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**Optimizing Language Teaching and Learning Materials:  
A Different Approach to Advanced Language Teaching  
and Learning**

**Cesty k optimalizaci výuky jazyků a výukových materiálů:  
Jiný přístup k pokročilé jazykové výuce a učení**

Disertační práce

Vedoucí práce - prof. PhDr. Hana Gládková, CSc.

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Jane Jovanov

## **Abstract**

The PhD thesis “Optimizing Language Teaching and Learning Materials: A Different Approach to Advanced Language Teaching and Learning” deals with the most recent advances in linguoculturology and pushes forward the idea of a new advanced level language-teaching material. The first chapter of the thesis serves as an overture to the importance of using linguoculturology in the creation of language-learning materials. It also puts forth the importance of language in the creation of the language persona, which is further explained in the following chapters. Chapter two presents the development stages of contemporary linguoculturology and the basic terminology used in the study of this linguistic study. Chapter number three explores the advances in foreign language learning, combining different methods and finally introducing the concept of polycontextuality in foreign language-learning, along with the basic theoretical structure the proposed e-textbook. The fourth chapter presents the e-textbook intended for foreign advanced level language-learning, along with descriptions on similar projects and textbooks that exist today. In conclusion, a topic example is presented with examples coming from the native language of the author (Macedonian) along with English translation. This topic example is presented in the spirit of the polycontextual and multimodal approach, presenting several points of view of one topic, which represents the core of the presented e-textbook for advanced foreign language-learning.

## **Keywords**

linguoculturology, linguaculture, worldview, language persona, background knowledge, language realia, authentic materials, textbook, language-learning, e-textbook

## **Abstrakt**

Disertační práce „Cesty k optimalizaci výuky jazyků a výukových materiálů: Jiný přístup k pokročilé jazykové výuce a učení“ se zabývá nejnovějšími pokroky v lingvulturologii a prosazuje myšlenku nového pokročilého jazykového vyučovacího materiálu. První kapitola práce slouží jako ouvertura k významu používání lingvulturologie při tvorbě jazykových učebních materiálů. Vyjadřuje také důležitost jazyka při tvorbě jazykové osobnosti, což je dále vysvětleno v následujících kapitolách. Druhá kapitola představuje vývojové etapy současné lingvulturologie a základní terminologii používanou při studiu této lingvistické studie. Třetí kapitola se zabývá pokrokem ve výuce cizích jazyků, kombinováním různých metod a konečně zavedením konceptu polykontextuality do výuky cizích jazyků, spolu se základní teoretickou strukturou navrhované elektronické učebnice. Čtvrtá kapitola představuje e-učebnici určenou pro cizí pokročilé jazykové vzdělávání spolu s popisy podobných projektů a učebnic, které dnes existují. V závěru je uveden vzor s příklady z rodného jazyka autora (makedonština) spolu s anglickým překladem. Tento příklad je prezentován v duchu polykontextového a multimodálního přístupu, který prezentuje několik pohledů na jedno téma, které představuje jádro prezentované e-učebnice pro pokročilé cizojazyčné učení.

## **Klíčová slova**

lingvulturologie, lingvultura, světonázor, jazyková osobnost, základní znalosti, jazyková realita, autentické materiály, učebnice, jazykové vzdělávání, e-učebnice

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Since man first began to teach language at the dawn of time, the question of language learning and its nature has been in the spotlight of linguists and language teachers. For decades, researchers have been trying to develop and test a variety of strategies to master a foreign language, which has resulted in numerous guides and texts on the topic. Such attempts aim at achieving a constructive perspective, which will, in turn, create an effective system to stimulate language-learning while also encouraging active participation in communication at the same time. Needless to say, this is an everyday topic in linguistic societies and universities, both of which try to approach this matter from various angles and perspectives.

