

Intercultural Competence in Textbooks of Croatian as a Mother Tongue

Gordana Čosić^{1,*}, Katarina Aladrović Slovaček²

¹Primary school D. Domjanića, Sveti Ivan Zelina, Croatia

²The Faculty for Teacher Education University of Zagreb, Croatia

Received 2 October 2022

Accepted 1 December 2022

ABSTRACT

The development of language competences is the fundamental goal of educational documents at the world (Eight Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning, 2008; 2020), European (CEFRL, 2015) and national level *Curriculum for the subject Croatian language for elementary schools and high schools (2019)*. This implies the development of language-communication and linguistic competence. In the process of primary school language learning, it is important to develop linguistic and communicative competence, which includes sociolinguistic, strategic and pragmatic competence, but also intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is most often defined as competence in which knowledge of elements of different cultures that are in contact with the dominant culture is developed or the child gets to know them through different contents in order to understand the world in which he lives. In Croatian language classes, the child most often encounters this competence through various texts that are written from the perspective of another culture or talk about different cultures that live in the Republic of Croatia, as well as outside it. Thus, a child will, for example, learn something about the eating habits of the British if he reads E. Blyton's novels *Five Friends* and the like. Therefore, the goal of this research is to analyze textbooks and reading books for the teaching of the Croatian language from the third to the sixth grade and to find elements of intercultural competence in the texts through qualitative analysis. It is expected that cross-cultural elements will most often be found in the starting texts and that most of the texts will belong to the Anglo-Saxon linguistic and cultural area.

Keywords: *Language Competence, Intercultural Competence, Textbooks, Croatian Language, Primary School Age*

Introduction

The first language that a child acquires in all languages of the world is called mother's or mother's (Jelaska, 2005). More recent research (Jelaska, 2007; Pavličević-Franić, 2011; Aladrović Slovaček, 2019) shows that this adoption begins already in the second trimester of the mother's pregnancy and ends only around the 11th/12th trimester. when, according to Piaget (1977, 1978), the transition from the concrete to the abstract phase of the development of thinking takes place,

because then morphological and syntactic knowledge becomes automatic. Although the mother tongue is the first language a child encounters, in contemporary literature we do not find much research on its importance as a prerequisite for mastering other contents, i.e. teaching subjects, for example, at school age, but also mastering foreign languages. The document *Eight key competences for lifelong learning* (2008, 2020) emphasized the importance of communication in the mother tongue precisely assuming its importance for mastering other teaching and non-teaching content, but also for mastering other languages. It is precisely for this reason that since the eighties of the twentieth century, the importance of communication in the mother tongue, as well as in a foreign language, has been increasingly discussed in linguistics, thus changing the way and course of language teaching, which until then was classical and focused exclusively on learning grammar and, of course, vocabulary, but on very isolated examples and not necessarily in communication. Therefore, new terms appear in linguistic theory, especially in foreign language learning, on the one hand "communicative competence" and on the other hand "linguistic competence" (Pavličević-Franić, 2005). Both competences are aimed at the acquisition and development of language knowledge, but they start from two different assumptions, so one could say from two different theoretical concepts, which see their consequences in pragmatics and understanding of teaching practice. Communication in the mother tongue itself implies knowledge of linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive and strategic competence (Pavličević-Franić, 2011). In order to realize all these competencies, it is necessary to master grammar and spelling knowledge at a theoretical level and to apply this knowledge in the linguistic activities of listening, speaking, reading and writing. As already mentioned, Dell Hymes (1980) was the first to introduce the concept of communicative competence into linguistics, which he defined as the speaker's ability to choose the most suitable one from among several language subsystems, that is, he considers it the competence of a real speaker who, at the end of his language development, does not only possess grammatical knowledge, but also knowledge of its appropriate use in a certain communication context. The very word "use" changes the previous understanding of the term "language competence" and expands it with pragmatics. On a similar track are the authors Canale (1983), who under the term "communicative competence" mean a synthesis of knowledge about basic grammatical principles, knowledge about how language is used in social contexts to perform communicative functions, and knowledge about how to pronounce and communication functions can connect with regard to the principles of discourse. As can be clearly seen, they extend this definition to the discourse level, which complicates the term itself and acquires a discourse value in addition to the pragmatic one. The author Widdowson (2000) thinks very similarly, who distinguishes competence (knowledge of linguistic and sociolinguistic rules) and ability (the ability to use language knowledge to create discourse integrity), whose definition actually includes the thoughts of the previous two authors. Perhaps the simplest approach to this term is shown by the author Trask (2005), who defines it as the ability to exemplify expression in social circumstances. From the aforementioned theories, two communication models were developed Bachman and Palmer's (1990, according to CEFRL, 2005) and the Communication Model highlighted in CEFRL (2005). In Bachman and Palmer's model (1990, according to CEFRL, 2005), the communication

model includes linguistic competence, which implies organizational and pragmatic competence; strategic, which includes illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence and includes psychophysical elements (table 1) (Bagarić Medve, 2012).

Table 1. Communication model according to Bachman and Palmer (1990, according to CEFRL, 2005)

| Communication Model (Bachman & Palmer, 1990, according to CEFRL, 2005) | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Language Competence | It consists of conscious, unspoken, analyzed and unanalyzed knowledge stored in long-term memory - it is made up of ORGANIZATIONAL (ability and involved in the supervision of formal language structures - grammatical and textual competence) and PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE (knowledge of cohesion and rhetorical organization - functional and sociolinguistic knowledge). |
| Strategic Competence | It refers to the possibility of creating and interpreting discourse by connecting sentences or expressions and texts with meaning, with the intentions of the language user and important characteristics of language use, and includes ILKOUCIOUS (how to perform language functions) and SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE (sensitivity to dialects, sensitivity to registers, etc.) Three elements are important: assessment, planning and execution. |
| Psychophysical Elements | It refers to the neurological and psychophysical processes that are involved in the very execution of the phase of language use, i.e. in the performance. |

The communication model (Zeroj, 2005) includes language competence, which includes lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic and orthoepic competence; sociolinguistic, which implies language use in a certain social context; pragmatic, which implies discourse, functional and planning competence, and strategic, which implies the use of strategies in the broadest sense (table 2).

