

THE CURRENT ORIENTATIONS OF THE DIDACTICS OF LANGUAGES AND CULTURES AND EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

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Abstract

This article takes up the contents of a lecture given on the occasion of a colloquium entitled "Ethics, citizenship and educational issues in language teaching and learning" at the Université d'Artois (France) in January 2023. I show that the Language Policy Unit of the Council of Europe, to which the organizers of the colloquium refer in their orientation text, represents a counter-model of democratic functioning, and that their proposals constitute a counter-model of "citizen didactics". As the pedagogy of reference of the actional perspective, namely the project pedagogy, requires, the problem of the formation of democratic citizenship in the language class is concretely that of the autonomy and the responsibility of the students in the conduct of their common learning project and in the realization of pedagogical projects, which implies the mobilization of all the methodological matrices available. While the proposals of the Council of Europe lead to the dissolution of language teaching in a vague "plurilingual and intercultural education", the citizenship training of students must be conceived in a very concrete way as the responsible management, between the teacher and the learners, of the modes and means of effective learning of the language.

Acronyms

- CEFR[L]: *Common European Framework of Reference [for Languages]* (CoE 2001)
- CoE: Council of Europe
- DLC: Didactics of Languages-Cultures
- FFL: French as Foreign Language
- IPM: Integrated Plurilingual Methodology
- LPU: Language Policy Unit

Introduction

My intervention is situated in the Axis 1 of the Colloquium, "Éthique, citoyenneté et enjeux éducatifs dans l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues" ("Ethics, citizenship and educational issues in language teaching and learning")¹, and it constitutes in particular a reaction to two explicit references, in the call for papers of the organizers, to the orientations of the Council of Europe (CoE) concerning the educational goal announced for this axis (English translation of the French version of the document):

Learning a foreign language means acquiring the intellectual tools to face reality and the unknown, to enrich oneself through the knowledge of other cultures and other views of the world. Learning also means less ignorance, which is the basis of intolerance and

¹ I have kept the look of the original slide show, in which the comments illustrate the documents as much as they illustrate the text.

Christian PUREN, "The current orientations of the didactics of languages and cultures and education for democratic citizenship"

racism" (Hugh STARKEY, Council of Europe). (Hugh STARKEY, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2002)

"What tools do we have to educate for democratic citizenship, as recommended by the Council of Europe, which advocates "inclusion and not exclusion, participation and not marginalization" (European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of 1992)?

The COE's "Language Policy Unit" (LPU) has published a number of documents which state that training for democratic citizenship, through "plurilingual and intercultural education", is its "vision" for language teaching. Here are a few examples, each with a short quote:

-*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001)*

The Council also supports teaching and learning methods that help young and old alike to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to become more independent in their thinking and actions in order to be more responsible and cooperative in their relationships with others. In this sense, this work helps to promote democratic citizenship. (p. 4)

-*Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe (2007). The origin of the document is a "Scientific Committee" created for the preparation of the conference "Linguistic Diversity for Democratic Citizenship in Europe (Innsbruck, May 1999)".*

-*School, community, university: partnerships for sustainable democracy. Education for Democratic Citizenship in Europe and the United States (2011):*

*This guide examines how schools and universities can work with local communities to promote democracy in society based on the principles of **Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC)**, a concept developed by the Council of Europe.*

-*Council of Europe Language Policy Portal (latest consultation 2022 12 18): "Languages are a fundamental factor in the lives of citizens and the democratic functioning of societies."*

I underline: We can see that the CoE even claims authorship of the concept of "education for democratic citizenship", and its acronym "EDC".

Plurilingual and intercultural education" is currently defined in this way on the CoE's "Resource and Reference Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education":

*A major challenge for education systems is to give learners the opportunity to develop their language and intercultural skills in order to enable them to **act** effectively as **citizens**, acquire knowledge and develop attitudes open to otherness. Such a vision of language and culture teaching constitutes **plurilingual and intercultural education**. (underlined in the text, www.coe.int/fr/web/language-policy/platform, last consultation 2022 12 17)*

I will defend the following ideas in my speech: from a didactic point of view, the problem of training for democratic citizenship in the language classroom is concretely that of empowering and making students as well as teachers responsible for the conduct of their common teaching-learning project. As far as this training is concerned, the set of guidelines of the CoE's LPU constitutes a perfect counter-model both in the way they are elaborated (chapter 1) and in the proposals made (chapter 2), whereas credible alternatives already exist (chapter 3). Indeed, for a long time, a number of language-culture didacticians have been denouncing the drifts of the LPU, whose effects on school language teaching in Europe are catastrophic, and have been making proposals that effectively combine the formative aims and the specific objectives of school language-culture teaching and learning.