Gradually, we have developed different language systems - phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary helped us to uncover some, but not all of the secrets of what it means to have a good command of a certain language. Our language abilities are not only associated with the correct use of grammar and other units of language but are also dependent on the ability to decipher meanings and context; every speaker has to select an additional set of language units, which would then contribute to the fulfillment of every single communicative task. Each new linguistic discovery and advancement in the theory of linguistics brings linguists closer to solving the mystery of language and its use. As time goes by, it becomes easier and easier to learn a foreign language – however, despite all technical achievements, numerous rules and schemes, foreign language learners, even those of an advanced level – still do not feel comfortable with expressing themselves in the ever-changing language environment. One can guess that this is due to the fact that learning a foreign language at an advanced level inevitably leads the speaker to its greatest frontier – the anthropocentric properties of language. In modern linguistics, the anthropocentric views and practices mark the growing interest in the problem of the interrelation between language and culture. The two global entities that determine and regulate the life of the individual.

Anthropocentrism in language is frequently found in the analysis of issues which reflect the specific use of language by individuals. Those specifics concern the perception of the world, the reflection of one's environment in language and one's consciousness, and the fixation of



those effects in language. This relation goes vice versa too – anthropocentrism in language is also concerned with the way language specifics reflect on one’s view of the world around them; one always uses culture and language as a filter for real life perception. Often, the following pages will face the reader with the notion that culture reflects on language and language reflects on culture. On many different levels, people who learn a language at an AL (advanced level) frequently notice that their aspirations for mastering its flawless grammar often end up producing a flawed intercultural communication.

Cultural studies and their research are conducted on the methodological grounds of the systematic method. However, before speaking of the systematic method, we should mention that culture is comprised of objective and subjective elements. It is of utmost importance to note that researchers who deal with culture apply the systematic approach only to objective cultural manifestations. It is only after identifying those manifestations that researchers can identify, classify and structure the subjective cultural manifestations. In other words, the objective forms possess an inherent observability, while the subjective forms have an inherent derivability. In the anthropocentric approach (and linguaculture as its constituent) both objective and subjective manifestations are studied, but the real “value” of this thesis is carried by the subjective manifestations. That being said, I would like to add that this thesis is carried out within the framework of linguoculturology, which is an interdisciplinary part of linguistics dedicated to the comprehensive study of language, consciousness and culture.

**The subject of this research paper** is the interaction between culture and language, and the way it reflects on the language system, and primarily on language-learning. In the following chapters I will explore the manner this interaction functions in real life and how that affects learning materials. Also, what can be done to implement culture and language in language classes, how background knowledge is built in the classroom; and last but not least, explore linguacultural concepts as units of mental and verbal representations of the cultural values of society. This never-ending continuous interaction between language and culture creates enormous challenges for authors of various language textbooks and learning materials. This thesis presents the mutual interaction of culture and language and represents a continuation of previous work and views on this topic from various authors, most of whom are presented in the referenced literature.

Linguoculturology is one of the most actively developing areas in contemporary (applied) linguistics, which is, in turn, conditioned and pushed by the development of the humanities and their continuous orientation towards greater interdisciplinarity.

Before pressing further, it is crucial to clarify several notions of what this thesis is about:

1. This thesis posits to present a completely new kind of learning material<sup>1</sup>;
2. The new learning material will be multimedia / electronic in nature;
3. This (electronic) learning material will embody a new structure and complexity, previously unseen in any other similar learning materials;
4. As this is a completely new kind of learning material, there are enormous requirements for the author to deliver sufficient theoretical description and examples;
5. Due to the nature of this work, this thesis (its ideas and proposed learning material) may very well end up as an idealistic proposal, which has no practical or commercial application in real life. Nevertheless, even though the author of these lines is not an economist, entrepreneur, nor a manager (who can practically organize the production and the sales of the learning material) – it is the author’s duty as a linguist, teacher, and a researcher to propose something that, in my view, can revolutionize the language learning process at an advanced level;
6. During the numerous debates with my colleagues at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University, I have received countless words of support and interest in the outcome of this project. At the same time, I have received a wealth of advice on what to add further to the text, in order to fulfill the requirements of modern textbooks and learning materials. For example, my colleagues recommended the inclusion of archaic texts, synonyms and antonyms, proverbs, idioms, multiple levels of texts, different viewpoints etc. Some of these recommendations proved to be helpful; but I would like to underline that even though their ideas were good and would only strengthen the theoretic viability of this thesis, it was practically impossible to implement every single piece of advice in the text. If I chose to do that, this thesis would grow and end up being several times bigger than its current size. So, in the name of clarity and brevity, I would like to inform the reader that this paper will only contain the **quintessential base** necessary for the theoretical and practical merit of this new concept for language learning material;

