Abstract: Education for sustainable development (ESD) is defined as education that changes skills, knowledge, values and attitudes to build more sustainable and just societies for all (UN 2015; UNESCO, 2017). Its importance is recognized and implemented into Croatian educational system at the policy level (National Implementation Report, 2014). However, there is still little research on specific aspects of ESD in Croatia. ESD envisions education that is set on three pillars: economic, environmental and socio-cultural, the latter given the least attention (Gregers Eriksen, 2013; Zygmunt 2016). Being holistic and transformational in its nature (Engdahl, 2015; OMEP, 2017; UNICEF, 2019), ESD concerns learning content, outcomes, pedagogy and learning environment, therefore it should be the main aim of education in general, including language education. Zygmunt (2016) argues that language as a medium of obtaining and transmitting knowledge has immense importance for sustainable development. Baltic and Visnjic Jevtic (2020) proved that even children at age 3 to 7 understand the concept of diversity, especially linguistic diversity, and its positive value. Also, Otieno (2008) emphasizes that culture underlines the EDS, because culture influences our behavior, communication and learning. Therefore, language education should be one of the main areas to implement EDS (Zygmunt, 2016). This paper deals with Croatian mother tongue (L1) and English foreign language (FL) learning within the scope of ESD. More precisely, it investigates whether the curricula for learning Croatian as L1 and English as FL in primary education (grades 1–4) support education for sustainable development. For the purpose of this paper two curricula will be analyzed: Curriculum for subject Croatian language in the primary and secondary school (MZO, 2019a) and Curriculum for subject English language in the primary and secondary school (MZO, 2019b). Based on the qualitative analysis of the curricula for primary level (grades 1 to 4), it will be discussed how language learning outcomes specified by the two curricula are related and might contribute to the development of ESD key competencies: system thinking competency, anticipatory competency, normative competency, strategic competency, collaborative competency, critical thinking competency, self-awareness competency and integrated problem solving competency. The study has shown that both L1 and FL curricula support the development of ESD key competencies. The most supported competency by both curricula is system thinking competency, followed by self-awareness and collaboration competency. However, in both curricula there is a relatively large number of outcomes that can not be directly related to ESD key competencies. Still, they could be also used to foster the competencies providing ESD pedagogical approaches and methods are applied.

Keywords: ESD key competencies, lower level primary school, first and foreign language learning