1. The CoE's Language Policy Unit: a counter-model for democratic functioning

Two critical books have been published on LPU orientations and specifically on the *CEFR*, Bruno Maurer's in 2012, and the one I co-edited with him in 2019. In the general introduction to the latter (p. 1), I announce the list of some of the many available critical articles we refer to: Berchoud 2017; Comerford 2010; Friederike Delouis 2008; Lefranc 2009; Maurer 2011; Migeot 2017; Prieur 2017; Puren 2006d, 2007b, 2012b, 2015f; Simons, 2011.

Friederike Delouis's 2008 article (the only one whose complete references I give in the bibliography of this article) is a synthesis of all the strong and systematic criticisms made of the *CEFR* by about twenty German-speaking educationalists at a conference in Tübingen (Germany) the year after its publication. They already feared what would actually happen next:

An economic instrumentalization of languages and their learning?

[...]

Private language schools can use the CEFR as a 'quality label' that ennobles their products" (Thonshoff: 188). (Friederike Delouis 2008, p. 29)

The most important part of the *CEFR*, in fact, deals with a mode of certification assessment that is in fact a business model, whose main purpose is to promote it. This goal was already evident in one of the CoE's earlier major publications, the 1996 *Vantage level*, about which I wrote in 2001 (Puren 2001a):

There is already a real European language market which will only grow in the future, and in its most lucrative segments (adult education and the corresponding certifications) organizations of the same dimension have already been set up, such as Eurocentres or ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe). I mention these two organizations because on the title page of what is intended to be a sequel to the 1975 Threshold level –van Ek & John Trim's Vantage level (Council of Europe, 1996)- they are warmly thanked for their "important financial contribution to this work". (p. 6)

In the general conclusion of our joint book (Maurer and Puren 2019), after a proper investigation of the development process of the *CEFR* and its *Companion Volume*, Bruno Maurer was able to state, without fear of contradiction:

The CEFR [2001] and the CV [Companion Volume, 2018], even more so for the latter, are indeed the work of two organizations, two private for-profit companies, the Cambridge English Learning Assessment and the Eurocentres Foundation. The authors, whose names appear in the acknowledgements but not on the cover, are all employees of these organizations: the authorship could not be clearer. It is not surprising that in this context their private employers find it profitable. It is much more surprising, however, that on this basis, one would claim to be building public linguistic education policies. [...]
Behind this mechanism, it is the whole process of expertise that is to be questioned: the procedure of choice of experts, the construction of the framework of their mission, the mode of work by compilation within the framework of a carefully maintained entre-soi; upstream, it is even the mission entrusted to the Unit of linguistic policies of the Council of Europe that must be questioned: what mandate, what real political project? (p. 295)

In the same book, I explain why the *CEFR* proficiency scales propose « des descripteurs en réalité impossibles à utiliser par les enseignants eux-mêmes » ("descriptors that are in reality impossible to use by teachers themselves", chap. 1.3.4.4, p. 57), and that this is « une supercherie et un stratagème » ("a deception and a stratagem") on the part of the authors (title of chap. 1.3.4.7, p. 74):

They are in fact promoting their own certifications to teachers, and to the managers and decision-makers of school systems, while ensuring that they are unable to compete with them. This inability can only convince education officials, policy makers in their countries, and ultimately the teachers themselves, that the only reasonable decision is to entrust

Christian PUREN, "The current orientations of the didactics of languages and cultures and education for democratic citizenship"

these organizations with the certification of their students in parallel with the national examinations, and probably then as a replacement for these examinations, since these are the only certifications that can boast international recognition. (pp. 74-75).

This is what is happening in the teaching of languages in schools in France. And yet, certificate-based evaluations have very important effects upstream. In his 2012 book, Bruno Maurer already wrote:

The reorientation of educational systems is taking place gradually, without any debate. If all national systems are indeed to become "plurilingual and intercultural", then let it be at the end of clearly stated national debates where the effects in terms of the conception of citizenship, the mutation of the place of the school, the commodification of language teaching or the conception of the teaching profession will be weighed. Instead of this approach, measures are gradually being introduced, in small steps, which have been developed without political legitimacy and which are gradually distorting the systems. (p. 153)

And he accused the authors of the *CEFR* of « Développer le sentiment de citoyenneté pour contrebalancer le déficit de citoyenneté » ("Developing a sense of citizenship to counterbalance the citizenship deficit", title of chapter 3.2.2, p. 117).