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<sup>1</sup> “*Learning material*” and “*textbook*” or “*electronic textbook*” are interchangeable terms in this text. Even though the idea of this thesis is to present a new kind of textbook for learning foreign languages, it will also serve as a linguacultural encyclopedia and a material for different adaptation courses for foreigners etc. When I started writing this thesis, the idea was to create a new kind of textbook for advanced language students; however, as the idea developed, it became evident that it will be something more than just a tool for students at language departments.

7. Quite a few people I talked to consider the idea impractical from many different aspects. They questioned its economic viability, manpower needed to create and sustain the textbook, objective sources of information etc. Explanations addressing these concerns will be found scattered throughout the text whenever the context allows it;

We begin our journey with the ideas of Wilhelm von Humboldt on language and its representation as ‘a spirit of the people’. The first chapter represents a view of how culture and language came to shape the world we live in, as well as an explanation of the theory that took this idea to the extreme by American relativists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf. Their names are attributed to the Theory of Language Relativity, with its basic premise that every nation is influenced by its language; language limits or shapes the way in which a particular nation views the world. From the point of view of the American relativists, language holds absolute power over how meaning is created, which determines the world around them. Language sets standards of thought and behavior, directs the formation of logical categories and concepts, permeates all aspects of social and individual life, determines the forms of culture, and leads one throughout life in much the same way in which modern car navigation systems do.

The further development of the idea of this interaction between culture and language is represented in works that have conflictive perspectives. The Hypothesis of linguistic relativity<sup>2</sup> produced ideas that were further developed into a Hypothesis of the language picture of the world<sup>3</sup>.

However, another theory came into existence that rejects the direct interaction between language and culture – the idea of *language universals*. Works that support this idea tend to

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<sup>2</sup> The hypothesis is most closely associated with the linguists Benjamin Lee Whorf and Edward Sapir, who proposed, in one form or another, that if different languages carve up reality in different ways, then it follows that speakers of different languages have different worldviews. Elements of this idea can be traced in the writings of philosophers (Wilhelm von Humboldt, Ludwig Wittgenstein), psychologists (William James), and anthropologists (Franz Boas). Major methodological breakthroughs were made by interdisciplinary teams... Extending the research of language and thought to the field of language learning and bilingualism is seen as a continuation of the linguistic relativity hypothesis (Athanasopoulos et al. 2016). Authors of this article also ask the following questions: If speakers of different languages exhibit differences in their cognitive and linguistic behavior, how do speakers of more than one language behave? Does learning a new language entail internalization of an alternative interpretation of experience, or does the first language continue to dominate the conceptual repertoire of second language users? These questions are, if not fully, at least partially answered in the following chapters.

<sup>3</sup> The set of knowledge gained in the course of development of the world and imprinted in a language form represents the so-called ‘the language intermediate world’, ‘language representation of the world’, ‘language model of the world’, ‘a language picture of the world’ (Kireeva 2017). The last term is mostly distributed in contemporary linguacultural research and is used in the text of this thesis.

view the language picture of the world and its national specifics as reduced to individual facts, instead of as an integral and unified system.

Many linguists, on the other hand, viewed the two opposing approaches as too extreme, and embarked on a new search to discover the subtle relationships between language and culture. It is now commonly accepted, in the field of contemporary linguistics, that the strong version of the Hypothesis of linguistic relativity and the idea of extreme universalism in language are too groundless, and even dangerous to be of use. These extreme views gradually gave way to more balanced ideas; a move that serves as a testament for the rejection of ambiguity in the interpretation of the relationship between language and culture – as language is the expression of culture, but also a tool that influences culture in return. This interpretation of the language/culture complexity led to the emergence of a new direction in linguistic research.