1. INTRODUCTION
The United Nation 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1, p.3) states that the Agenda “is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity”. The document was adopted in 2015, as a unique attempt to unify all nations to reach the mutual aim “to shift the word on a sustainable and resilient path” (A/RES/70/1, p.3). UN member states have all agreed on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and its 169 targets in order to end poverty, resolve inequalities, build peaceful and just societies, protect human rights and promote gender equality, protect our planet and its resources. Besides the global issues, the 2030 Agenda emphasises that each country “faces specific challenges in its pursuit of sustainable development” (A/RES/70/1, p.8). Therefore, all countries will implement Agenda on a local, regional and global level, according to the “different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities” (A/RES/70/1, p.8). The array of goals and issues encompassed by the UN 2030 Agenda require immense means and instruments for its implementation. To meet Agenda goals, it is crucial to develop global partnership, build capacities and transfer technologies. As pointed out by Leicht, Heiss and Byun (2015, p.5) “all countries must stimulate action in the following key areas - people, planet, properties, peace and partnership (...) Achieving these goals requires a profound transformation in the way we think and act”. The main purpose of education for sustainable development (ESD) is to provide education that changes skills, knowledge, values and attitudes to build more sustainable and just societies for all (UN, 2015; UNESCO, 2017). As the idea of sustainable development itself, the concept of education for sustainable development is also not new. At the Tbilisi Conference on Environmental Education organized in 1977, the participants agreed that “environmental education encompasses a broad spectrum of environmental, social, ethical,
and cultural dimensions” (Leich et al., 2018, p.27), providing a solid base for the future development of ESD. The overall importance of education for the achievement of sustainable development was pointed out at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992. Agenda 21, the action plan designed at the conference, stated that “promoting education, public awareness and training are linked virtually to all areas in Agenda 21” (UN, 1992, p.320). Two years later the Environmental and Population Education and Information for Human Development project introduced the concept of education for sustainable development, which was given an important role in the 2012 Rio+20 Summit, when the member states “resolve to improve the capacity of our education systems to prepare people to pursue sustainable development, including through enhanced teacher training, the development of sustainability curricula, the development of training programmes that prepare students for careers in fields related to sustainability, and more effective use of information and communications technologies to enhance learning outcomes” (UN 2102, p.44). Consequently, the UN 2030 Agenda mantined the central role of ESD. Namely, the long lasting global focus to provide basic skills and education for all became insufficient for the fast changing and complex world. As Leich (2018, p.32) points out “It has become clear that education is not only an instrument to sustainable development but that the concept of teaching and learning must be transformed to enable individuals to lead sustainable development as agents of change”. In line with that, ESD pedagogies abandon rote memorizing in favor of participatory learning with the purpose to stimulate students to use higher order cognitive skills e.g. analyzing, critical thinking, decision making, brainstorming, discussing etc. The lessons shift from teacher-centred approach to student-centred, drawing upon multi-methods such as drama, art, debate, experience, music, design in order to foster creativity and change the view of teaching as a mere process of passing knowledge to students. The idea is to raise change-agents capable of problem solving and not patients who only learn about local and global problems. Knowing that changes in education requires evidence-based decision making, Laurie et al. (2016) study aimed to provide some evidence for the contribution of ESD to quality education. A synthesis of reports produced by 18 countries based on interviews to education leaders and practitioners showed that ESD contributes to quality education on various levels: students’ performance, school curriculum, and learning and teaching. For instance, students of ESD school develop stronger critical thinking, better research skills and understanding of the studied topic; by using local themes school curriculum provides interesting learning context for students who are more engaged and committed to learning; ESD fostered innovative methodologies, increased the IT usage, and changed the assessment methods. The importance of the ESD is also recognized and implemented in Croatia. From 2010 Croatia is reporting on the national implementation of the ENECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development. From two National Reports available publicly (https://mcoe.gov.hr, 2020) it is evident that Croatia has adopted the Strategy and included its goals into several policy documents. However, most of Croatian actions and activities related to the ENECE Strategy aim at the economic or environmental sphere. Namely, ESD relies on three spheres of interest - economic, environmental and socio-cultural, that should be equally balanced. However, the sphere of socio-cultural activity seems to be given less attention than the other two (Zygmunt, 2016). That is in contrast with the Agenda 2030, Goal 4 - quality education, that states: ‘By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development’ (A/RES/70/1, Target 4.7). Furthermore, the whole purpose of education has been shifting from economic competitiveness to global citizenship, social justice and sustainability (Laurie et al., 2016), topics that for the majority belong to the socio-cultural sphere. Zygmunt (2016) following this line, argues that language education should be in the centre of ESD since linguistic knowledge is the prerequisite for communication and a medium of obtaining and transmitting knowledge. Linguistic competence reflects the quality of a social group allowing it to negotiate a variety of issues with other groups, show respect to each other, reach consensus in a tactful and tolerant way. Bahtic and Visnjic Jevtic (2020) proved that even children at age 3 to 7 understand the concept of diversity, especially linguistic diversity, and its positive value. Also, Otieno (2008) emphasizes that culture underlines the EDS, because culture influences our behavior, communication and learning. Mother tongue and foreign language education are pathways to culture, interculturality, global citizenship and therefore, language education should be one of the main areas to implement the social - cultural sphere and EDS in general (Zygmunt, 2016).

