspective and empathised with foreign points of view, provided them with the ability to see how their own values, beliefs, behaviours might look from the perspective of an outsider who had a different set of values, beliefs and behaviours. Students became less willing to assume that their own values, beliefs, behaviours were the only possible and correct ones.

2 Read the introduction to *My kitchen* at the top of p51.
   Do you agree that the kitchen is the heart of the home?
   Is it where your family get together?

3 Work in three groups.
   Group A Read about Santina, from Italy.
   Group B Read about Elizabeth, from the United States.
   Group C Read about Lakshmamma, from India.
   Answer the questions.
   1 What does she do?
   2 What does her husband do?
   3 Where does she live?
   4 What’s her house like?
   5 How does she feel about her kitchen?
   6 Is her life easy or difficult?
   7 What does her family eat?
   8 Does she seem to be happy?
   9 What do you think she worries about?

4 Find a partner from the other groups.
   Compare and swap information.

5 Which person is most likely to say …?
   1 'I can never decide where to go swimming.’
   2 'We have found you a very nice girl. Why won’t you marry her?’
   3 'If anyone wants me, I’m weeding and watering.’
   4 'I’m too busy to play tennis today.’
   5 'I live my life in tune with nature.’
   6 'I’d love to have a new kitchen.’

What do you think?
In your opinion, who …?
• is the wealthiest materially
• is the happiest spiritually
• is the most creative cook
• has the hardest life
Give reasons for your answers.

Speaking
1 What food do you most associate with home? Is there a particular day of the week or time of year when you eat it?
2 Talk about your kitchen. Answer questions 1–12 from the text.

Figure 7. Example of a task addressing the dimension of *Intercultural attitudes*
A world in one family

1 Do you know anyone who has married someone of another nationality? Do they have any children? Tell the class.

2 Look at the photo of the family. There are three nationalities in the family. How can this be?

3 T1.7 Listen to Xabier talking about his family. Read and answer the questions. Underline any you cannot answer.
   1 What nationality are Xabier and his parents, Ana and Teo?
   2 Which city do they live in?
   3 How did Xabier’s parents meet? Give details. Why did they decide to live in England?
   4 When and why did Xabier first notice his nationality?
   5 Why weren’t Xabier and James bilingual as children?
   6 How many times has Xabier been to Bolivia? How old was he?
   7 How many times has James been?
   8 What contact does he have with his mother’s family?
   9 How long did they stay in Spain every summer?
   10 What is Xabier studying? What is James going to study?
   11 What is Xabier hoping to do in the future? Where is he planning to live?
   12 What is James doing at the moment? What’s he going to do?
   13 What does Ana think are the pros and cons of bringing up a family in another country?

4 T1.8 Now listen to Xabier’s mother, Ana. Answer the questions that you underlined in exercise 3.

Figure 8. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Intercultural attitudes

The dimension of Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre) included a reading section that told the story of Shakespeare’s famous lovers Romeo and Juliet. The text was in the form of a picture story, which summarized the action of the play, and characters’ speech bubbles which gave actual lines from the play. This allowed the students to understand the story while also getting a feel of the original language. The example of the tasks categorised under the dimension of Skills of interpreting and relating is presented in Figure 9. The task contained a Sherlock Holmes detective story called The Three Students which was found in one of the Reading and Listening sections. Students analyzed, interpreted
and retold the story in their own words and thus were able to develop the ability to interpret and explain oral and written text from another culture.

Figure 9. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Skills of interpreting and relating

The dimension of Skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendrefaire) included everyday situations, such as travelling or making a phone call. Students practiced expressing an attitude, acting out situations, making suggestions and arranging to meet. They learned the language used to pay a bill and were given the opportunity to role-play the conversation. They wrote a speech defending a cause and an essay about advantages and disadvantages of childhood. In one task they were encouraged to choose a famous town, do research, make notes and write about it. The examples of the tasks categorised under the dimension of Skills of discovery and interaction are presented in Figure 10., Figure 11. and Figure 12. Students played a role of a journalist and Calvin Klein. In another task students had to imagine they were on a business trip or at an event. In the Writing section there was a thank-you email written by a student to her host family. Students had to write their own email.
to someone they had stayed with and to an English friend. This type of tasks invited students to practice the interaction with people from foreign cultures by making use of knowledge, attitudes and skills in real-time communication and simulated interactions.

