The Reflection on Cultural Competency in Estonian National Curriculum for Upper Secondary School

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Abstract
Estonia’s educational policy is reflected in the National Curriculum (NC), where cultural competency is included as one of the core competencies. The NC in force since 2011 stipulates that in the upper secondary school, 60% of the study process has to be held in Estonian. This means that the curriculum aims to implement Content- and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method in schools where the main first language of the students is other than Estonian. Culture is one of the core components of CLIL in addition to content, communication and cognition. In this study, a model designed by a French didactic, Christian Puren (2002, 2006, 2014) was used to investigate the characteristics of what is cultural competency in the 2002 and 2011 curricula and how its signification has evolved. Puren sees cultural competency as a complex of different components: transcultural, which refers to values; metacultural, which is knowledge; intercultural, in representations; pluricultural, found in behaviour; and co-cultural, or cooperation. The study used content analysis method inspired by discourse analysis (Bardin, 2007) where language is considered to reflect themes that refer to certain components of cultural competency. Therefore, cultural competency components were analysed in their respective categories.

Keywords: Curriculum; Cultural competency; Foreign language teaching and learning.

Introduction
Education has often been understood as something that prepares the future citizen. In the context of globalization processes, questions about the concept of citizenship, formerly firmly related to the nation are put to the test. Two major approaches to curriculum studies define the purposes of the curriculum. On the one hand, there is the German Didaktik tradition, which focuses on the development of the individual, and on the other, the Anglo-American curriculum tradition, where attention is brought to the assessment and the quality of instruction. In this paper, I will intend to argue that although the Estonian national curricula for upper secondary schools (2002 and 2011) contain the main elements of Anglo-American curriculum policy such as the objectives, methods, content and assessment guidelines (inspired by Tyler’s rationale), they still refer to the elements of the Didaktik tradition, to the interplay between the individual and the world, where education means formation, perhaps even transformation, as argues Byram (2010). My focus is on the development of the meaning of the cultural competency in the two most recent Estonian national curricula (2002 and 2011 respectively).
Different Western countries, such as France, Italy and UK still struggle to find answers to the need to adapt to the cultural diversity within the society. Difficulties are often differently emphasized and are driven from the current composition of the existing communities within a country. In Estonia, quotas for the refugees demanded by the European Commission have been discussed in the light of the already perceived problems with Russian minorities. According to the 1934 census of population, less than 4% of the population in the Republic of Estonia was from Russian origins. In 1989, just before the end of the Soviet Occupation period, the number peaked at 30%. In 2015, according to Statistics Estonia, 25% of Estonian population is from Russian origins, 5% from other origins and almost 1% of the population has an undefined citizenship. A report (2015) of the Estonian Ministry of Culture on integration in Estonia addresses concern that 19% of residents from foreign origins who have born in Estonia and who’s parents are born in Estonia do not hold Estonian citizenship. This is mainly because Estonian citizenship is not granted by the birth to children whose parents are not Estonian citizens.

Several political representatives of the Russian community in Estonia continue to express their firm opposition to the educational reform efforts in terms of the prerogative of teaching in Estonian, considered as discriminative. Estonian is spoken by the majority of Estonian citizens, but it is a language not very much known in other parts of the world. Russian, on the other hand, is a mother tongue for approximately a quarter of Estonian population and is one of ten most spoken languages in the world. Not surprisingly Estonian language has been considered as a means to safeguard the culture. The NC in force explicitly aims to implement CLIL for Estonian as a foreign language. According to Eurydice study (2006), Estonian CLIL aims are specifically language-related. The status of Estonian language influences also the choice of subjects to be taught in Estonian on the upper secondary level (Estonian music and literature, civic education, Estonian history, geography), compared to most of the countries in Europe. Therefore, the curriculum bears important meaning for the development of cultural competency. Still, there are no specific programs for CLIL classes.

Theoretical overview

A study on teacher’s views of curriculum policy (Erss et al., 2014) demonstrated that a lot of Estonian teachers do not feel involved in the curriculum policy making and are therefore alienated of its content. Researchers such as Westbury (2008), Sivesind and Kareseth (2010) underline that the curriculum policy always reflects what is happening in the society and is strongly influenced by globalization processes. The curriculum reflects the society’s expectations. The cultural aspect of globalization raises important questions about what should be the purposes of the curriculum in terms of cultural competency, as there are a lot of scholars i.e. Ball (2003), Hopmann (2003) and Sivesind (2013) who alert for the constant attenuation of assessment and performativity in curriculum planning.