Table 2. Communication model according to Zeroj (2005)

| Communication Model (Zeroj, 2005) | |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Language Competence | Knowledge and ability to use language resources that can be used to form well-structured messages - lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic and orthoepic competence. |
| Sociolinguistic Competence | It refers to the possession of knowledge and skills for the appropriate use of language in a social context. |
| Pragmatic Competence | It includes DISCOURSE AND FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCE and PLANNING COMPETENCE - stringing messages in accordance with interaction and transaction schemes. |
| Strategic Competence (Separated From The Model) | It implies the use of strategies in the broadest sense |

From the presentation of the aforementioned models and theories, we wanted to determine the place occupied by intercultural competence, especially in the context of communication competence and with regard to the fact of the increasing importance of learning foreign languages, population migration and the need to understand one's own culture in order to understand another culture.

Intercultural competence and its place in the teaching of the Croatian language

Zeroj (2005) himself singles out the development and mastery of communicative competence as the fundamental goal of learning any language, both native and foreign, which includes, as indicated in the previous chapter, linguistic, i.e. linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence. Precisely sociolinguistic competence implies language learning in the context of society and culture and implies the environment as an important factor in the process of language learning, and then also knowledge about the environment in order to be able to understand it, that is, to understand the content conveyed to us through language. In line with the above, the language learning process also includes learning about the culture and cultural patterns of a certain society, which is usually mediated through textbooks and textbook texts. Thus, the child also learns about his own culture through textbook texts, and then by reading translations of texts that are appropriate for his age, the child immediately adopts the elements of culture: customs, cultural patterns and behaviors, food as part of culture and the like, which are the contents of almost all novels, stories, short stories and other text types. Zeroj itself, in its improved version from 2020, expands the term intercultural competence and by this term also includes intercultural education, intercultural encounters, intercultural exchange and intercultural dialogue, all of which contribute to the understanding of interculturality in the language learning process. PISA (2020, p. 8) prescribes the Conceptual Framework of Global Competences. It states that the first key area of knowledge for global competence refers to the many manifestations of culture and intercultural relations, such as language, art, knowledge, traditions and norms. Acquiring knowledge in this area can help young people to develop a greater awareness of their own cultural identity, to understand the differences and similarities between and within cultures, and to appreciate the importance of preserving cultural differences and diversity. Through learning about other cultures and individual differences, students begin to recognize multiple, complex identities and avoid categorizing people based on certain identity characteristics (eg black, white, male, female, poor, rich). Students can acquire knowledge in this area by reflecting on their own cultural identity and the identity of their peers by analyzing common stereotypes about people in their community or by analyzing examples of conflict or successful integration of different cultural groups. Since interculturality is an important determinant of fundamental educational documents in the Republic of Croatia, our scientific interest was to analyze educational documents on the one hand and textbook texts on the other hand in order to determine the place of interculturality in the process of learning and teaching Croatian as a mother tongue.

Interculturality in educational documents

Croatian is the mother tongue of the largest number of students in schools in the Republic of Croatia. As a subject, it has the largest number of teaching hours of all subjects, and is divided into three areas: Croatian language and communication, Literature and creativity, Culture and media. Teaching contents are planned according to the outcomes planned in the Curriculum for the subject Croatian language for elementary schools and high schools, but also according to the outcomes foreseen in the curricula of cross-curricular topics and curriculum areas.

In order to place the Croatian language in the context of primary school education in the Republic of Croatia, the paper refers to the National Framework Curriculum (2011), the proposal for the National Curriculum for Primary School (2017)¹, the proposal for the National Document in the Language and Communication Area of the Curriculum (2017) and the Curriculum for subject Croatian language for primary schools and high schools (2019). The educational cycles are determined by the National Framework Curriculum (2011): the 1st cycle consists of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades of elementary school, the 2nd cycle consists of the 5th and 6th grades of elementary school, the 3rd cycle consists of 7 .and 8th grade of primary school, and the 4th cycle refers to 1st and 2nd grade of vocational schools and all four grades of gymnasiums, and partly also all four grades of four-year vocational and art schools. In addition to covering the years of schooling, they also have common educational goals, i.e. expectations of what the student should achieve in a certain developmental cycle, and are based on the student's developmental stages. According to the National Curriculum Proposal for elementary school, there are three educational cycles, and they are determined according to the student's developmental age. The first cycle is aimed at children up to the age of 7/8. years of life (preschool, 1st and 2nd grade), the 2nd cycle is aimed at children from 7 to 11/12. years of life (3rd, 4th and 5th grade), and the 3rd cycle is aimed at children from 11 to 14/15. years of life (6th, 7th and 8th grade). The national curriculum determines the cycles according to the adjustment periods that students go through at school, and they try to facilitate the adjustment periods of both students and teachers, so the 1st cycle refers to initial school experiences, the 2nd cycle to the period of transition from classroom to subject teaching, and 3 cycle for the transition from primary to secondary school. According to the National Framework Curriculum (2011), within the Language and Communication area, in the Croatian language subject, expected student achievements by educational cycle are achieved through four language activities: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Each language activity elaborated for each cycle is elaborated in 5 items, and the last item of each of them is Getting to know and respecting Croatian culture, the culture of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia and other cultures. During the first two cycles (until the end of the 6th grade), students through all language activities should learn to recognize and respect the characteristics of Croatian, their own and other cultures in their immediate environment and in simple non-literary and literary-artistic texts, assigned and independently selected, and to notice and accept differences and values Croatian, own and other cultures in their immediate surroundings and in simple non-literary and literary-artistic texts, given and independently selected, and express them by speaking (verbally and non-verbally), reading and writing. In the proposal of the National document of the language

¹ Although today the only officially valid document is the National Framework Curriculum from 2011, the paper also uses proposals for documents for which decisions have not been made. The proposals were created as part of the educational reform School for Life, which has been implemented in the Republic of Croatia since the 2018/2019 school year. as an experimental one, and from the 2019/2020 school year. began to be implemented in all schools of the Republic of Croatia. The proposal of the National Curriculum for Primary Education was adopted in 2017. The Ministry of Science and Education has never made a decision on its application. Decisions were made for the curricula of the subjects according to which teaching is conducted in the Republic of Croatia, and all of them, including the Curriculum of the subjects for the Croatian language in elementary schools and high schools (2019), are based on this original document. Following the above, the proposal of the National Curriculum for Primary School Education is considered a document whose content is important in the context of the analysis of teaching content for the needs of this work, and in the same way and in the same context, the proposal of the National Document of the Language and Communication Area of the Curriculum was used and analyzed (2017).