To conclude this chapter, I will simply reproduce the references from a book published by the CoE in 2015:

COSTE Daniel, CAVALLI Marisa. 2015. *Éducation, mobilité, altérité. Les fonctions de médiation de l'école*. Unité des Politiques linguistiques, Division des politiques éducatives, Service de l'éducation, **Direction de la citoyenneté démocratique et de la participation**, DGII : **Direction générale de la démocratie**, Conseil de l'Europe, 2015, 72 p.

I emphasize: the authors of this study are not responsible for it, but the titles of the CoE's services responsible for their publication are particularly unfortunate, suggesting more the decisions of an authoritarian bureaucracy than the formation of democratic and participatory citizenship...

2. The *CEFR*: a counter-model of "citizen didactics"

I will define "citizen didactics" here as all the implementations of the teaching-learning process by the teacher and the learners leading their common project as autonomous and responsible citizens.

In Friederike Delouis's 2008 synthesis, two passages are already included which note the criticism of German-speaking educationalists on this point at their 2002 conference, the first concerning learners, the second teachers:

One of the researchers regrets that the CEFR deals too little with the learner as an individual; the difficulty of a linguistic performance is seen as inherent to the task, without any link to the abilities of the individual who produces it (Abel: 11). Intellectual differences between students are not taken into account as preconditions for learning. In particular, levels B2 and especially C could not be reached by many learners and even by native speakers, Barkowski believes. Too often, the student is perceived only in his cognitive dimension, on the model of a computer that assimilates and reproduces data. Moreover, the Framework contains nothing about "learner languages" or "interlanguages", nor about learning strategies or hypotheses tested by the learner. (p. 26) [...]

Possible drifts

[...] It would be fatal if the CEFR prevented initiatives and hindered the teachers' freedom, Abel remarks. The descriptors, it is thought, will necessarily have multiple effects on

Christian PUREN, "The current orientations of the didactics of languages and cultures and education for democratic citizenship"

learning and teaching; can we avoid the danger of a situation where programs and textbooks will be dominated by a concern for level and the descriptors associated with them? (p. 29)

One can only note the relevance of these criticisms, and the fact that this drift has indeed occurred, just as much as the one, noted above, of "the economic instrumentalization of languages and their learning". This was not, strictly speaking, a "danger", but a logic inscribed in the document itself: the only real only real concern of the authors, in fact, is to promote their model of certification assessment. However, in this type of assessment, by its nature and function, one is only concerned with the results, the **products** of teaching-learning, without taking into account the teaching-learning **process** in which the learners and teachers have previously been involved with their cultures, their experiences, their personalities, or again, as it is said at the end of the first quotation above, with their own languages and their own learning strategies.

In the following passage, the authors of the *CEFR* seem to appeal to the democratic participation of teachers:

If there are practitioners who upon reflection are convinced that the objectives appropriate to the learners towards whom they have responsibilities are most effectively pursued by methods other than those advocated elsewhere by the Council of Europe, then we should like them to say so, to tell us and others of the methods they use and the objectives they pursue. This might lead to a wider understanding of the complex diversity of the world of language education, or to lively debate, which is always preferable to simple acceptance of a current orthodoxy merely because it is an orthodoxy. (pp. 142-143)

The invitation " *If there are practitioners who upon reflection are convinced that...*" clearly betrays the dominant, and somewhat condescending, posture of the authors in relation to teachers². And what sincerity can be accorded to their invitation, when their text is published in French by Didier editions in a volume whose back cover begins with the following lines?:

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is the result of more than ten years of research by leading linguists in the 41 member states of the Council of Europe. The projects that preceded this final result were subject to wide consultation and resulted in this very important contribution to applied linguistics and modern language teaching.

What these lines invite is not a debate, but a pure and simple **application of** the orientations of this text by the teachers.

Applicationism is a means constantly used throughout the history of didactics of languages-cultures (DLC) to deprive teachers of their professional autonomy and responsibility. Applicationism is also a reductionism, which does not allow teachers to really take into account the complexity that they are constantly confronted with in their classrooms. With the frustration, even the bad conscience of teachers, applicationism finally feeds institutional authoritarianism: recommending one practice more or less strongly always implies discarding at least one other.