The decision to teach 60% of the subjects at upper secondary level in Estonian could be a result of policy borrowing. Amos Paran (2013) has proposed a hypothesis that the CLIL implementation in many European countries has Finland’s successful use of this method as an example to follow. He argues that
CLIL implementation is therefore not always a well thought through decision and often fails to take into consideration contextual factors that are crucial to a policy’s success. Such contextual factors can be for example the status of teacher education in a given country, the status of the language of instruction (minority or majority language, language spoken in the society or not), or the preparedness of the teaching staff to implement changes.

Although differences of opinion still exist, there appears to be some agreement that CLIL refers to the valorisation of content, cognition, communication and culture, the “4Cs” (Coyle, 2007, Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols, 2008). Coyle (2007) defines effective CLIL as “a progression in knowledge, skills, and understanding of the content, engagement in associated cognitive processing, interaction in the communicative context, the development of appropriate language knowledge and skills as well as the experience of a deepening intercultural awareness”. Cummins (as cited in Coyle, 2007, p. 551) explains that the “framework (of the “4C’s”) puts culture at the core and intercultural understanding pushes the boundaries towards alternative agendas such as transformative pedagogies, global citizenship, student voice and identity investment”. But although the culture is accentuated in these propositions, Coyle (2007) considers the interaction (mainly between the students) in the learning context as fundamental to learning. Therefore it seems to be the intercultural competency that is in the core of the CLIL method. In this paper, the culture is not considered as something that could be compared to other components of the CLIL but rather what encompasses them.

Many researchers in foreign language teaching and learning field such as Abdallah-Pretceille (2006), Byram (2010), Dervin (2009) and Puren (2002, 2006, 2014) have reflected upon the historical development of the concept of cultural competency and studied discourses in legislative documents, student books and theoretical literature that explain these developments. Intercultural competency is one of the most emphasized at the moment but has been subject to contradictory interpretations. Dervin (2009) argues that it has a tendency of being too underestimated when reduced to communication and interaction as a mere sending and receiving of messages. On the other hand, it is difficult to grasp the whole signification of cultural education with a single denomination of “intercultural competency”, therefore, Abdallah-Pretceille (2006) speaks of “culturality”: knowledge about otherness has to be completed with constant work on oneself. Byram (2010) argues that paying attention to multilingual and multicultural aspects of social interaction can “enrich education for citizenship and that in the best of all possible worlds, the intercultural citizen is gebildet [reference to Bildung concept of citizenship], is a social agent active in a multicultural society”, whether “national-state” or “international polity”. Byram is also positive about the perspective of implementing CLIL to gain these objectives.