and communication area of the curriculum (2017), it is emphasized that through language communication cultural heritage is expressed and the culture of living is transmitted, ideas, opinions and feelings are exchanged, as well as the values, norms and customs of a particular community and as one of the goals of learning and teaching in the language-communication area, he points out that the student will develop linguistic-cultural identity and intercultural competence, a sense of belonging and respect for his own linguistic identity, culture and tradition, and respect and respect other linguistic and cultural communities and their values. Defining the domains in the organization of the language-communication area, it is emphasized that the language-communication area of the curriculum is based on the primary human need for communication with others in the community, the development of integrated multiple literacy and socio-cultural awareness. Literacy is defined as the ability to understand, interpret and evaluate texts of different contents and structures, and a text is considered any complete linguistic and multimedia expression. Three domains of the language-communication area were determined: 1. Communication-functional literacy, 2. Reading literacy and 3. Intercultural literacy. *Intercultural literacy implies the development of knowledge about oneself and others, responsible behavior towards members of other languages and cultures, appreciation of different values, beliefs and behaviors. Within this domain, the following develop: a. self-awareness as a person who builds, respects and expresses his own (linguistic) identity and respects the identity of others within the linguistic, cultural-linguistic and closer, wider and different speech communities b. the ability to mediate between languages and culture with the goal of fostering openness to different perspectives c. awareness of the processes of creation, expression and exchange of ideas and values and understanding of changes in the world and communication between cultures d. awareness of the necessity of suppressing all types of stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination and hate speech (2017, p. 9).*

In the Curriculum of the subject Croatian language for elementary schools and high schools (2019) there is a term describing some cross-cultural element of the curriculum in 7 places (table 3).

Table 3. Concept of interculture in the Curriculum for the subject Croatian language for primary and secondary schools

| The Part of the Curriculum in Which the term is Found | Quote From Curriculum |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Description of the subject Croatian language | By learning the Croatian language, students master communicative linguistic competence by connecting the organic idiom and Croatian standard language and acquire the basics of reading, media, information and intercultural literacy, which is a prerequisite for personal development, successful schooling, lifelong learning and a critical attitude towards a series of phenomena in social and business life. (2019, p. 6) |
| 2. | Students develop an attitude about the necessity of using the Croatian standard language and the rules of cultural communication. They are also aware of the need to preserve Croatian dialects and speech and creatively express themselves in local dialects. Pupils are enabled to understand and accept intercultural differences and to observe and |

| | | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | overcome cultural and linguistic stereotypes and prejudices while respecting and appreciating the languages of other nations. (2019, p. 6) |
| 3. | | Reading and getting to know the literature of the Croatian people, cultural and civilizational circles, enables students to acquire literary knowledge, literary culture and cultural identity, while reading literary texts of world literature develops cultural competence and intercultural understanding. Students are also encouraged to read literary and aesthetic texts in order to develop into lifelong readers and lovers of the art of words. (2019, p. 6) |
| 4. | Structure - areas of the subject curriculum CULTURE AND MEDIA | The subject area of culture and media is based on the understanding of text in different social, cultural and intercultural contexts. The subject area encourages the development of knowledge about oneself and others, appreciation of different beliefs and values, and enables activities in the social community. The subject area includes: • critical attitude towards media messages, understanding the influence of the media and their messages on society and the individual; creation of media messages and their responsible transmission • understanding of culture from the point of view of everyday life, from the social point of view, culture in relation to popular culture and culture in relation to literature and other arts and the influence of culture on shaping one's own cultural identity • encouraging awareness of the uniqueness and value of different opinions, attitudes and ideas, societies and cultures for the sake of successful communication and understanding of others and others. |
| 5. | Connection with other subjects and cross-curricular topics | The Croatian language is the language of instruction and learning in which all students studying in Croatian schools are educated. During learning and teaching, students develop different types of literacy (communicative-functional, reading, informational, media and intercultural), which they need for communication and cooperation, as well as the expression and development of ideas and attitudes in all other teaching areas, subjects and cross-curricular topics included in national curricula. |
| 6. | Learning and teaching subjects Learning experiences | The goals of the course are to develop the ability to use language in different communication situations, to develop reading literacy and culture, to explore the experiences and ideas of literature, to encourage and evaluate one's own creativity and the creativity of others, and to understand the text in different cultural, historical, intercultural and social contexts. |
| 7. | Evaluation of the achievement of educational outcomes | The evaluation elements include: • acquired knowledge of language, literature, media, cultural and intercultural literacy • the ability to understand linguistic, literary and cultural concepts by which knowledge is organized and interconnected and intertwined in the subject Croatian language (intra-subject connection) and connected with cross-subject topics and other subjects according to the principle of intersubject connection • application of knowledge and concepts at the level of analysis and synthesis and creation of new knowledge and concepts. |

The curriculum stipulates that intercultural literacy is achieved through spiral programming, the induction method, the principle of gradualism, and starts from the principle of nativeness. First of all, it is realized in learning about native languages and Croatian standard language. Students become aware of the peculiarities of their speech and gradually notice the differences between their native speech and the Croatian standard language, and express themselves freely in their native speech and the Croatian standard language. Students are also encouraged to, after reading the texts or books, express their experience of the read text (literary or other type of starting text)

and make their own observations about them. In the 3rd grade, they encounter texts with a simple structure, and the structure becomes more demanding with the developmental age of the students and with the reading experience and knowledge that the students acquire each school year. In the 6th grade, the student both reads and writes texts with a multipart structure. It is expected that from the 5th grade, they connect popular culture texts with everyday life and recognize their meaning in the context of everyday life. The curriculum envisages visits to cultural institutions and events, but also participation in them and their own creative expression about the events they saw or participated in. In all classes, students are encouraged to observe and express their own experiences and attitudes. In the lower grades, they observe their immediate environment and discuss the familiar, and in the higher grades, they know how to recognize the familiar in new content and notice differences in relation to the familiar, while not comparing themselves, but the observations are based on the complete inclusiveness of all differences (sameness). All outcomes are achieved with the guidance they receive from teachers, and teachers are extremely important in shaping the personality of students.

Given that the contents provided for in the curriculum are realized most often with the help of textbooks and textbook materials, the focus of our research fell on them. The authors of textbooks and reading books are equally important, because through their selection of texts and shaping of teaching content, they convey values that they want to be rooted in society through the educational system, and one of them is intercultural literacy.