The following different forms of reductionism can be identified in the history of DLC, often working in combination with each other:

-methodological reductionism, successively generated in the course of history by each of the constituted methodologies, which were all intended to be exclusive;

² The French translation accentuates this posture: « Si certains praticiens, après réflexion, **restent** convaincus que... » ("If some practitioners, after reflection, **remain** convinced that...").

Christian PUREN, "The current orientations of the didactics of languages and cultures and education for democratic citizenship"

- scientific reductionism*, of the linguistic type, in the so-called "Applied Linguistics", or cognitive, with today's promoters of a teaching based on the "discoveries" of neuroscience;
- technological reductionism*, based on a supposed technological determinism;
- practical reductionism*, based on a set of practices considered as "*the best practices*".

The more power one wants to take over teachers, the more applicationisms one summons at the same time. To experience this here, I invent an *ad hoc* statement that brings them all together:

The approach we propose in this course brings together all the good practices whose effectiveness, demonstrated in the field by the experience of many teachers, is based on the fact that they bring together and synergize all the potentialities of the new technologies so as to make the different language processing areas in the brain work.

Can one imagine a more "convincing" argument, or at least one that leaves less room for a debate in which teachers could put forward their own professional experience?

The authors of the *CEFR* cannot claim any of these applicationisms: they repeatedly state that they do not want to impose any methodology or good practice whatsoever, and their allusions are rare and vague to what they call, on page 4, "exploiting the full potential of new communication and information technologies". As for scientific applicationism, here is what they write in different passages of their text:

*Recent work on linguistic universals has **not as yet** produced results which can be used directly to facilitate language learning, teaching and assessment.* (p. 109)

*The grammar of any language in this sense is highly complex and **so far** defies definitive or exhaustive treatment.* (p. 113)

6.2.2 How do learners learn?

6.2.2.1 There is **at present** no sufficiently strong research-based consensus on how learners learn for the Framework to base itself on any one learning theory. Some theorists believe that [... Others believe that [...] Between these polar extremes, **most 'mainstream' learners, teachers and their support services will follow more eclectic practices** [...] (pp. 139-140)

I emphasize: as we can see, the authors of the *CEFR* only admit the eclecticism of teachers insofar as they consider that research is unfortunately not yet sufficiently advanced to impose on them the single method, which would be the "scientific" method³.

But these authors are inaugurating a new form of applicationism that is more pernicious than the previous ones, and that can be called "ideological" in reference to the title of Bruno Maurer's 2012 book, *Enseignement des langues et construction européenne. Le plurilinguisme, nouvelle idéologie dominante (Language teaching and European construction. Plurilingualism, the new dominant ideology)*⁴. The following passage from the 2007 *Guide for the Development of Language Policies in Europe* is a perfect illustration:

³ In the French version of the *CEFR*, the translator has added an occurrence of the same meaning: "The description [of competencies levels] also needs to be *based on theories* of language competence. This is difficult to achieve because the available theory and research is inadequate to provide a basis for such a description" (p. 21) has been translated as: *Il faut aussi que la description [des niveaux de compétence] se fonde sur des théories relatives à la compétence langagière bien que la théorie et la recherche **actuellement** disponibles soient inadéquates pour fournir une base.* (p. 23)

⁴ One might as well speak, as Emmanuel Antier does in a 2018 article (§26), of "political applicationism". For an available online rehash of the main ideas that B. Maurer outlines in his 2012 book, cf. Maurer 2015.

Christian PUREN, "The current orientations of the didactics of languages and cultures and education for democratic citizenship"

*The aim of plurilingualism and plurilingual education is not simultaneously teaching a range of languages, teaching through comparing different languages or teaching as many languages as possible. Rather, the goal is to develop plurilingual competence and intercultural education, as a way of living together.*⁵ (p. 18)

In the title of one of the chapters of his 2012 book, Bruno Maurer announces that he is going to develop a criticism that seems to me to be very accurate: "Quand l'Europe dissout l'enseignement des langues dans l'éducation plurilingue et interculturelle" ("When Europe dissolves language teaching in plurilingual and intercultural education") (chapter 1.2. p. 17). He takes it up again in the conclusion of his book in the form of questions of interpellation:

Can we admit without debate that the more we affirm the central role of languages, the less we actually teach them? Therefore, is it acceptable to focus all research on intercultural competencies, the "savoir-être" ("know-how to be"), to the detriment of linguistic competencies, the "savoirs" ("knowledge"), and communicative competencies, the "savoir-faire" ("know-how to do")? (p. 152)

It is not only the whole of DLC research, but the whole of teaching that suffers from this shift in focus. Language teachers are first and foremost specialists in the teaching and learning of language: to take away this objective by giving them only an educational purpose is simply to deprive them of what their professional autonomy and responsibility are based on.