This new direction in linguistic research is represented by the linguacultural approach in the study of the language and cultural units. Its contents include language realities and the traditions of a nation; the mindset of people also falls within the scope of interests of linguaculture, as this mindset is manifested in language. Descriptions of linguistic realities and their structures are an inevitable property of linguaculture, since they are crucial to understanding what the language picture of the world really is, as well as what it represents. In this context, this thesis is adjacent to the line of works that deal with linguaculture and the analysis of linguistic components in culture. Its goal is to bring these complex ideas in the realm of language teaching, and in doing so propose a completely new fundament of how linguaculture can and should be implemented in language teaching. Thus, the **relevance** of this thesis is further justified by the lack of implementation of the linguacultural basis in language-teaching practices.

As I explained previously, Linguistics addressed the idea about the national specificity of the language picture of the world at different chronological stages. Due to this, the study of linguaculture is based on different methodological assumptions and involves various analytical procedures.

My decision to return to Wilhelm Humboldt's idea of language as the 'spirit of the people' is based on the recent achievements of several linguistic disciplines, such as: the communicative-functional approach, pragmalinguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, the subjective factor in language, and last but not least, semantic research. These

linguistic disciplines will enable us to maximize this research and deliver relevant conclusions that can be used in applied linguaculture. When doing linguacultural research, one must take into account the previous results that prove the mutual influence between language and culture. In addition, linguacultural research could be based on the idea of the organizational structure of the linguistic personality<sup>4</sup>. In fact, the approach from the perspective of the ‘linguistic personality’ is, compositionally, one of the foundations of this thesis. That is because it takes into account the latest developments in the field of linguistics, and especially in linguaculture.

Accordingly, the first chapter of this thesis focuses on the foundations of culture, its roots in language (and vice versa), as well as the root of modern ideologies in language, and it presents a view of the relationship between culture and language. This chapter also looks at concepts that should seem to be redundant when authoring a thesis on the study of foreign languages. However, the purpose of this chapter is to focus the attention of the reader on how the concepts of nation, identity, nationalism and so on affect language and culture (and the way this should be included in the foreign-language curriculum).

The second chapter deconstructs the meaning of linguaculture and highlights the correlation between language and culture. It indirectly introduces the ‘linguistic personality’ and its concept and structure, as well as why it plays a vital role in the creation of the language picture of the world. In addition, linguacultural research can be based on the organizational structure of the linguistic personality. This approach, in terms of language and personality structure, is compositionally suitable for this work; it takes into consideration the latest developments in the fields of linguistics and linguaculture.

The research presented in this paper will be based on the hypothesis that the nature of language-culture interaction is complex and ambiguous, resulting in the fact that this interaction covers all tiers of the language system and all language functions – which, in turn, leads to the heterogeneity of linguistic units that have a culturological component. Before we proceed, it is important to mention that **there is no dominant component in this interaction**, which would influence the second component. The nature of language-culture interaction is represented as a

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<sup>4</sup> During the research of what ‘linguistic personality’ represents, it came to my attention the numerous definitions of what ‘linguistic personality’ actually is, as it is also described by Khuranova (Хуранова 2017) in her article “*The Concept of ‘Linguistic Personality’ as a fact of interconnection and interdependence of language and identity*”. Nevertheless, I will continue with the concept of “linguistic personality”, originally initiated by Karaulov (1987), who posits it as an accomplished personality, expressed in the language and through the language, that develops its identity at three consecutive levels: 1) verbal and semantic (mastery of lexical, grammatical and phonetic language material); 2) cognitive or thesaurus-like (forming the world picture); 3) motivation and pragmatic (formation of the system of goals, motives and attitudes of the individual – the motivational level of his communicative needs) (Bogatyreova 2015).

feedback loop of mutual influence, as some kind of linguacultural complex where one phenomenon produces the other.

The third chapter introduces the theory of the new approach to foreign language learning at an advanced level and the fourth chapter reviews computer linguistics and the basic structure of the proposed electronic materials for advanced language learning.

The problem of selecting research methods is directly related to the fact that there are changes in the linguistic paradigm, which transitioned from being a descriptive to being an explanatory discipline. This, in turn, requires new tools for scientific analysis that would allow us to see how language units organize the communication process, which then correlate to linguistic units with the worldview of the linguistic personality, and thereby explain linguistic facts.