Research methodology

Description of the method of data collection and determination of the research sample

Taking into account both the mentioned documents and the developmental stages of the students, for the purposes of this work, intercultural elements in the introductory texts in reading books and language textbooks from the 3rd to the 6th grade will be analyzed. Students from 3rd to 6th grade are aged 8 to 11 years. The proposal of the National Curriculum emphasizes the 1st cycle as the period during which students adapt to the school system, and this includes *emotional and social aspects of adaptation*. During this period, students *develop a positive image of themselves as students, they are encouraged to cooperate with each other and build a sense of community and belonging to the class department and school*. The 2nd cycle is the period during which prerequisites are *acquired for the development and application of an abstract way of thinking in different areas of learning* and during which social development is defined in such a way that peers have an increasing influence on development. In the 3rd phase, *the ability to think abstractly develops intensively* and social development is connected with emotional development, identity formation and the increasing influence of peers. The work includes introductory texts from 3rd to 6th grade in order to analyze what and to what extent intercultural contents are represented, taking into account that this period is also a transitional period towards an intensive social period. Social development implies developed intercultural competence and the ability to understand diversity inclusively. The starting point is reading books and textbooks in the mother tongue of two (three) different publishers because the mother tongue is the basis of the development of communication

competence, through the teaching of the mother tongue the personal identity of the student is formed and, by expanding knowledge about one's own, the knowledge and awareness of different cultures and the importance of mutual understanding and acceptance, and in this way intercultural literacy is developed.

When analyzing texts from reading books and textbooks, the following cross-cultural elements were taken: language, geographical features, cultural manifestations, art, customs, tradition/heritage. All the mentioned elements will be analyzed from the perspective of learning about one's own culture and identity and as learning about other cultures.

Table 4. Cross-cultural elements in textbooks and reading books from the Croatian language in the 3rd grade of elementary school

| Title of textbook/ reading book | Title of the text | An example of cross-cultural elements |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Zlatna vrata 3, an integrated workbook of the Croatian language in the third grade of primary school | Introduction | The authors instruct students to value friendship, kindness and diversity. |
| | Project proposal: Respect (pages 98 and 99) | To respect home, homeland, mother tongue, family, nature, people who do good deeds, diversity of people. "When you don't understand someone or something, learn more about it." |
| | Mario Šarić: Four brothers | Being open to differences. |
| | Nada Iveljić: It's a small world | Patriotic song, love for the homeland. |
| | Milan Crnković: Long live Croatia | A patriotic song in the Kajkavian dialect. Students reflect on their homeland. |
| | Zvonimir Balog: A friend in a wheelchair (page 84) | Friendship. Sports disciplines for athletes with disabilities. |
| | Nada Iveljić: Krampus (p. 86) | The custom of celebrating the feast of Saint Nicholas. |
| | Denis Mazur: A great miracle for a small pine tree (p. 88) | The custom of celebrating Christmas. |
| | Maja Flego: Share the happiness (90 pages) | The custom of writing greeting cards for Christmas and New Year, congratulating the holidays. |
| | Sanja Pilić: Sanjana Božić (page 96) | Gifts and holiday giving. Giving to those who need help. |
| | Nevenka Videk: Easter Bunny Quarrel (p. 184) | The custom of celebrating Easter, coloring eggs. |
| | Mladen Pokić: I love you, mom (p. 198) | The custom of celebrating Mother's Day. |
| | Jadranka Oštarčević: Private zoo (p. 200) | The custom of celebrating International Family Day. |
| I read and write 3, Tamara Turza Bogdan, Slavica | Gianni Rodari: Invitation to dance (p. 8) | He lists the children of the world (Russian, Danish, Slavic, Mauritanian...) and invites them on a merry-go-round around the world. |
| Pospiš, Vladimira Velički (2020), working reader for the 3rd grade of primary school | Andrea Petrlík Huseinović: Ciconia Ciconia: White stork (p. 85) | The white stork, which is believed to bring good luck, whose home was in the Republic of Croatia, but fled to Africa, before the war in Croatia. |
| | Tamara Vrbanović: Christmas Wishes (p. 60) | Christmas wish fulfillment customs. |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Ljerka Pukec: Homemade bread (page 92) | Gratitude. Days of bread. Thanksgiving days. |
| | Natali Šarić: Santa's magical recipe (page 98) | Santa's elves, making wishes come true for Christmas. |
| | Ksenija Grozdanić: Grandma's spells (page 101) | The custom of celebrating Easter, coloring eggs for Easter. |
| | Gustav Krklec: When this miracle happened (p. 116) | The custom of marking Maskar/Poklada/Fašnik - masking. |
| | About the Olympic Games (p. 140) | Connecting people at the Olympics, types of Olympics, history of the Olympics. |
| | Tatjana Barat: Zlata Bartl – scientist and inventor (p. 142) | The story of the girl and scientist Zlata Bartl, the inventor of Vegeta. |
| | Dorling Kindersley: Mahasin Girl (from the book Life as Mine, How Children Live Around the World), (p. 144) | The story of the little girl Mahasin who was born among nomadic herders. Life, customs, education, geographical position and characteristics of Sudan. UNICEF as an international organization. |
| | Sanja Polak: Doppelgangers for a birthday (p. 152) | Celebrating birthdays (for several days). |
| | Sanja Polak: Eco picnic (p. 158) | Ecology. |
| | Theater etiquette taken from the pages of the Zagreb children's theater Mala scena (p. 176) | How to behave well in the theater. |
| | In the library (p. 178) | Hans Christian Andersen's birthday, April 2, was chosen to mark Children's Book Day. Students are encouraged to research why this is so. |
| | In the museum (p. 180) | About archeology and cultural heritage. Students are encouraged to create a Tourist Guide of their homeland, in which they will highlight natural beauty, famous people, and cultural heritage. Museum Night at the end of January. |
| I read and write 3, Dunja Pavličević-Franić, Vladimira Velički, Katarina Aladrović Slovaček, Vlatka Domišaljanović, Croatian workbook for the 3rd grade of primary school | Communicating in Croatian (p. 8) | Communication in the mother tongue, ways of communication, verbal and non-verbal communication. |
| | Encyclopedia of animals: Brown bear (12. p.) | Facts about the brown bear, the largest land animal in Croatia, a sanctuary for young bears in Kuterevo, Lika-Senj County. |
| | School trip (16. p.) | Native motifs: Students tell a story about a school trip during which they walked in the forest, picked mushrooms, collected autumn leaves, found different plants and flowers, and played hide and seek. On the second day, they visited the village and grandfather Marko's sheep and goat farm, which is guarded by Croatian shepherds. |
| | Reading with observation: Going to the cinema (p. 24) | Cultural event: organized film screenings in the cinema, registration, ticket reservation, ticket pick-up, arrival at the cinema, ticket purchase, ticket office hours, how to get information. |
| | Stjepan Lice: Bread from the heart (p. 26) | The custom of celebrating Bread Day in class, bread baked by grandma. |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Encyclopedia of animals: Tawny owl (p. 30) | Protected species in the Republic of Croatia, Krka National Park, peculiarities of the barn owl. |
| Jadranka Čunčić Bandov: Christmas wishes (p. 32) | The custom of faith in the fulfillment of wishes for Christmas. |
| Congratulations and good wishes (p. 38) | The custom of writing greeting cards and good wishes on various occasions. Celebrating Christmas and New Year, birthdays. |
| We talk, we talk, we admire, we sprehama, we talk (p. 40) | Preserving heritage: Croatian standard language and native languages. |
| Egg - the source of life (p. 70) | The egg as a source of life, types of eggs, the custom of coloring eggs for Easter. |
| Student work: Valentine's Day in our class (page 78) | The custom of celebrating Valentine's Day. Students are encouraged to investigate where this custom comes from. |
| Capital initial letter (pages 90-97) | Learning about the rule of capitalization, students write down the names of Zagreb's sights, and also research their own hometown, and write down the names of rivers, lakes, cultural institutions and landmarks, streets, squares... They get to know the names of books, movies and magazines that they could read or buy. . |
| Miroslav Kovačević: A song for my mother (p. 98) | The custom of celebrating Mother's Day. |