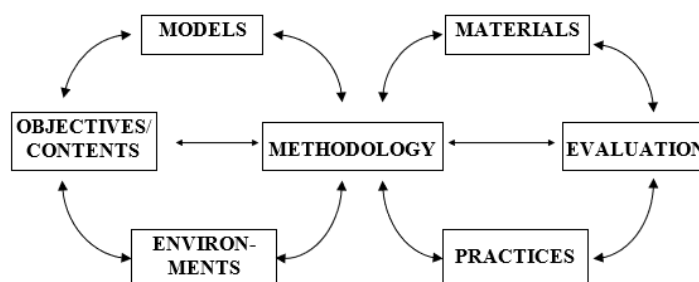
In a 2006 article entitled "Le CECR et la réflexion méthodologique en didactique des langues-cultures : un chantier à reprendre" (*The CEFR and methodological reflection in language and culture didactics: a project to be resumed*), I justified my criticism of the abandonment of the methodological question by the authors of the CEFR:

In contrast to the aims, objectives and contents, which are largely the prerogative of the institutions, methodological issues are indeed the core of the language teacher's job. (p. 6)

But long before me, in 1985, the Swiss didactician René Richterich had stressed the importance of language teaching-learning methodology as a common area for the implementation of autonomy and responsibility of both teachers and learners:

Learning to learn a foreign language, helping the learner to discover his own learning strategies, making him capable of developing and exploiting them, teaching him to become autonomous, these are some of the salient features of current pedagogy and didactics. It is interesting to note that the methodological burden is twofold: on the one hand it concerns the teacher who must find practical means to carry out the above tasks, on the other hand it concerns the learner who must acquire a method to learn. Methodology therefore applies to both teaching and learning. (p. 13)

This centrality of methodological questions is found in the modeling of the field of didactics that I have been proposing for a long time in my work:



⁵ I will come back to this reduction of the social problem to "living together" later.

The didactic perspective consists in constantly questioning the methodological questions themselves (in other words, in problematizing them) on the basis of all the extra-methodological positions represented on this diagram, without giving priority to any of them in the answers, which would inevitably lead to reductionism. Methodological applicationism appears when the methodology used is no longer questioned, because it is claimed to be consistent. Scientific applicationism is based on one or more "MODELS" (theoretical models); technological applicationism is based on "MATERIALS"; and good practice applicationism is based on "PRACTICES". Another form of reductionism, starting from the ENVIRONMENTS, was systematically carried out by all methodologies when they were first developed: they were always built at the outset, in fact, with reference to a specific audience and the beginnings of learning (cf. Puren 1998c).

In the ideological applicationism of the CoE's LPU, this entire field of didactic reflection and design is neutralized in favor of an element of a "meta-didactic" nature ("didactological", in the terminology I use), in this case a purpose.

The aims have all legitimacy to intervene in the didactic field: as an ethical positioning, they even constitute, with the ideological and epistemological positioning, the three main elements of the didactological perspective. But this perspective has to be constantly recursive with the two other constitutive perspectives of the discipline, i.e. the methodological and the didactical ones, in order not to lose sight of the complexity of the discipline (cf. e.g. Puren 1994a for a historical approach, 1999a for the current functioning).

The two other meta-methodological positions in the field of didactics have also led to reductionist drifts in DLC:

-EVALUATION: this is the case when teaching is heavily influenced by language tests, or is reduced to test preparation (*Teaching to the test*).

-OBJECTIVES-BASED: this is the case when teaching is strongly influenced by predetermined language content, as in the so-called "language on specific objectives" courses which are based on "prior analysis of language needs": for example, FOS (*Français sur objectifs spécifiques*, "French on specific objectives") and FOU (*Français sur objectifs universitaires*, "French on university objectives") courses. A version of this reductionist approach is well known in general pedagogy, which was rife in the 1980s, and which is precisely called "objective-based pedagogy". Coupled with notional-functional grammar, it has led in some countries to language programs consisting solely of lists of language notions and functions.