**Roleplay**

Imagine you are a journalist. You are going to interview Calvin Klein about his life. Write questions to ask him with your partner. Then roleplay the interview.

**Interviewer** Where were you born?
**CK** In New York. In the Bronx.

**Interviewer** Have you always been interested in fashion?
**CK** Yes, I have. Well, most of my life, since I was 14.

Figure 10. Example of a task addressing the dimension of *Skills of discovery and interaction*

6 You are abroad on a business trip. Invent a name and a background for yourself.

You are at a social event. Stand up and socialize! Ask and answer questions.

Figure 11. Example of a task addressing the dimension of *Skills of discovery and interaction*

5 Write a similar letter to an English friend.

Swap letters with a partner. Try to correct your partner’s letter using the symbols.

Figure 12. Example of a task addressing the dimension of *Skills of discovery and interaction*

The tasks belonging to the dimension of *Critical cultural awareness* (*savoir s’engager*) prompted students to discuss about cultural differences. Students related various topics and texts to their own lives and compared their own culture to other cultures. The examples of the tasks categorised under the dimension of *Critical cultural awareness* are presented in Figure 13. and Figure 14. In the first task students were asked to compare British and Croatian laws. In Figure 14., students were asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of bringing up a family in another country. These tasks helped develop the ability to critically evaluate products and practices in one’s own culture and country in relation to other cultures and countries.
5.3. Analysis of the *Insight Intermediate Student's Book* according to the Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence

There were ten units in the *Insight Intermediate Student's Book*. Each unit was divided into five sections (A – E), with a Vocabulary Insight page and a Review. After every two units, there was a Cumulative Review. At the back of the book, there was a ten-page Vocabulary bank. Every unit had a separate vocabulary bank that included vocabulary tasks.

The dimension of Knowledge (*savoirs*) included factual knowledge and information about cultures. There was an article about British fashion from the 1960s to the 1990s and an article about Fairtrade organization. Students discovered American history and American attractions. Students learned about charity events that help the world and World Wide Fund for Nature. The theme of coming of age was carried through with a text that told at what age people in Britain do different things. Traditional festivals and their origins were described. Students discussed the decisions that have influenced popular culture. They read an article about Pablo Picasso and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and listened to a radio show about the film Singin’ in the Rain. The topic of famous festivals was presented in an article about the Sundance Film Festival, the WOMAD music festival and Glastonbury festival. Most of the texts were in the form of an article. The examples of the tasks categorised under the dimension of Knowledge are presented in Figure 15., Figure 16. and Figure 17. The first
example is an article about Route 66, a famous road in the USA. The theme of discrimination and segregation was covered in the text about Rosa Parks. A quiz about popular culture was included in the unit. Students could discover and understand other cultural content, products, practices, significant events and individuals in the national memory of countries where English is spoken.

Figure 15. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Knowledge
The dimension of Intercultural attitudes (savoir être) included an email about a project linking up students from schools in different countries, an article describing tourism in Mozambique, a radio account of rowing and a trip to the North Pole, an article about

Figure 16. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Knowledge

Figure 17. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Knowledge
different types of travellers, a story about backpackers stranded in the Australian Outback, a radio interview with a member of the First Nation community in Canada who campaigned for a better school, an article about a charitable event, the people it is helping and teenagers involved in fund raising, an article about how a gift from a charity enabled a girl from a poor Ugandan community to go to school and university and a story about another family who were helped by Heifer International. Students became aware of local and global issues. Furthermore, they discussed teenage obesity in the USA, the number of obese teenagers in the USA, their diet and lifestyle. However, the perception of the USA as an obese nation could lead to generalisation and stereotyping. They were asked to discuss life on an island affected by rising sea levels due to climate change, to read an article about organizing a flash mob to promote recycling and a text about a lasting friendship between two pen friends and to discuss forms of protest. Students read about problems and lives of teenagers in other countries. They could compare their own issues and relate to them. Students were encouraged to discuss how teenagers spend their money, to listen to a radio programme on the spending habits of British teenagers and to talk about it. These kinds of tasks addressed the students’ attitudes and perceptions. The examples of the tasks categorised under the dimension of Intercultural attitudes are presented in Figure 18. and Figure 19. The theme of the ideal beauty encouraged the students to discuss and to form their opinion about the Western ideal of beauty. They discussed the images of models, celebrities portrayed in the media. Students were encouraged to think about foreign culture, customs and traditions and how a responsible tourist should behave. Students discovered and understood other cultural practices by changing perspectives in the learning process. They became interested in the daily experiences of a wide range of social groups, not only that of the dominant culture.
Figure 18. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Intercultural attitudes
Figure 19. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Intercultural attitudes