Intercultural competence in the 3rd grade of primary school is developed on native and close to students topics about celebrating holidays and birthdays, they get to know cultural institutions (especially the theater) and learn about etiquette and polite behavior at various cultural events. Students learn to communicate and express their own views. There are very few texts that talk about other peoples, their way of life, culture and customs (Table 4).

Table 5. Cross-cultural elements in textbooks and reading books from the Croatian language in the 4th grade of elementary school

| Title of textbook/ reading book | Title of the text | An example of cross-cultural elements |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Trace in the story 4, part 1, workbook of the Croatian language for the 4th grade of primary school, Vesna Budinski, Martina Kolar Billege, Gordana Ivančić, Vlatka Mijić, Nevenka Puh Malogorski, Profile Klett (2021) | We repeat, that's why we know, Maja Šimleša, excerpt from the story Suli u aventura (page 12) | A text about Africa, about giraffes. Students are encouraged to reflect on life in Africa. |
| | Preparation for the reading lesson (pp. 17-18) | Students are encouraged to research the life of a writer of their choice and report on him/her in class. |
| | A good plan for a successful day (p. 19) | Students are encouraged to plan their activities during the day in order to successfully complete their assignments. |
| | How to be relaxed before the exam? (p. 23) | Students are given advice on how to face and overcome negative feelings. |
| | Autumn Queen (p. 32) | Students learn about pumpkins - the queens of autumn. Recipe for buzzard. |
| | What do we know about life in the deep sea? (p. 38) | Oceans, features, animals in the ocean, light in the ocean, sea depths. |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Nikola Miličević: Bread (p. 55) | The custom of celebrating World Food Day (October 16). |
| | Sanja Lovrenčić: What everyone knows (p. 66) | Celebrating International Internet Day (October 29) |
| | Maja Gabelica-Šupljika and Mirjana Milanović: All Saints and All Souls' Day in the Family (page 70) | Celebrating All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. |
| | Show yourself in the theater and Performing Arts (pp. 83-85) | Theater as art. Performing arts. |
| | How our country was created (p. 90), Antun Mihanović: Our beautiful homeland (p. 166), Drago Britvić: God, save Croatia (p. 167), Hrvoje Hitrec: The gift of a good king (p. 168) | Patriotism. Historical monuments. Anthem. |
| | Mirjana Milanović: The Story of Nikola (p. 115) | Custom for the feast of Saint Nicholas. |
| | Theater, taken from the museum publication for children, Museum of the City of Zagreb, edited by Vesna Leiner (p. 120) | Theater history. |
| | Maja Gabelica and Mirjana Milanović: Christmas card (page 128) | The custom of writing greeting cards. |
| | Katarina Čeliković: Christmas tree of the Božićs (p. 132) | Customs with the celebration of the Christmas holiday. |
| | Roland Breitenbach and Joachim Schad: The most beautiful winter holidays (p. 136) | Holidays: Christmas, New Year, Epiphany. |
| | Dragutin Domjanić: Christmas (p. 139) | Native speech and holidays. |
| Trace in the story 4, part 2, workbook of the Croatian language for the 4th grade of primary school, Vesna Budinski, Martina Kolar Billege, Gordana Ivančić, Vlatka Mijić, Nevenka Puh Malogorski, Profile Klett (2021) | Gordana Sokol: Safe online (page 8) | Behavior on the Internet and in the virtual world. |
| | Zvonimir Balog: Those who are often late are not honorable people (p. 17) | Students are instructed to read a text about the Japanese: The Japanese take train delays very seriously, this is what happens when the train is 5 minutes late. The question was asked: What kind of image do you create about the Japanese based on the information from that news? |
| | To kiss lovingly | Celebrating Valentine's Day. |
| | Writing in big letters, Zvonimir Balog: Postman (pp. 23-27) | In addition to writing capital letters, students learn about the geographical location of other countries and places/cities in their homeland, Croatia. |
| | Zvonimir Balog: Krk (40. p.) | Cultural heritage: International Glagolitic and Glagolitic Day, Glagolitic in Croatia, the first written monuments in Croatia, Bašćanska ploča. |
| | Zvonimir Balog: Carnival (page 49) | Masquerade, Poklade or Fašnik – customs of masking. |
| | Do we speak the same language? 58. p.) | Heritage: Croatian dialects and Croatian standard language. |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| | Tatjana Pokrajac-Papucci: Swallow (71. – 82., 117. ... p.) | Ecology: Migratory birds move to the south and then return, description of their journey with the help of a map. 19. 3. World day of swallows. World Water Day. World Forest Day. Earth Day. Climate changes. World Environment Day. | |
| | Marija Novak: Towards Easter (p. 103) | Celebrating Easter in Croatia and other countries. | |
| | Be the dearest (pp. 128-132) | Celebrating Mother's Day and International Family Day. | |
| Zlatna vrata 4, integrated workbook of the Croatian language in the fourth grade of primary school, part 1, Sonja Ivić and Marija Krmpotić, Školska knjiga | Lovrak's days of culture (page 39) | Cultural heritage, Mato Lovrak. | |
| | Mladen Kušec: City with two names (p. 60) | Cultural heritage, homeland: the legend of Zagreb, Zagreb, people of Zagreb, customs. | |
| | Dragutin Domjanić: Kaj (p. 70), Jurjica Vesna Gržalija: Ča (p. 90), Vanja Radauš: The first sound I heard (p. 98), Literary language and native speech (p. 106) | Heritage: Croatian dialects and literary or standard language. | |
| | Comparison of film and literary work (p. 72) | Students are encouraged to think about cultural achievements in literature and film art, to express their views and respect the opinion of others. | |
| | Ivan Goleš: Long-lived olive trees (page 92) | Heritage: olive trees, fruit and olive products. | |
| | Miroslav Slavko Mađer: Friends in trouble (page 94) | Patriotism: Memorial Day for the victims of the Homeland War, Memorial Day for the victims of Vukovar and Škabrnja. | |
| | Nedjeljka Lupis: Shoes of St. Nicholas (p. 112) | The custom of celebrating the feast of Saint Nicholas, gifts for Saint Nicholas. | |
| | Josip Prudeus: Croatian Christmas (p. 120) | The custom of celebrating Christmas. | |
| | Zlatna vrata 4, integrated working textbook of the Croatian language in the fourth grade of primary school, part 2, Sonja Ivić and Marija Krmpotić, Školska knjiga | Puppet movie: Koya (p. 26) | Media culture: puppet film, director, features. |
| | | Internet, Harald Braem: Song to the computer (p. 38) | Media culture: Safer Internet Day. |
| Zvonimir Balog: Carnival (p. 54) | | The custom of masking. | |
| Zoran Ivić: World Mother Language Day (page 56) | | Cultural heritage and patriotism: mother tongue. | |
| Dragutin Domjanić: Late snow (page 68) | | Croatian heritage: the Kajkavian dialect. | |
| Sanja Pilić: My mother (p. 84) | | Celebrating International Women's Day. | |
| Photo story: Rijeka's colorful umbrella (page 88) | | Cultural event: a walk along Rijeka's Korza with colorful umbrellas decorated by Vujka Meić from Rijeka. | |
| Dragutina Tadijanović: Greetings to the forest (p. 104), Ana Pisac: Water that means life (p. 106) | | Ecology: World Forest Protection Day, Water Day | |
| | Branko Pilaš: In a fairytale world (p. 112) | Cultural event: celebration of International Children's Book Day, World Health Day, Croatian Book Day | |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sanja Kursar Pupavac: Easter customs (page 122) | Easter | Cultural heritage: customs with the celebration of Easter. |
| Ivan Pršić: Playing in the air (p. 140) | | Zdravlje: obilježavanje Međunarodnoga dana tjelesne aktivnosti, Međunarodnoga dana sporta. |
| Rosemarie Nele: My mom (p. 144) | | Celebrating Mother's Day and Family Day. |
| Niveska Juraga Kovačev: There | | Patriotism: students are instructed to think about their homeland and to express it in language on the topic of their homeland. |