Puren (2002) sees the cultural competency as a complex of different components. He has defined five of them by following their emergence in the context of foreign language teaching and learning since 1900 in Western countries (Europe and North-America). First and foremost, there has always been a great importance given to the transcultural component, which refers to values. The values were once considered universal, or at least, universally applicable, which has arrived at a certain cultural domination of western countries over other
cultures. Similarities with the transcultural component of cultural competency can be found in the original ideas of Bildung, the German conception of the educational purpose to prepare a cultivated, cultured, well-read person. A different approach came with the active method in 1910. Puren defines it as the metacultural component, which is knowledge. The objective was to underline essential differences in the matter of how the foreign culture appears through the political, educational structure, geography or fine arts, which were mainly observed via texts. Therefore this component of cultural competency was developed mainly by activities which demand a complex of different cognitive activities, such as proposed by B. Bloom (1956): remembering, analysing, interpreting etc. With the growing possibilities to travel to foreign countries (in the '70s, in Estonia after the Restoration of Independence in the '90s), the intercultural component appeared. The objective was to be able to talk with the native speaker in punctual situations, such as buying bread at local grocery’s or reserving a train ticket. The main objective of cultural competence was to discover one’s representations of everyday practices of the foreigners and to change one’s behaviour accordingly. In the '90s, as the contacts with the “Other” did no longer engage people merely in punctual communication and interaction with the native speakers of the language, the pluricultural component appeared. The pluricultural component refers to living side by side with people from different cultural backgrounds and origins, with no actual obligation to interact with them: behaviour as the need to accept the “Other” as he or she is. Therefore, representations and behaviour are essentially inter-related: intercultural refers to personal representations (or representations shared with people from the same background) about cultural practices and the need to modify them in order to interact with those from other cultures; pluricultural refers to the taking account of different cultural practices and phenomena that influence and explain the behaviour of the “Other”. The most recent, co-cultural component refers to the conceptions of action. As the pluricultural, this component of cultural competency has an important role in the Common European Framework for Languages (here and after CEFR). This component sees the cooperation as a collaborative making of a common culture. Puren’s model is hence important for the present research as it defines the development of the concept of cultural competency in detail and gives an opportunity to trace in the National Curricula the emerging components, such as plur- and co-cultural (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Study activities</th>
<th>Social objective</th>
<th>Key concept</th>
<th>History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transcultural</td>
<td>Reading, translating texts</td>
<td>To recognize common values</td>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Traditional methodology, 19th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacultural</td>
<td>Work with different oral and written texts</td>
<td>To inform oneself on the foreign culture, to inform</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>1910-1960, active method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural</td>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>To communicate in punctual situations with foreigners, to know cultural norms</td>
<td>Communication, representation</td>
<td>1970-… communicative approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pluricultural</td>
<td>Discussions, opinions, work with texts</td>
<td>To live side-by-side with people from other origins, to understand the</td>
<td>Behaviour, attitude, Plurilinguism and</td>
<td>1990 –… CEFR, Plurilinguism and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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need to act accordingly, to be culturally tolerant

| Co-cultural | Projects, task-based learning | To work together with people from partially or entirely different cultural backgrounds, to adapt or create a long-standing “common culture” | Common conceptions of action, contextual values | 2001 – ... CEFR, Active approach |

Table 1. Christian Puren’s model of cultural competency

It is important to notice that in Estonia, the communicative approach emerged significantly later than in Western Europe and North America. This is mainly due to the fact that until the ‘90s, Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union and the possibility to travel to Western countries, with some exceptions for people, who had relatives there, was restricted to countries of the former URSS, where the main common language of interaction was Russian. In addition to the deficit of study materials in the ‘90s (the textbooks from the Soviet period were tainted with the communist ideology so they had to be excluded from the study material), new innovative methodologies were discovered moderately after the Restoration of Independence in 1991.

Research questions

Prior research (Mänd, 2010) about the importance of cultural competency in the general guidelines and Foreign language field of the 2002 National Curriculum for Basic and Upper Secondary School (here and after the NC1) showed that the cultural competency does not confine anymore with the traditional approach by knowledge and values but also indicates the importance of understanding representations, behaviour, and cooperation. Nevertheless, the results of the analysis showed that as for the foreign languages subject field concerned, the development of cultural competency combined meta- and intercultural aspects and little attention was attributed to pluri- and co-cultural competency. Therefore further support was expected to be found in the comparison of the NC1 and National Curriculum for Upper Secondary Education currently in force (here and after the NC2). How has the meaning of cultural competency been developed in the curricula in terms of the importance attributed to the pluri- and co-cultural components of cultural competency? What kind of changes can be observed between the two most recent Estonian curricula? What hypothesis could be elaborated in terms of what meaning the teachers in CLIL classes could attribute to the development of cultural competency?

The method

The corpus of the study included the general guidelines of the two curricula and the competencies expected to be developed by the school system. The curricula had a relatively similar structure. The main difference is that the NC2 has regrouped subjects under subject fields, therefore adding broader guidelines than the NC1. The aims, content and outcomes of the two, at the moment, separated fields of Foreign Languages and Social Studies were analysed.
because they have become important in the objective to implement CLIL in mainly Russian-speaking schools in Estonia.