The dimension of **Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre)** included an extract from the novel A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson. Students had to interpret the text with the help of the questions in the tasks. The example of the tasks categorised under the dimension of **Skills of interpreting and relating** is presented in Figure 20. The unit whose main topic was modern technology contained a slam poem. Students were encouraged to discuss forms of poetry which were popular among young people. They had to read and listen to the poem and afterwards discuss the question regarding the topic and the poem. They learned strategies for understanding poetry. The main aim of this kind of tasks was to enable students to analyse the cultural meaning being conveyed to them through classic literature and other sorts of texts or documents. They learned to use texts to identify and elicit implicit references, allusions and connotations.
Figure 20. Example of a task addressing the dimension of **Skills of interpreting and relating**

The dimension of **Skills of discovery and interaction** (savoir apprendre/faire) included choosing a tour of London, writing a letter, showing attitude, choosing an issue that students feel strongly about and campaigning for it, discussing issues concerning ecology, writing an opinion essay to explain why their school should choose a specific charity and a cover letter in response to an advert. Students had to choose a situation, prepare a dialogue and play it out. They had to use phrases to make formal or informal apologies. This could be considered as real-time communication in a real situational context. They were asked to write a letter to a newspaper, prepare dialogues and act them out for the class. At the end of the unit that dealt with modern technology students were asked to write a for and against essay about spending too much time online and about the effects of modern technology on our lives. The examples of the tasks categorised under the dimension of **Skills of discovery and interaction** are presented in Figure 21., Figure 22. and Figure 23. They included a role play between a
travel agent and a tourist, writing a profile for a website and an informal email in reply to an online advert. Overall, students were asked to play a role using their knowledge, attitudes and skills in simulated intercultural interactions and to find solutions to problems.

5 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs A and B. Choose a role card and prepare a dialogue between a travel agent and a tourist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are a travel agent. Think about what visitors can see and do in your town. Decide which activities and places would appeal to different types of tourist. Listen to Student B, then give advice about what they can see and do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are a tourist. Tell student A what you want from your holiday and what type of activities you enjoy. Ask them for advice about what you can see and do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 21. Example of a task addressing the dimension of **Skills of discovery and interaction**

6 **Imagine you are joining HouseExchange.com. Write a profile for the website. Include information about:**

- you (your name, where you live, your personality and interests).
- your home (this can be your real home or an imaginary one).
- your neighbourhood or town and what visitors can see and do there.
- your ideal holiday with HouseExchange (where you would like to go and why).

Figure 22. Example of a task addressing the dimension of **Skills of discovery and interaction**

**Task** Write an informal email in reply to the online advert below.

**Wanted: e-friends**

We have a partner school in Rotterdam, Holland. They are looking for e-friends for their sixteen-year-old students. They want to email students in different countries to practise their English and to find out more about life in other places. Tell them about life in your country, school and friends. Please attach photos and describe yourself and your friends.