One thing that helps us detect and reveal the interaction between language and culture is the analysis of the language system in relation to the person who uses the language. In this case, we are dealing with the structure of any linguistic personality, which combines lexical, grammatical, cognitive, and pragmatic models of language description. The interaction between language and culture found at these levels is exteriorized because of the introduction of the concept of cultural marking, which is embodied as a specific form in culturological components.

**The aim of this dissertation is to develop a holistic, polytextual, polycontextual and a consistent approach to the description of linguacultural units in language, as well as to create a methodological apparatus that will organize these units in a fashion suitable for use in language-learning materials.** The proposed language-learning material is based on the concept of culturological components, which is understood as information that is culturally valuable, and which is contained within a linguistic unit. Achieving this goal requires addressing a number of tasks:

- Determine the terminological apparatus which will be used in this thesis;
- Explore a variety of approaches in the study of language and culture;
- Summarize the achievements in the field of linguoculturology and the study of national / ethnic specifics;
- Select a method of research that will adequately reflect the characteristics of the material and the subject of this research, while also enabling substantial penetration into the structure of language units that correspond to the purpose of this study;

- Develop a working hypothesis about the mechanism of interaction between language and culture and the implementation of this interaction in applied language teaching;
- Demonstrate the potential of linguacultural models of analysis and their use in language teaching;
- Analyze language materials in Macedonian;
- Support the selection of language materials;
- Conduct theoretical overview of the results and outline future prospects for any research of this kind.

Accordingly, the following theses are advanced:

- The object of linguacultural research is language, and the language represents the linguacultural code;
- The linguacultural code is complex: its two integral parts are language and culture, which are mutually conditioned;
- Cultural components boost the implementation of a linguacultural code;
- Cultural components are an indicator of cultural marking in language units, i.e. an indicator of how language functions as a linguacultural code;
- The linguistic personality is the prime bearer of the linguacultural code;
- The structure of the linguistic personality helps localize culturological components;
- Polycontextuality enables the widest implementation of the linguacultural code;

Choosing the methodological apparatus is particularly important as I consider the specific way culture and language are thought in foreign language-education. Most studies in the past have attempted to examine culture learning via surveys, inventories and interviews (Kearney 2008). In the course of this work and the proposed language material I will be using the **method of observation over the language material, discourse perspective**, as well as the **semantic method, contextual method, derivational analysis**, and the **descriptive method** based on the identification of similarities or differences in various linguacultural meanings in Macedonian language. The sheer versatility and diversity of this research inspired the usage of these methods. The method of observation over language materials makes it possible to track the changes and trends in language. The data and conclusions obtained by the application of this method are additionally supported by context analysis. Another major method in this thesis

is semantic analysis, as it casts light on the process of creating meaning in lexical units. I do not aim for a classroom-based induced material, but towards the selection of materials coming from real contextual situations in the places where they occur. In other words, this thesis adopts discourse perspectives (several for one situation, is applicable), and goes beyond the pre-established features of learning-materials adapted to the usual classroom discourse. Regarding the ethnographic method, our opinion is on par with Kearney's (2008), adding that the ethnographic method can be substituted by the contextual method. This means that the researcher can examine the interactional mechanisms and routines by which context is created only by making sense of the activity within a communicative situation. Kearney also adds that context is a constantly evolving construction which is only understandable by attending to situational features – the constant re-shaping of 'what is going on' that occurs as participants in communicative situations interact (Kearney 2008, 93).

**The goal of this thesis is to turn the linguacultural theory and constructive grammar into a prototype for the production of language-teaching material** (in Macedonian, as the author's native language; such learning materials demand a native language speaker, in order to best detect and transfer the meaning to a textbook for advanced learners). These language-teaching materials can serve as a basis for production of future electronic language textbooks/materials of this type – **in any language of choice**.

The source for these materials can be found in various cultural dictionaries, texts found in journals, fiction and non-fiction books, thesauruses, social media etc. It should be noted that the material is to be collected / acquired from third sources only. No author material will be provided, as the core of this work deals with **authentic materials and texts which contain authentic language**.

The scientific novelty of this thesis lies in the creation and implementation of a comprehensive linguacultural approach in creating textbooks/materials for advanced level language teaching, as well as defining linguacultural specifics of linguistic units, developing the concept of the organizational structure of the linguistic personality and creating linguacultural and analytical competence.