Cross-cultural elements in the texts of Croatian language textbooks for the 4th grade are aimed at the environment in which children grow up and encourage students to think about interpersonal relationships, family, patriotic themes, customs associated with the celebration of holidays or certain events. There are rare texts that come out of a wider native and familiar environment. Intercultural literacy is achieved in mutual communication, in verbal and non-verbal communication about the relationship to the homeland, people, national heritage and customs, ecology and occasional reflection on events and peculiarities outside the framework of the student's homeland. The diversity of the Croatian language achieved through Croatian dialects and the standard (literary) Croatian language encourages students to reflect on the cultural heritage in their immediate homeland, but also develops awareness of the interconnectedness of all residents of the Republic of Croatia. (Table 5)

Table 6. Cross-cultural elements in reading books from the Croatian language in the 5th grade of elementary school

| Title of textbook/ reading book | Title of the text | An example of cross-cultural elements |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Petica, Croatian language reader for the fifth grade of elementary school, Diana Greblički-Miculinić, Dijana Grbaš Jakšić, Krunoslav Matošević, Profile Klett (2020) | Luis Sepulveda: The story of the seagull and the cat that taught him to fly (p. 44) | Ecology: students think about ecological disasters, about the animals that are threatened by them. The text connects with the story of people who differ by race, nationality or some other characteristic, but are the same and no one kind is more valuable than the other. |
| | Ivan Kušan: Liar, Melita (p. 73), King of liars (p. 76) | Culture: The story of Melita is associated with the story of the famous liar Baron Münchhausen and the theater alphabet - who does everything in the theater. |
| | Josip Prudeus: Centennial Calendar (p. 84) | Cultural heritage: the Vučedol calendar - the oldest calendar in Europe, Ivan Meštrović - the Well of Life monument (page 91) |
| | Traditional Christmas customs (p. 95) | Customs related to the celebration of Christmas. |
| | Grigor Vitez: A pine entered the room (p. 102) | New Year customs in the world. |
| | Tin Kolumbić: When you fall in love at school (p. 106) | Celebrating Valentine's Day. |
| | Jadranka Čunčić-Bandov: Masquerade jokes (page 108) | Celebrating Masquerade Day at school. |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Tin Kolumbić: Earth Croatia (p. 112), Antun Mihahović: Our beautiful homeland (p. 114), Dragutin Domjanić: Tičica and I (p. 116), Drago Gervais: Pipa (p. 117), Mate Zlatko Damjanović: Cradle (p. 118), Tea, what, what (p. 119), Croatian language in the calendar of days and (mild) days (p. 120) | Patriotism: Croatian homeland, anthem, Croatian dialects and Croatian literary language. |
| | The theft of the Mona Lisa: the greatest crime of art of the 20th century, article taken from the Internet portal (p. 123) | Culture: getting to know famous artists and their works. |
| | Crocodile from the suburbs: An exciting film about growing up and diversity, article taken from the internet portal (p. 127) | Cross-cultural elements are found in the various differences of the children in the film: a dark- skinned immigrant, a dysfunctional family, a boy with a speech impediment, a boy in a wheelchair, the son of a single mother, a girl who prefers to play boy's games. It is a German film. |
| | Henry Winterfeld: Timpetill. City without parents (p. 128) | Convention on the Rights of the Child. The importance of family. Conflict resolution. |
| | Pigeons and people (p. 141) | Cultural heritage: carrier pigeons. |
| | Girls and boys about prejudice (p. 145) | Dialogue about the stereotypes that exist about girls, boys and anything the students want to suggest. |
| | Andreas Steinhöfel: Rico, Oskar and Dark Shadows | Intercultural communication: people of different abilities, religions, races, genders. The differences between us. Celebrating the World Day of People with Down Syndrome. |
| | (p.146), World Down Syndrome Day: Don't forget to wear colorful socks (p.149) | Students are taught how to critically approach the media message, create a cover to present themselves to the world, about comics in the world, the Oscar film award, about Croatian filmmakers in the world of animated film, about the history of poster making, and how to create a poster and choose words that are stimulating. |
| Power of words 5, Croatian reading book for the fifth grade of elementary school, Anita Šojat, Školska knjiga | In the world of media (pp. 168-189) | Pupils are introduced to knowledge about the rights of the child, but also about the duties of the child. The concepts of conventions and general standards for everything are analyzed. |
| | Convention on the Rights of the Child (Page 14) | Intercultural literacy is acquired in teamwork and designing products that they want to present to the world. |
| | The Magic of Life: From Idea to Profit, Entrepreneurial Team Project (p. 30) | Culture: famous painters and their works, virtual museum. |
| | Ivan Kušan: Coco in Paris (p. 42) | Gender equality, women who changed the world. |

| | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Our Beautiful Project (page 52) | Intercultural literacy is developed by researching one's own country and other European countries. At the Fair of European States, everyone should present one country: its customs, landmarks, culinary specialties (food), characteristic clothes, famous literary figures, famous musicians, athletes, Nobel laureates, people whose works have contributed to humanity. |
| | Antun Mihanović: Croatian national anthem (p. 54), Drago Britvić: Your country (p. 56), Pajo Kanižaj: My Croatia (p. 58), Nada Zidar-Bogadi: Spring in Zagreb (p. 60), Miroslav Dolenc Dravski: My Podravina (p. 62), Vanja Raduš: This is Croatia (p. 64), Mate Balota: Pramaliće (p. 106) | Patriotism: anthem, Croatian language, Croatian regions. |
| | Vladimir Devide, Dubravko Ivančan, Basho Matsuo: Haiku. | Connecting with Japanese culture and poetry. |
| | Stjepan Lice: Medicine for the Heart (p. 126), Charles Dickens: A Christmas Story (p. 138), Christmas Magic Around the World (p. 151) | Intercultural competence: Customs related to the celebration of Christmas, creativity in making gifts. Christmas in the world. |
| | Joan Kathleen Rowling: The Sorting Hat (p. 192) | Popular culture, Harry Potter. |
| | Raquel Jaramillo Palacio: Miracle (p. 196) | Peer violence against a boy whose appearance is different from the children he goes to school with. |
| Croatian word 5, reading book from the Croatian language for the fifth grade of primary school, Ante Bežen, Lidija Vešligaj, Anita Katić, Kristina Diklica, Ina Randić Đorđević, Alfa (2019) | Find new friends (p. 8) | Peer relationships, introduction, highlighting what makes a student special, talking about family, friends, city, school, place and food. |
| | Daniel Načinović: Homeland grows from the heart (p. 24) | Patriotism: a song about the homeland, a reminder of the 2018 World Cup in Russia and the success of the Croatian national team. A personal identity is being built. |
| | Zvonimir Balog: Plitvice Lakes (p. 26), National Parks of Croatia (p. 44) | Patriotism: the peculiarity of the Plitvice Lakes National Park, the peculiarity of national parks in Croatia. |
| | Bojan Meandžija: House of Memories (28th page) | Patriotism: memories of the Homeland War. |
| | Holidays in the world (p. 38) | Cross-cultural connection with research on holidays in the world. |
| | Milan Krmpotić: Bocar (p. 71) | Social sensitivity towards people living in difficult conditions. The influence of foreign languages on the Croatian language. Bottle of happiness - a humanitarian campaign to collect plastic caps, the sale of which will help the poor and people in need. |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Vlasta Juretić: Saint Mikula (p. 81) | Heritage and customs: celebrating the feast of Saint Nicholas, a dramatic text in the Chakavian dialect. |
| Dragutin Domjanić: Christmas (p. 84) | Heritage and customs: thinking about Christmas with a text in the Kajkavian dialect. |
| Ivan Kušan: Koko in Paris (p. 90) | Students learn and think about friendship, helping each other. |
| Spring haiku (p. 101) | Cross-cultural connection with Japanese culture and poetry. |
| Brian Bilston: Refugees (p. 124) | Cross-cultural connection is achieved by encouraging students to think about people who, fleeing war-affected areas, had to look for a new home, came to live in other countries. |
| Elena Favilli and Francesca Cavallo: Formula 1 driver (page 1,38) | Students are encouraged to think about the equality of men and women. |
| Student work: My distant oasis (p. 144) | Interculturality is made aware through the story of a boy who moved to Croatia with his family from Jordan. |
| Friends - everywhere around us (p. 154) | Students exchange experiences, thoughts about friendship and interpersonal relationships. |
| I want to tell you what I carry in my heart (p. 157) | They practice speaking on the following topics: Famous people from my homeland, My homeland, My family, My Croatian language, Our beautiful Croatia. |
| Workshop of stage improvisation of anecdotes (p. 166) | Students improvise stage anecdotes based on anecdotes about famous people from Croatia and the world (Columbus and the sailor, Doctor Robert Koch, Einstein on the train, Ivan Zajc and the young man, Matoš and the mother, Tin Ujević and the menu, Andersen and the hat) |
| We learn how to cite correctly - citation, not plagiarism (p. 170) | Students learn about authors and copyright, the importance of citing sources, citing or quoting, citing or quoting from the Internet, and plagiarism and intellectual property. |
| We explore and distinguish media and cultural events (pp. 175-182) | Culture and media. Literacy is developed through reading popular culture texts that students connect with their own experience, learning about media and communication through different types of media. A historical account of the development of human communication and media is given. |
| Lado – "traveling museum" (p. 183) | Cultural heritage: students develop a sense of Croatian tradition and culture and are encouraged to attend cultural events such as the Lada concert, the ensemble of Croatian folk dances and songs. |
| Welcome to the theater (p. 194) | Culture: students learn about the people who create a play, learn how a play is made, and are encouraged to visit a theater and see a play. |

The texts in the reading books for the 5th grade are longer and more demanding in terms of content than the texts in the 3rd and 4th grade. In addition to the topics that are also represented in the texts for the 3rd and 4th grade (customs, holidays, Croatian standard language and dialects, homeland, Koko in Paris, family), there are more common topics that encourage students to learn and think about differences, about people who they live in other regions or have moved to Croatia from other countries. In the 5th grade, students encounter haiku poetry, famous people from Croatia and the world, and expand their already acquired knowledge about their culture, traditions and customs by learning about the same phenomena in other cultures and countries. In texts for the 5th grade, the concept of inclusivity more often refers to different cultures, peoples and regions, and not only to those that students encounter in their environment. (Table 6).