The study used content analysis method inspired by discourse analysis, where language is considered to reflect themes that refer to certain components of cultural competency and therefore, cultural competency components were analysed in their respective categories. Laurence Bardin (2007) defines the notion of the theme on a semantic level, thus the elements of the analysis have variable length. The recording unit was composed of utterances, which contain a verb, and was also defined in terms of verbalisation (refers to an actor), or nominalization (refers to a concept). In the case of nominalization, the record units that did not contain any verb, the semi-colon was replaced with “[means]” to distinguish the recording units. Then the utterances were categorized according to the Puren’s model for cultural competency, presented above. The content of the compared sections was coded in http://www.qcamap.org, free software in order to create an Excel file with categorisations. Then the file was reviewed and commented. Although this enables to describe the categories quantitatively, further reading from other researchers should be done to confirm the reliability of the conclusions. The sections of the curricula were compared with one another to find out in which categories of cultural competency they differ from one another and if there are any significant shifts in the importance of the pluri- and co-cultural components.

Results

In this section, I will discuss the initial outcomes of the document analysis by comparing the emergence of each component of cultural competency in the national curricula.

The values that refer to the transcultural component of cultural competency are important almost in each section of the curriculum except for the study outcomes of the foreign language subject field. In the Foreign languages study outcomes, only the section for Estonian as a foreign language in the NC2 states that the student “understands his place within the society”. Elsewhere, references to the transcultural component can be observed by numerous recording units that are introduced with verbs such as “feels, respects, values, follows, and acknowledges”.

Extra attention in the general guidelines of both curricula is brought to the need to ensure the sustainability of the Estonian culture. In the NC1 the need to “safeguard and develop Estonian nation and culture” is altered in the NC2 with the need to “safeguard and develop Estonian nation, language, and culture”, the latter also underlines that “therefore in the upper secondary school special attention is paid to teaching the Estonian language”. These particular recording units can be found in the second sentence of the NC1’s general aims, whereas the NC2 places them as the last recording units in the “setting of goals” section. Introducing and concluding are considered as means to bring attention to certain elements of discourses. The NC2 demonstrates more clearly the aims of the Estonian integration policy and indicates in my view the determination of Estonian culture through language. The modification probably derivates from the amendment of the preamble of the Estonian Constitution (1992). In 2007, “Estonian language” was added to the following sentence: “With unwavering faith
and steadfast will to strengthen and develop the state (...) which must guarantee the preservation of the Estonian people, the Estonian language and the Estonian Culture (...) the people of Estonia (...) have adopted the following Constitution”. Similar attention to valuing local culture was observed by Karseth and Sivesind (2010) in the Norwegian curricula: in the globalization context, the need to respect the cultural heritage of the nation-state does not necessarily conflict with the differences between cultures because personal cultural heritage is considered as something to be appreciated and developed worldwide. At the same time, Karseth and Sivesind alert for the old distinction between “us” and “them”. In general, both Estonian curricula have been designed from a student-centred approach, meaning that most of the study aims and outcomes are formulated in the 3rd person singular, which refers to the student. But the general aims of both curricula refer to the responsibilities of the Estonian school expressed in impersonal tense. It is interesting to note that while the sustainability and development of the Estonian culture are emphasised in both curricula, the NC2 general guidelines do not mention the need to support the cultural identity of minorities living in Estonia separately as in the NC1. Instead, the NC2 states that its text departs from basic social values, among which cultural diversity is mentioned.

Both curricula point out that the school must assure that the student will avoid opinions, which violate essential values, such as human dignity and respect for life. This is explained thoroughly in the section of Social studies subject field. The NC1 phrases this through nominalisation and considers the possibility that the student could be holding unacceptable beliefs: “the beliefs which do not correspond to the general values can only be altered in individual and systematic work, guiding the student delicately [towards socially accepted beliefs]”. The NC2, on the contrary, verbalizes the study outcomes: “The student respects the individual, cultural differences and various viewpoints in case they do not demean human dignity”. Therefore the latter defines this transcultural component through the students’ exposure to opinions that could have a negative impact on his or her beliefs and signals the need to be more analytical and cautious while constructing opinions. The former addresses the possibility that some students may have inappropriate opinions about others, therefore giving more emphasis on the schools’ role in shaping opinions. The aim of the NC2 was probably to avoid stigmatizing the student in advance.

If the interest of the reader of the curricula would be in the understanding of the meaning of cultural competency as stated explicitly in the general competencies chapter, then the performance of knowledge about cultural artefacts, general ethics, and moral norms would define it especially in the NC1 and NC2’s first version, therefore referring to a combination of trans- and metacultural components. In the NC2, the value competency has been renamed as “value- and cultural competency” and the content of the first version of the NC2 has been completed with pluricultural notions such as “the capacity to value human, cultural and environmental diversity”.