The *CEFR* corresponds to a strong version of reductionism, since the authors propose to combine the two above-mentioned reductionisms in an assessment by predefined competence objectives. They thus deprive teachers of a decisive area of their shared responsibility with students, that of joint regulation of the teaching-learning process.

This *CEFR* is a very rich document: each time I reread it, I discover another good reason to criticize it, and to be surprised that so few didacticians do so. Here is what it says on page 20 of the French version:

Learning efforts in relation to those objectives and those units need also to be situated on this vertical dimension of progress, i.e. assessed in relation to gains in proficiency.
(CoE 2001, *CEFR* p. 16)

One would understand "results of efforts" at a stretch, although this is certainly not the best way to encourage learners' efforts. But to think that proficiency scales assess the learners' efforts themselves is a pure logical and pedagogical aberration.

In particular, the authors of the *CEFR* make an extreme reduction of the great complexity of the problem of evaluation in schools, as I was able to describe it in a 2001 article entitled "La

problématique de l'évaluation en didactique scolaire des langues" ("The problem of evaluation in school language didactics", Puren 2001b), and as I was able to propose its management in the book Maurer and Puren 2019, in the 4th part entitled "Pour une autre évaluation, l'évaluation intégrée" ("For another evaluation, the integrated evaluation"). This reduction of the problematic of evaluation in the *CEFR* inevitably causes a reduction of the didactic problematic as a whole, since the evaluation model they propose is a certificative evaluation conceived independently of any teaching-learning process.

3. Available alternatives to the *CEFR* authors' "vision" of language and culture teaching

I will successively take up the two elements of the "vision" of language teaching proposed by the CoE LPU experts, "plurilingual and intercultural education" and "education for democratic citizenship".

3.1. Plurilingual and intercultural education

–As far as "plurilingual education" is concerned, I refer to the entire 5th part of the 2019 joint book, written by Bruno Maurer, which is significantly entitled "Vers une **méthodologie** plurilingue intégrée" ("Towards an integrated plurilingual methodology") (my emphasis). He opposes the conception of the CoE's LPU, according to which "plurilingual education is not about the simultaneous teaching of several languages" (cf. *above* the lines taken from *the 2007 Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe*):

The proposal for an "integrated plurilingual methodology" (IPM) that we make in the following lines really takes into account at least two languages in the way of teaching and in the reflection on how to learn and teach them. (p. 238)

B. Maurer presents this IPM only in terms of its general principles and a few concrete examples, because –and this is the consequence that interests me directly here– its implementation can only be contextual and diversified, in particular since it will depend on the nature of the L1 and its functioning in relation to the L2, and it can only be conceived and implemented under the responsibility of local educationalists and field teachers:

*In contrast to the *CEFR*, which unduly claims that a single framework for the undifferentiated teaching of all languages is possible, we set out the limits of relevance and implementation of the IPM according to the audiences concerned, the teaching objectives, the didactic traditions and the teaching-learning environments. These limits lead to a "plurimethodological" approach that can, by means of a reasoned eclecticism, respond to the coherent complex management of the teaching-learning processes of different languages, starting from an agreement on broad common principles based on shared knowledge about how languages are learned. (p. 287)*

–As far as "intercultural education" is concerned, I refer to my "Complex model of cultural competence: trans-, meta-, inter-, pluri- and co-cultural components" (Puren 2011j), and to the use I have made of it since then in various publications (cf. on my website the bibliographic section "Culture – Cultural Competence"⁶): it is all these components of cultural competence that must henceforth be taken into account in the didactics of language-cultures. The authors of the 2001 *CEFR* had logically added to the intercultural competence of the communicative approach the "pluricultural competence", to take into account the new "plurilingual and pluricultural Europe" (p. 3). However, they had not drawn the consequence of their new objective of training a "social actor" in a foreign language-culture, namely a "co-cultural" competence in the sense of being able to adopt or create with the other, in order to act with him, a set of shared conceptions of common action.

⁶ www.christianpuren.com/bibliographies/culture-compétence-culturelle/.

Christian PUREN, "The current orientations of the didactics of languages and cultures and education for democratic citizenship"

In the course of 2005, the experts of the CoE's LPU even reduced the cultural issue to "intercultural" again, as can be seen in the name of their project "plurilingual and intercultural education".