Figure 23. Example of a task addressing the dimension of **Skills of discovery and interaction**

The dimension of **Critical cultural awareness (savoir s’engager)** included a discussion about why people protest, what they would protest against and why they would set up a campaign in their school. Students also discussed how students access information about
global and local issues, and they discussed charities in their own country. Within the theme of ideal beauty, students considered what a person from another culture might think about current Western ideal of beauty. Students thought about differences between going to school in their own country and in another country. They discussed possible differences between their life at school and that of teenagers in other countries. Students were encouraged to think and find ideas about famous attractions in their own country. They were asked to compare the laws in Britain and in their country, and to compare the life of a British teenager to their own. The examples of the tasks categorised under the dimension of Critical cultural awareness are presented in Figure 24., Figure 25. and Figure 26. Students were invited to describe a festival that takes place in their local area, to discuss and to compare festivals in their country and abroad. They were encouraged to think about their own identity. They were asked to compare students’ lifestyles in their country to that of an American teenager, think about the place where students live and choose the things that make up their cultural identity. In general, students were encouraged to express their impressions and opinions, and to view the topic from another perspective. They compared cultural practices and realized what the similarities and the differences were. During this process students became aware of their own cultural products and practices and they evaluated them.

4 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.
   1. Which of the traditions mentioned in the text are similar to those in your country?
   2. Are there any other festivals that you celebrate in your country? What is their origin?
   3. Do any of them encourage people to spend a lot of money?

Figure 24. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Critical cultural awareness

8 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Think about the place where you live. Choose the things that make up your cultural identity, then put them in order of importance. Give reasons for your order.
   - language
   - music (songs and dance)
   - festivals
   - beliefs
   - land / geographical features
   - houses
   - food

Figure 25. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Critical cultural awareness

3 **SPEAKING** Think about your lifestyle. How does it compare to an American teen’s lifestyle? Who has the healthiest lifestyle and why?

Figure 26. Example of a task addressing the dimension of Critical cultural awareness
6. Discussion

Textbooks need to be appropriate for students in order to promote the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence successfully. Not only do the learners acquire the linguistic competence but they also have to develop competence for intercultural interaction. Textbooks divide their units or chapters into language work and culture section is often appended rather than integrated and a few pages of background information are added at the end of the chapter. In practice this leads the teacher to treat these pages as supplementary and optional. We have seen that fictional texts were mostly used when referring to elements from another culture. The figures from the previous chapter indicated that the *Insight Intermediate Student’s Book* contained more learning tasks that are aimed at promoting the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence than the *New Headway Intermediate Student’s Book*. Out of these two textbooks, the *Insight* had a higher ratio of learning tasks that promote intercultural communicative competence to other learning tasks. In the *New Headway* the majority of these tasks were found in the Reading and Speaking section, whereas in the *Insight* these learning tasks were distributed in all of the sections, not only in the section dedicated to culture. The textbooks that we analysed covered different cultural topics and information. The themes dealt with in this textbook touched upon sustainable development, environment, tourism, charity, taste, health, beauty, media, technology, lives of teenagers and traditions.

The *Insight* invited students to question, evaluate and make cross-cultural comparison. The textbook increased the awareness of the world around them. There was a cultural comparison element, which encouraged students to think about the similarities and the differences with their own culture. However, it should be taken into account that it focused dominantly on vocabulary. The culture texts served as context for a new vocabulary set. No attention was given to a specific culture and nation, but a variety of cultures and nations were included. Students were encouraged to think critically about the issues raised, to evaluate their current point of view, to discuss and to share their opinions with others. The textbook covered cultural and historical themes which allowed broadening students’ understanding of the customs, traditions and history. Structured activities encouraged students to question their current opinions and the opinions of others. Tasks were designed to stimulate critical thinking, to encourage participation and the exchange of opinions. Students were encouraged to think about their own culture as well. The *New Headway* focused on English-speaking countries, especially the United Kingdom, whereas the *Insight* includes stories from all
around the world. As the name of the textbook indicated, it offered an insight into different cultures. The *Insight* attempted to include more intercultural learning tasks than the *New Headway*. It raised students’ awareness of international cultures as well as that of their own and encouraged students to handle authentic situations. The *New Headway* used cultural texts and facts to consolidate the use of grammar and it was obviously designed from a traditional perspective. It blended a traditional methodology and a communicative approach. Culture was just a backdrop for language tasks. Both of the textbooks included learning tasks that promoted the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence, but that was not their primary objective. The textbooks used in this study focused primarily on grammar and lexis. Having evaluated the textbooks, we could state that cultural learning is subordinate to language learning. It was apparent in these textbooks that language and culture are not separated though. Cultural elements were integrated and thus could not be treated as optional and supplementary. However, the study indicated that the *Insight* sought to develop cultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity and global perspectives to a greater extent than the *New Headway*.