Moving on to the role of the knowledge in the curriculum, the most important shift in the importance of the metacultural component is observed in the general guidelines of the curricula. The metacultural component refers to the capacity to inform and to be informed. It is most present in the chapter of general
competencies, where communicative competency encompasses various activities of information processing (the ability to understand, interpret, exchange, create texts), similar to the Bloom taxonomy (1956). But the NC2 adds also the ability to define the function and the need to use texts in appropriate situations. This can also be seen as a reference to intercultural component because text processing is not seen as an individual task but an activity in a social context. Karseth and Sivesind (2010) in their study on the Norwegian curriculum reform stated that the new conception of knowledge society should refer to the sharing of knowledge and its use rather than to simple acts of information processing.

The subject field of Estonian as a foreign language has also a section on cultural history in the NC1. This section emphasizes all elements of culture that represent cultural heritage, although specific artists are not designated. In Puren’s terms, “approach by the representative” (in Fr. l’approche par le représentatif) means that the artist is considered as the right person to sense the essence of his or her time and culture. In the NC2 the culture is not referred to as cultural history and is described as one of the general themes. Regardless of that, in both curricula it refers to trans- and metacultural components (in NC2, the sub-title of the section “Culture and creativity” is “Culture as creativity”). This conclusion could be made as the content is described by notions and not by verbalization of what is done with these notions.

The intercultural component is the most emphasized in the study results of the subject field of foreign languages. The recording units in both curricula repeatedly refer to communication skills, for example the aim of teaching Estonian as a foreign language is that “the student will acquire the capacity to interact in different situations in Estonian language” (NC1), similar to the aim “the student acquires a level of language skills which allow him or her to communicate in oral and written production while following the respective cultural norms” (NC2).

Both curricula in the foreign languages sections underline the need to privilege communicative methods in the learning process: the NC1 describes study activities in the frame of „communicative-cognitive action“, the NC2 refers to the communicative and active approach. Puren (2006) has proposed another definition of active approach, which is “active perspective” (in French la perspective actionnelle). The task-based class activities do not grant, in his opinion, the real aims of the active approach, which in the CEFR, is “the formation of a social actor”. The reasons why the study outcomes often point to intercultural components derivate from the need to assess the students individually, which often comes in dispense of teamwork assessment. Individual assessment in communicative approach means interacting within a certain framework of social situation, which can be predicted and acted through in classroom practices, mostly by revising and elaborating dialogues about different communicative situations.

One particularity of the NC2 is that the evaluation of each level of language proficiency is described almost as in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and refers to reading, listening, writing and speaking skills (levels A1.1-C1). For Puren (2006), the communication skills indicate emphasis on the intercultural component of cultural competency. But the NC2 has combined the study outcomes matrix with separate grammar evaluation
explications (“grammar correction”) in addition to the four communicative skills. There are two possible interpretations to this choice: firstly, the teachers in Estonia by whom the curricula should be enacted are more acquainted with traditional methodologies of language teaching. The authors of the curriculum might be concerned that the teachers do not see the language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in the context of language structures and what errors are to be permitted or not by the curriculum. Another way of interpreting the decision to refer to the grammar in the curriculum is maybe a certain vigilance towards the communicative approach, which for its fascination for speaking skills and the excessive use of dialogues as a learning material has been criticized for not granting sufficient knowledge of language structures. Content-wise, the decision to keep explicit reference to grammar in the curriculum echoes the need of to focus on written texts, which are presumed to grant opportunities to analyse language structures.