3.2. Education for democratic citizenship

The experts of the CoE's LPU therefore still do not take into account in their educational project not only the "doing together" of collective work, but even the "doing society together" which is so essential in a shared citizenship. We saw above, in the quotation from the 2007 *Guide for the Development of Language Policies in Europe*, that the object of plurilingual education was reduced for them to "living together" (p. 18).

The same theme of "living together", with its specific values, can be found in the following programmatic question posed by the authors of the orientation text of the present Arras conference:

*How should the educational system of a country, or a region, adjust to meet the needs of learners and promote language teaching that ensures the formation of citizens who respect human rights, fundamental freedoms, and who also observe values such as **tolerance, equality, respect and living together**?* (emphasis added).

Yet more and more philosophers, sociologists and pedagogues consider this "living together" insufficient to collectively meet the challenges posed by today's societies and the school project of citizenship education. In a dossier yet entitled "Living Together" in the January 2018 issue of the magazine *Le Courrier de l'Atlas*, the political scientist and sociologist Vincent Geisser, a research fellow at the CNRS and IREMAM (Institute for Research and Studies on the Arab and Muslim World) denounces:

[Living together] is an intellectual, political and societal posture that advocates tolerance, anti-racism and anti-discrimination. But the formula has become a catch-all. [...] The discourse of living together serves more and more our incapacity to act together. [...] Personally, the notion of "in common" seems more relevant to me, [that is] the defense of common values and "doing things together" (p. 28)

The criticism of this reduction to "living together" in the French school system is just as firm from the pedagogue Philippe Meirieu, who declared in 2012 on the Café pédagogique site:

In this situation of disintegration of the collective, the injunction to train for "citizenship" and "living together" is not very effective... because "living together" is only an illusion or a fusional regression as long as it is not articulated –as the whole tradition of popular education has shown and repeated– on a "doing together".

The French conception of society is very demanding, because it considers citizens as autonomous and responsible individuals who "make society" with all the others, i.e. who participate actively with them in the same project of society. The great novelty of the actional perspective in language didactics is that its reference pedagogy is a well-known pedagogy, the project pedagogy, which gives itself precisely as a first goal the formation of a citizen, with as a fundamental principle the idea that the best way to form students to citizenship is to ask them to act in their class micro-society as real citizens engaged with their teacher in a common project: in this case, for our purposes, in a project of teaching-learning a language-culture. In the actional perspective, contrary to the conception of the CoE's LPU experts, citizenship education is therefore inseparable from a "doing together", and this "doing together" can only be the effective teaching-learning of a language culture.

It is undoubtedly the influence of the Anglo-Saxons in the drafting of the first (English) version of the *CEFR*, which explains in part the absence of consideration of "making society together" in this text, which nevertheless introduces into the teaching-learning of languages the goal of training a "social actor". In fact, the "faire ensemble" ("making together") does not have the same place in Anglo-Saxon political philosophy as it does in French political philosophy: the ideal

of multicultural societies is limited to the harmonious coexistence of diverse communities (to "living together"). This difference can be found in the two languages themselves: the title of the issue of the *Cahiers de recherche du GIRSEF*⁷, No. 110, September 2017, "**Faire société**" dans un monde incertain. Quel rôle pour l'école ?" was thus translated in the English version (No. 111 of the journal, same date) as "**Living together** in an uncertain world. What role for the school?" (my emphasis).

The actional perspective, which is a perspective of social action, given its natural reference pedagogy, project pedagogy, considers the classroom as a micro-society in its own right. In the case of the teaching-learning of a foreign language-culture, the homology is perfect, since the challenge is to train a social actor acting in a foreign language-culture in a multilingual and multicultural society, and that precisely the classroom is a multilingual environment (one must manage at least L1 and L2) and multicultural: there is at least the teaching culture and the multiple learning cultures produced by the personalities, cognitive profiles, motivations, experiences and individual learning strategies. As I have noted repeatedly in my work, and again in a recent essay on mediation (Puren 2019b):

by exploiting the homology between the classroom micro-society and the outside society, one can consider and make the language classroom function as a "co-cultural incubator", i.e. of social action culture, i.e. a place and a time where students, in an intensive and secure manner because mediated by the teacher, have the opportunity to train themselves in skills that will be necessary later on in their professional and civic lives: adapting to other ways of working, working in groups, facing the unknown, uncertainty and complexity, learning from one's own mistakes and the mistakes of others, producing by making the most of limited means, conceiving and conducting collective projects, self-evaluation individually and collectively, etc. The language-culture teacher can then fully claim a role as an educator in school teaching, and as a trainer in vocational teaching (p. 59)