The aim of the study is to investigate whether the new curricula for learning Croatian as L1 and English as FL in primary education (grades 1-4) support ESD. Support was defined as contribution of language learning outcomes to the development of eight key competences for ESD: system thinking competency, anticipatory competency, normative competency, strategic competency, collaboration competency, critical thinking competency, self-awareness competency and integrated problem-solving competency, as defined by Rieckman (2018).
2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In 2015 the Republic of Croatia undertook a reform of the educational system that resulted with new subject curricula for primary and secondary schools. Curricula for all subjects, as well as inter-subject themes, were officially adopted in 2019. All new curricula are competence-based, defining educational outcomes, in contrast to the old curricula that only listed subject contents (more in Turza Bogdan, Cvikić & Aladrovčić Slovaček, 2019). In line with research questions, the source of relevant data were curricula for two subjects - Croatian as a first language (L1) and English as a foreign language (FL), i.e. Curriculum for Croatian language in the primary and secondary school (MZO 2019a) and Curriculum of English language in the primary and secondary school (MZO 2019b). Both subject curricula differentiate 3 subject areas, defining educational outcomes for each subject area. Subject areas in two curricula are to a great extent comparable. Subject areas in Croatian as L1 are: 1) language and communication, 2) literacy and creativity, 3) culture and media, whereas subject areas in English as FL are: 1) communicative language competence, 2) intercultural communicative competence, 3) independence in language learning. The curricula were qualitatively analyzed for its content in relation to ESD and the analysis was conducted according to the procedure used by Knezevic (2015). The base for the analysis in this study was description of aforementioned eight key competences for education for sustainable development (Rieckman, 2018), and the unit of the analysis was an educational outcome. All educational outcomes defined in Curriculum for Croatian L1 (MZO 2019a) and Curriculum for English FL (MZO 2019b) for the lower level of primary schools (Grade 1 - 4) were assessed for their contribution to develop each of EDS key competences (EDSKC). The outcomes were assessed by two evaluators, and a three-point scale (0-2) was applied: 2 - an outcome contributes to development of a key competence, 1 - an outcome partially contributes to development of a key competence, 0 - an outcome does not contribute to development of a key competence. The outcome was assessed to contribute to development of EDSKC if its description was in direct relation with the description of an EDSKC. For example, the Croatian language learning outcome A1.1. states that a pupil “talks in accordance to his/her interests and needs, respecting interests and needs of the others”, which is in a direct relation, ie. synonymous to the collaboration competence defined as the ability “to understand and respect the needs, perspectives and actions of the others” (Rieckman, 2018, p.44). Therefore the outcome was assessed to contribute to development of EDS collaboration competence and attributed 2 points. The outcome was assessed to partially contribute to development of EDSKC if its description contained the element that could be in relation with the description of an EDSKC. For example, the same outcome might contribute to the development of critical thinking competency defined as the ability “to reflect on one’s own values, perceptions and actions” (Rieckman, 2018, p.44). However, that is not obvious from the definition of the outcome, but it might be fostered by teaching methods. The outcome was assessed to partially contribute to development of EDS critical thinking competence and attributed 1 point. If there was no relation between the outcome and an EDSKC, the outcome was assessed not to contribute to a particular ESD key competence and attributed 0 point. Each outcome was assessed for its contribution to every EDSKC. In total there were 120 outcomes assessed - 53 for Croatian and 67 for the English language. Naturally, such content analysis has its limitations due to a certain level of examiners subjectivity in assessing the outcomes. The subjectivity was attempted to be minimised by the fact that all outcomes were assessed by two examiners, and the assessment differences were discussed until reaching a consensus. The results of the analysis are presented in the following section.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to generally explore the ways in which language classes can contribute to the development of ESD. Therefore, only the overall results of the contribution of the learning outcomes to the development of ESD key competences will be presented, since the detailed investigation is beyond the scope of this study. Table 1 presents the percentage of all language learning outcomes according to their general contribution to development of EDS key competences, separately for each subject - Croatian as L1 and English as FL. The results showed that in both subjects the majority of outcomes (75% in Croatian L1 and 83% in English FL) were assessed not to contribute to the development of ESD key competencies. In the subject Croatian L1 21% of outcomes were assessed to directly contribute, and 4% to partially contribute to the development of ESD key competencies. In the subject English FL 14% of outcomes were assessed to directly contribute and 4% to partially contribute to the development of ESD key competencies.
Table 1: Outcome contribution to development of EDS key competencies in Croatian L1 and English FL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>outcomes contributing to ESDKC</th>
<th>outcomes partially contributing to ESDKC</th>
<th>outcomes not contributing to ESDKC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Croatian L1</td>
<td>21.20%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English FL</td>
<td>13.90%</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
<td>82.60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to provide insight into the contribution of each outcome to the development of each ESD key competency, the results were analyzed by the total number of outcomes related to the development of an ESD key competency, regardless of the extent of the contribution (direct or partial contribution). The extent to which a single outcome is contributing to the development of the ESD key competencies was considered not to be relevant for this study, since the results presented in Table 1 showed that within the outcomes with contribution to ESDKC most of them directly contribute to ESDKC, and only a small percentage of the outcomes were assessed to partially contribute to the ESD key competencies. The results of the number of outcomes contributing to each ESD key competency are presented in Figure 2, separately for the subject Croatian as L1 and English as FL. Even though there was a slight difference in the number of investigated outcomes (53 for Croatian L1 and 67 for English FL), the results were highly comparable. In both curricula, the learning outcomes contribute the most to the development of the systems thinking competency (Croatian=31, English=28), whereas the least developed competencies were strategic competency (Croatian=0, English=1) and anticipatory competency (Croatian=1, English=1). The collaboration competency, critical thinking competency and self-awareness competency were assessed to be developing by the outcomes of both subjects. However, there were differences in the extent to which a certain subject develops any of these three competencies. Self-awareness competency was the second most developing competency by the outcomes of L1 classes (n=24), while at the same time, collaboration competency was the second most developing competency by the outcomes of FL classes (n=21). A considerable difference was also noticeable in the contribution of the outcomes to the development of critical thinking competence, i.e. L1 classes contribute more to its development (n=18) than FL classes (n=7).