An important shift in the attention to the pluri- and co-cultural components can be observed in the NC2. These components of the cultural competency are quite balanced in the NC2, while in NC1 the pluricultural emerges on the second place after the metacultural and the co-cultural is the least important of all five components. The co-cultural appears mainly in the NC2’s sections for “social and civic competence” and “entrepreneurship competence”. Verbs of active nature are used to explain these competencies, but they are more often mentioned in the NC2, for example “social and civic competence [means] doing constructive teamwork”, “social- and civic competence [means] supporting actively the democratic developments of the society” and “the entrepreneurship competency [means] the capacity to organize and participate in joint activities”. The NC2 brings in the perspective that the student will be working together with others from his or her age group who have “the same understanding of things”. This sheds light on the idea of the possibility to cooperate with others outside the classroom, in the condition of sharing common concerns. In the NC1 on the contrary, the only record units that refer to the co-cultural are “action competency [means] co-operation skills” and “social competency [means] the capacity to support democratic developments in the society”. The emergence of the co- and pluricultural components is a tendency that describes, as argues Meyer (2006) (cited in Karseth & Sivesind 2010, p. 104), that there is a worldwide trend of how the education should prepare not just a future citizen, but also a member of human society as a whole.

The NC1 appears to be less focused on the pluricultural component because multiple interpretations are possible when the curriculum section for Estonian as a foreign language states: “The student defines his or her relationship with the surrounding life- and cultural environment. Acquired knowledge and immediate participation in the social and cultural environment are the prerequisites to adapt easily and without complications to Estonian society”. In this section, NC1 seems to reflect a paradigm that if the public sphere is mostly relevant to dominant culture then the student must adapt his or her behaviour according to the cultural norms of the country he or she lives in and keep the customs and behaviour of personal culture to private life. It is equally difficult to say whether the “immediate participation” has been interpreted as a way to cooperate (co-cultural component) or just to participate in cultural events, such as
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going to theatres, cinema, music events, which would point to the metacultural component. In contrast, the NC2 seeks to give a more accurate definition of pluriculturalism and often cites the CEFR (2001, p. 6):

“Plurality [Plurilinguism, my correction] has itself to be seen in the context of pluriculturalism. Language is not only a major aspect of culture, but also a means of access to cultural manifestations (...). In a person’s cultural competence, the various cultures (national, regional, social) to which that person has gained access do not simply co-exist side by side, they are compared, contrasted and actively interact to produce an enriched, integrated pluricultural competence, of which plurilingual competence is one component”.

Although the citation in the NC2 is slightly inaccurate, the references to CEFR brings forward the pluricultural competency in the NC2 compared to the NC1, where this component has not gained much attention and never refers to it as “pluriculturalism” or “multiculturalism”.

In the section of history, both curricula emphasize the necessity to develop through the learning process the students’ capacity to create their own opinion of events and phenomenon whilst enriching their “system of values”. This section could be interpreted as a combination of trans-, meta-, and pluricultural components with emphasis on the individual path that is characteristic of pluricultural component. Nevertheless, there is one difference between the curricula. While in the general guidelines Social Studies subject field section of the NC1 there are no explicit references to the diversity of cultures, cultural practices, and opinions, the NC2 indicates various objectives that explicitly refer to the pluricultural component, for example the need to “understand that diversity is to be considered as a value and condition of development of any society”. Both curricula sections on history have not elaborated on co-cultural component, although in the NC1, the recording unit “understands contemporary society’s problems, feels responsible for resolving them” could refer to the co-cultural (feeling responsible should lead to action). It could be argued that acknowledging doesn’t always lead to acting together. Individual actions rarely lead to important changes; it is the collective ones that count as a result of a co-cultural competency.

The transcultural component has a lot in common with the co-cultural component: its key concept is “values”. The main difference is that the first is the minimum prerequisite for the development of the second, which aims for the creation of a common culture. This aspect brings out the complexity of the co-cultural component, which cannot be developed by itself but always by looking for support from other components of the cultural competency: having some generally accepted common values to start with, negotiating knowledge, acknowledging representations and attitudes are all necessary to make teamwork not just effective for one single task, but to give it a long-standing perspective. The entrepreneurship competency of NC2 in comparison to the NC1 sees the students as actors in a social context, whereas the “action competency” of the NC1 mainly refers to the student’s competency of making the right individual choices. Therefore the findings for the references to Puren’s cultural competency model are much more balanced and complex in the NC2’s general aims and differ a lot in terms of the consideration for the metacultural (most important in
the NC1) and **co-cultural** (most important in the NC2) component of cultural competency.