Furthermore, the research showed that the dimensions from the Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence were not represented evenly. The *New Headway* was more inclined to the dimension *Knowledge*, whereas the *Insight* addressed mostly the dimension *Intercultural attitudes*. The *New Headway* provided a lot of historical and geographical information and stories about famous people. However, there was a lack of learning tasks that addressed the dimension *Critical cultural awareness*. It did not give students the chance to reflect upon elements from their culture and compare them to others. The *Insight* offered a lot of texts written by or about people from other cultures telling about their lives, realities, attitudes and values. It enabled students to acquire the capacity to abandon ethnocentric attitudes. Students were likely to reshape their values and integrate new perspectives so they could eventually become intercultural mediators. Regarding the dimension *Critical cultural awareness*, the *Insight* included more cultural materials that referred to the learners’ own culture and it invited students to compare their own culture with foreign cultures. This process of comparison developed tolerance and empathy towards differences and a feeling of the national identity. They consciously observed the similarities and differences between the two cultures and it helped them to reflect on their own values, customs, behaviours and attitudes. Students learned how to appreciate cultural diversity. The *Insight* encompassed the learner’s cultural identity as part of the learning process. These tasks
helped students acquire and develop intercultural competence so they could become intercultural speakers.

7. Conclusion

The goal of this study was to discover whether the Croatian secondary school English language textbooks promoted the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. Second language learning is also second culture learning. As we have seen, foreign languages education policy in the European Union encourages the development of students’ intercultural competence. The aim of an intercultural approach to language learning is to promote critical and cultural awareness and to provide a set of skills that will help students to observe, analyse, compare and evaluate different cultures. We are moving from the notion of native like proficiency to the notion of intercultural speaker. The native speaker is no longer a model. Students have to become aware that cross-cultural problems may occur. In language education, learners have to learn to interact with others and, consequently, to mediate between two or more cultures. We assessed textbooks with regard to their potential for promoting the students’ acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. The textbook sample was composed of the textbooks which were used in Croatian secondary schools. Assessing the potential of two foreign language textbooks was especially interesting to us: the New Headway Intermediate Student’s Book and the Insight Intermediate Student’s Book. We combined quantitative and qualitative research techniques. With the data gathered it was easy to determine whether the textbook helped students in the development of their intercultural communicative competence. As we mentioned before, the objective of culture learning was subordinated to other objectives. The results of this study showed that intercultural competence did not have such an important status as linguistic competence. There should be more focus on contents aimed at developing the savoîrs of intercultural communicative competence. Nevertheless, the analysis also showed that the Insight attempted to include more intercultural learning tasks than the New Headway. In the globalised world we live in, we are directly or indirectly in touch with different cultures and people of different origins. Therefore, intercultural communicative competence is a valuable asset in encounters between individuals of different cultural backgrounds.

Within the scope of this thesis we focused only on textbooks as the promoters of intercultural communicative competence. In future there should be more research dedicated to other factors that also contribute to the acquisition of intercultural communicative
competence. It would be of great interest to conduct a study on all textbooks used in Croatian schools, to include teacher's books and to observe how teachers use teaching materials in the classroom to teach intercultural communicative competence.


8. References


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Sažetak

U ovome se radu istraživalo mogu li udžbenici stranih jezika doprinijeti usvajanju interkulturalne komunikacijske kompetencije kod učenika. Naš je glavni cilj bio istražiti omogućuju li i u kojoj mjeri udžbenici koji su trenutno u upotrebi u Hrvatskoj usvajanje interkulturalne komunikacijske kompetencije. Podaci su bili prikupljeni iz jednog određenog izvora, a to su udžbenici stranih jezika. Koristili smo se kvantitativnim i kvalitativnim istraživačkim metodama. Željeli smo utvrditi sadržavaju li udžbenici engleskog jezika zadatke koji potiču usvajanje interkulturalne komunikacijske kompetencije. Istraživanje se temeljilo na Byramovom modelu interkulturalne komunikacijske kompetencije.

Ključne riječi: kultura, interkulturalni pristup, interkulturalna komunikacijska kompetencija, udžbenici engleskog jezika