Comparing the contribution level of Croatian as L1 and English as FL, some differences were visible. The differences between Croatian and English were probably influenced by language knowledge i.e. children enter primary education with a more established L1 language system than FL enabling them from the start a greater variety of communication activities (e.g. critical thinking activities). On the other hand, outcomes that boost collaborative competence were higher in number in English as FL, this might be a natural consequence of having intercultural communicative competence development embedded in the subject. Apart from these logical differences, the preliminary results showed that both mother tongue and foreign language education focus on the same competencies. Therefore, lack of contribution to anticipatory and strategic competencies was present in both curricula. Having in mind that ESD aims to instill an emancipatory mindset into learners in order to transform the
4. CONCLUSION

Education for sustainable development emerged as an attempt to tackle sustainability challenges present in the economic, environmental and socio-cultural spheres through education. The main driving force of this approach to education is to empower learners to make changes based on informed decisions in order to contribute to environmental integrity, economic validity and social justice for present and future generations (Agbedahin, 2018). In education, however, sustainability is usually associated with technical knowledge, leaving culture and language out of the focus which is unnatural taking into consideration the centrality of language in human activities, and ESD being also a process of social learning (Gregers Eriksen, 2013; Zygmunt, 2016).

This study set out with the aim of assessing the importance of subjects Croatian as mother tongue and English as foreign language in contributing to the development of ESD key competences. By analyzing the curricula of the two subjects at primary level education (Grade 1-4), the results indicate that language education contributes to the development of ESD competencies, in particular to system thinking, collaboration, self-awareness and critical thinking competencies. The results also reflect differences in learners’ knowledge and competencies required for each subject: Croatian L1 curriculum is more oriented to developing critical thinking, enabled by developed L1 language competencies, whereas English FL curriculum is more oriented to develop collaboration competency, which is required from language learner in order to appropriately participate in intercultural encounters. However, in both curricula there is a relatively large number of outcomes that cannot be directly related to ESD key competencies. Still, they could be also used to foster the competencies providing ESD pedagogical approaches and methods are applied. The study has shown that Croatian education system is in an intermediate stage of ESD implementation having given importance to some elements of ESD. However, only by including all competencies, and stakeholders, this approach can be fruitful.

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