Conclusion

In the process of learning both mother and foreign languages, the basic goal is to master communication competence. Summarizing all the above-mentioned theoretical assumptions, it can be concluded that communication competence implies the mastery of linguistic, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. Precisely the sociolinguistic aspect of this competence implies learning the language from the context, that is, it also implies the mastery of intercultural competence. In the fundamental educational documents of the Republic of Croatia, among which the Curriculum for the subject Croatian Language (2019) plays an important role, a lot of space is also devoted to mastering intercultural competence in the teaching of the mother tongue. This was exactly the starting point for our work. The aim was to determine whether the contents of intercultural competence are realized in the teaching of the Croatian language and in what way. In order to obtain data, textbooks from the 3rd to 6th grade of elementary school were analyzed. The third and fourth grades belong to the lower grades, while the 5th and 6th grades belong to the higher grades. The results of the content analysis showed that the contents of intercultural competence are integrated into the textbook texts, but they are primarily related to the concepts of Croatian culture, i.e. holidays, holidays and customs related to Croatian culture are often thematized in the texts. Furthermore, the number of texts that contain elements of intercultural competence increases with age, and a significant number of them appear in the 5th and 6th grades. However, content related to topics that encourage the development of intercultural competence can also be found in the cross-curricular area. Although we find them there, it is not entirely clear how these same contents are realized in individual subjects, that is, there is a lack of clear connection between the contents, so we come to the point that each subject is separated for itself and is taught that way. It can be metaphorically concluded that the items are still arranged according to the drawer system. Each subject is in its own drawer and does not have to rely on the contents of other subjects. Educational contents are not connected. Furthermore, teachers of different subjects cooperate too little with each other. Everything is based on the adoption of facts, and there is almost no clear and concrete connection, at least in practice. In order for students to develop their literacy in all the intended areas, it is necessary to collaborate with different subject areas. Only then will the system

gain completeness, and students will be focused on noticing, connecting, accepting and living diversity or sameness.

References

- Aladrović Slovaček, K. (2019). *Od usvajanja do učenja hrvatskoga jezika*. Zagreb: Alfa d.d.
- Bagarić Medve, V. (2012). *Komunikacijska kompetencija. Uvod u teorijske, empirijske i primijenjene aspekte komunikacijske kompetencije u stranome jeziku*. Osijek: Filozofski fakultet.
- Budinski, V., Billege, K. M., Ivančić, G., Mijić, V., & Puh Malogorski, N. (2021). *A clue in the story, part 1, workbook of the Croatian language for the 4th grade of elementary school*. Zagreb: Profil Klett.
- Budinski, V., Billege, K. M., Ivančić, G., Mijić, V., & Puh Malogorski, N. (2021). *A clue in the story, part 2, workbook of the Croatian language for the 4th grade of elementary school*. Zagreb: Profil Klett.
- Bežen, A., Vešligaj, L., Katić, A., Diklica, K., & Randić, Đ. (2019). Croatian word 5. In *Reader from the Croatian language for the fifth grade of primary school*. Zagreb: Alfa.
- Canale, M. (1983). *From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy*. London: Longman.
- Curriculum for the subject Croatian language for elementary schools and high schools*. (2019). Zagreb: MZO, downloaded on February 22, 2022, available at: <https://mzo.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Publikacije/Predmetni/Kurikulum%20nastavnoga%20predmeta%20Hrvatski%20jezik%20za%20osnovne%20skole%20i%20gimnazije%20u%20RH.pdf>
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)*. (2005). Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- Eight key competences for lifelong learning* (2008, 2020). European Commission.
- Greblički-Miculić, D., Grbaš Jakšić, D., & Matošević, K. (2020). *Petica, a reading book from the Croatian language for the fifth grade of elementary school*. Zagreb: Profil Klett.
- Hymess, D. (1980). *Etnografija komunikacije*. Beograd: Beogradsko izdavačko-grafički zavod.
- Ivić, S. & Krmpotić, M. (2020). *Zlatna vrata 3 - An integrated textbook of the Croatian language in the third grade of elementary school*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- Ivić, S. & Krmpotić, M. (2022). *Zlatna vrata 4 - Integrated workbook of the Croatian language in the fourth grade of elementary school, part 1*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- Ivić, S. & Krmpotić, M. (2022). *Zlatna vrata 4 - Integrated workbook of the Croatian language in the fourth grade of elementary school, part 2*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- Jelaska, Z. (2007). Teorijski okviri jezikoslovnemu znanju u novom nastavnom programu hrvatskoga jezika za osnovnu školu. U: *Komunikacija u nastavi hrvatskoga jezika*, ur. M. Češi i M. Barbaroša-Šikić. Zagreb: Agencija za odgoj i obrazovanje.
- Jelaska, Z. (2005). Usvajanje materinskoga jezika. In Z. Jelaska i sur., *Hrvatski kao drugi i strani jezik*, Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada.
- National document of the language and communication area of the curriculum*. (2017). Zagreb: MZO, downloaded on February 22, 2022, available at: <https://mzo.gov.hr/UserDocsImages//dokumenti/Obrazovanje/NacionalniKurikulum/PodrucjaKurikuluma//Jezik%20i%20komunikacijsko%20podru%20je.pdf>
- National curriculum for primary education*. (2011). Zagreb: MZO. downloaded on February 22, 2022, available at: <https://mzo.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Obrazovanje/NacionalniKurikulum/NacionalniKurikulumi/Nacionalni%20kurikulum%20za%20osnovno%20skolski%20odgoj%20i%20obrazovanje.pdf>
- Pavličević-Franić, D. (2011). *Jezikopisnice*, Zagreb: Alfa.
- Pavličević-Franić, D. (2005). *Komunikacijom do gramatike*. Zagreb: Alfa.

- Pavličević-Franić, D., Velički, V., & Aladrović Slovaček, K. (2020). *I read and write 3. Workbook in the Croatian language for the third grade of primary school*. Zagreb: Alfa.
- Piaget, J., & Barbel Inhelder (1978). *Intelektualni razvoj djeteta*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva.
- Piaget, J. (1977). Odnos jezika i mišljenja s genetičkog stajališta. In *Intelektualni razvoj djeteta – izabrani radovi*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva.
- PISA 2018 - Conceptual framework of global competences. (2020). Zagreb: NCVVO, downloaded on October 30, 2022, available at: https://pisa.ncvvo.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Konceptualni-okvir-globalnih-kompetencija_PISA-2018.pdf
- Trask, R. L. (2005). *Temeljni lingvistički pojmovi*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- Turza Bogdan, T., Pospiš, S., & Velički, V. (2020). *I read and write 3. Workbook from the Croatian language for the third grade of elementary school*. Zagreb: Alfa.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2000). *Teaching Language as Communication*. Oxford: University Press Oxford.

Acknowledgments

Not applicable.

Funding

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interests

No, there are no conflicting interests.

Open Access

This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. You may view a copy of Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License here: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>