Pedagogical projects, because they are social actions, and therefore complex, are likely to mobilize all available methodological matrices (cf. Puren 073-en), in other words to require what can be called a "plurimethodological approach" (cf. Puren 2020f, 2022g). In a working paper (Puren 053), I have proposed a practical exercise and its answer key that deals with a project presented by a teacher of French as Foreign Language (FFL) during the 12th SEDIFRALE (Rio de Janeiro, June 2001). This project had a marked civic dimension, since it consisted, for students of a final year class in FFL in the city center of a South American capital, to go and read their translations in Spanish of French poems in classes in the "underprivileged" suburbs of the capital. The proposed exercise consists of pointing out, for each of the six different types of activity that these students will have to carry out, the methodological matrices that they will have to implement. The exercise can be done, or the proposed answer key can be consulted directly, which shows that all the methodological matrices had to be mobilized successively during the realization of this project, some, sometimes, in combination with others.

Conclusion

I will conclude by relying, as I did in my lecture, on two charts. The national educational project is declined by the Ministry of National Education (France) in the *Socle commun de connaissances, de compétences et de culture* (*Bulletin Officiel* No. 17 of April 23, 2015), in the form of a series of objectives, all of which are presented as "a central reference for the work of all teachers and actors in the educational system" (p. 44). If we take up these objectives one by one and compare them with the different didactic configurations currently available in DLC, we immediately notice the existence of strong binary correspondences⁸:

⁷ Journal of the GIRSEF, Groupe interdisciplinaire de recherche sur la socialisation, l'éducation et la formation of the Catholic University of Leuven, <https://uclouvain.be/fr/chercher/girsef/les-cahiers-du-girsef.html>

⁸ First published in Puren 2019b, chap. 3.1.1. "Educational mediation," pp. 44-45.

The "common base of knowledge, competencies and culture" ...	Corresponding configuration in DLC
- "...opens to knowledge, forms judgment and critical thinking, from ordered elements of rational knowledge of the world."	active methodology
- "...fosters a development of the person in interaction with the world around them."	communicative-intercultural approach
- "...provides a general education that is open and common to all and based on values that allow for living in a tolerant society of freedom."	multilingual and multicultural methodologies
- "...provides students with the means to engage in school activities, to act, to interact with others, to gain autonomy and thus gradually exercise their freedom and status as responsible citizens."	social action-oriented approach (and its project-based pedagogy)

Furthermore, the different components of cultural competence favored in each of these methodological matrices can be taken up again with regard to teaching-learning cultures. They allow us to model in this way (see table below) what can be called "the components of the competence of complex management of methodological variation by the teacher and the learners"⁹:

**Components of the cultural competence of complex management
of methodological variation by teachers and learners**

	COMPONENTS
1. Knowledge of the different didactic cultures (with the corresponding methodologies), starting with that of his/her learners.	metacultural
2. Ability to distance oneself from one's own methodology, or that of one's initial training, or that of one's textbook. Interest in and respect for other methodologies (especially those of his/her learners).	intercultural
3. Ability to build different methodological devices in variation (to all learners, successively) or in differentiation (to different learners or groups of learners).	multicultural
4. Ability to build methodological systems that combine different methodologies in a coherent manner so as to produce synergistic effects between them.	pluricultural
5. Ability to build a common teaching-learning culture with learners.	co-cultural
6. Ability to apply the principles currently recognized in school pedagogy: homology between the social action targeted and the school action favored, active pedagogy, explicit teaching, reflective learning, empowerment, and responsibility of learners.	transcultural

Given the level of autonomy required of students in project-based pedagogy, this multi-methodological management can only be achieved in the framework of a permanent dialogue between them and their teacher. In order to ensure the training of democratic citizenship in the classroom, as the CoE wishes, language teaching must not be "dissolved" (to use the expression of B. Maurer quoted *above*) in plurilingual and intercultural education: on the contrary, it is at the heart of didactic reflection and intervention, in the management and joint implementation of the various possible methodological choices, that the training of pupils in autonomy and civic responsibility can best be achieved in concrete terms.

⁹ First published in Puren 2022g, final slide #49.

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