Civic education and Estonian history are two of the five subjects that schools are bound to assure with CLIL classes. These subjects are part of the Social studies subject field, which was chosen for the analysis for its importance for the development of the competencies that allow the student to learn about civic engagement, which should encompass all of the five components of cultural competency. Both curricula focus here on the **metacultural** competency which is expressed in recording units that describe the skills related to document and content analysis, meaning that the student will begin to understand the surrounding world and see the connexions between the past and the present as well as between the past events. My initial assumption about the significant difference in terms of pluricultural competence in the NC2's social studies subject field description was refuted as it is the **transcultural** component that has taken a more important role in the NC2 than in the NC1. This might also be related to the **co-cultural** component, which is also slightly more important in the NC2 than in the NC1: being a “kindred spirit” to others is a prerequisite for working together. The teamwork is perceived as a work in action: “the cooperation skills are learned [in school]”. A similar observation can be done for the content of the sections of civic education. The **metacultural** is the most important component in the NC1, as recording units constantly refer to knowledge processing and abilities to manipulate different textual resources (medias and other, as well as the capacity to apply methods of research and use accurate terminology). They are also numerous in the NC2, nevertheless, the latter brings out more explicit references to the **pluri-** and **transcultural** components which are moderate in number in the NC1. The references to the knowledge about legislative texts in the NC1 are elaborated in the NC2 to emphasise the central values of these documents, such as “respect for democratic principles”, “understanding Human Rights” and “acknowledging his or her rights and responsibilities as a citizen”.

Erss et al. (2014) pointed out in their research on Estonian teachers’ views on curriculum policy that most of them do not feel involved in curriculum making and criticize the detachment of the curriculum general guidelines from the subject field programs. From one point of view, it could be partially true if the focus of the reader of the curriculum is on the study outcomes of the latter, where it is difficult to trace the educational purposes other than those which refer to knowledge processing and interaction skills. But on the other hand, efforts have been made as explanations of the general competencies with respect to each subject field have been incorporated to the NC2.

**Conclusion**

It is almost certain that the general change in the concept of cultural competency in the curricula derives from the attention brought on the **meta-** and **pluricultural** components. While in the NC1, the student is an individual who depends on the knowledge he or she has acquired (refers to the metacultural), the NC2 brings attention to the co-construction of the knowledge (pluricultural, co-cultural). The pluricultural component has gained importance in the general description of foreign languages in the NC2, though similarly to the NC1, the communication (the intercultural component) is still underlined as the main
element of studying languages, while it has no bearing in the social studies subjects. Surprisingly, it is the **transcultural** component that has gained importance for the Social studies field in NC2.

The **co-cultural** component appears often in the description of the social studies subject field of the NC2, but at the same time is less present in their study results. Although the NC1 also mentions the need to assure civic engagement, the attention is brought to the individual path of the learner and therefore, it is more likely that competencies evaluated through the school education tend to be mostly individual.

The results of the analysis, which are to be considered with caution, open up some important themes. As the schools only recently (in 2014) had to bring learning activities and learning environment into conformity with the NC2, it is likely that teachers could still hold practices that depart from the NC1. Therefore it is too early to speak of the NC2 as an enacted curriculum, especially as the teachers do not feel involved in the making of the curriculum (Erss, Mikser et al., 2014). From the viewpoint of the intended new curriculum and the CLIL’s importance for Estonia as an integration project, it would be interesting to know if and how the teachers would embrace the emerging **pluricultural** competence and if the practicing teachers might be overly attentive to one of the core components that are presented in CLIL model (the 4 C’s). It could be that CLIL teachers with foreign language teacher’s background attribute more attention to the communication skills, which refers to the **intercultural** component and the teachers of social subjects would focus on content, which refers to the **metacultural** component.

These findings suggest several courses of action for the implementation of a more comprehensive subject field curriculum sections. The challenge now is to create a joint curriculum for CLIL subjects. A policy priority should also be to fill the gap between the outcomes and the general purposes of the curriculum, which, as cultural competency concerned, are the most ambiguous in terms of the meaning of pluri- and co-cultural competency. Further research should be done to investigate the content of the obligatory state examination in Estonian as a foreign language. Its content could provide answers to how the integration between the subject field of foreign languages and social studies is expected to be enacted by the teachers. It is equally important to ask how the teacher’s conception of cultural competency correlate with the ambitions of the National curriculum.

**Notes**

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