The practical significance of this work falls in line with linguoculturology and will not be confined only within the framework of this new approach in creating language textbooks. In the future, the results of this study will also help so-called compilers of applied grammars and textbooks to develop materials that will aid the subject in learning, and unconsciously reproduce



the linguacultural rules of a given language. The results will also help learners in becoming “immersed” in the cultural code of the designated language on the (almost) same level as a native speaker. Textbooks based on these approaches are primarily intended for language students, and especially those who study a foreign language at an advanced level (in other words, a language competency at the level of B2 is required, in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

In addition, the results of this linguacultural analysis should find practical application in creating fundamentally new lexicographical materials, such as dictionaries that will reflect data from linguacultural research.

The theoretical basis of this research can be found in the concepts developed in the following scientific areas:

- General linguistics, general cultural studies, anthropology, philosophy of language;
- Linguaculture and the theory of intercultural communication;
- Conceptual research in the field of linguaculture;
- Theory of the linguistic personality and language consciousness;
- Text linguistics, the theory of discourse and genre;
- The theory of precedent phenomena in communication.

The practical significance of this work is also associated with the urgent task of creating a **linguacultural minimum** as a source of forming communicative competence at an advanced level of language knowledge. In order to do this, it is necessary to define the point at which language and culture meet. This thesis aims to show that the existing components required to create the linguacultural minimum, such as speech etiquette, aphorisms, poems, stories, speech patterns etc. (which help us locate some of the influence culture has on language) do not cover the whole scope of the language <> culture influence. The interaction between language and culture stretches far wider and goes much deeper into the language system, as well as in the activities of human thinking and conceptualizing itself. The research related to the identification of cultural elements in the language system, and the allocation of these mechanisms (because of the interaction between language and culture) can serve a very important role. It can act as the linguistic foundation for solving methodological problems associated with the formation of communicative competence.

## *Introduction*

The emergence of interdisciplinarity in research serves as an indicator of the intensive developments of science. This may seem to be the standard today, but if we take even just a small chronological step backwards, we can see that science was much more conservative before. The development of science necessitates the ability to discover relationships between different branches in science. This is one of the most common definitions which creative researchers use in their favor. A chemist may test the interaction between different kinds of materials and discover a new one; a physician can compare different symptoms and discover a new kind of disease; a musician can put together two music genres that the mainstream deemed incompatible but still manage to produce a new music genre... The ability to harmonize related disciplines and find new common grounds between them is considered nothing short of progress in any developing branch of science.

From this perspective, it can undoubtedly be said that linguistics today is a flourishing science. However, it was not so long ago when new disciplines in linguistics were unknown, or even taboo. However, with the advent of the XX century, the situation in linguistics has changed drastically and has seen much improvement. Not ignored as before, the interdisciplinary approach gradually began to be perceived as an indicator of growth in research and as a marker of its relevance. But this special status of interdisciplinarity was well deserved: along with it a number of new disciplines that eventually won their right to hold a strong disciplinary status emerged as well. Some of these include psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, mythological linguistics, ethnopsycholinguistics, linguapoltology, linguoculturology and so on. None of these novelties can be dismissed away as being “just a phase” in science, but should instead be associated with a wider, global change of the dominant paradigm in linguistic research. This change was particularly active during the second half of the past century. During that time there was a clear abandonment of systemocentrism in anthropocentrism, which meant that linguistics was free to grow to a higher stage of understanding reality, making interdisciplinarity inevitable.

One of the most actively developing linguistic disciplines today is *linguoculturology*, a branch of linguistics that examines the interconnection of language and culture. Its first ray of light fell on linguistic ground during the 1970's and 1980's, when there was a methodological revolution in the humanities. Slowly, but surely, linguistics researchers turned their eyes to the cultural interpretation of historical, social and communicative processes.

One of the main challenges empirical disciplines face when they are dealing with the questions of culture (and language) is the dismal boundaries of their categories. When thinking about "culture", one tends to distinguish between concepts that are quite definite, concepts that claim objective meaning. But when asked to define or use this term in practice, a very vague area arises where boundaries can be willfully shifted, depending on the subject's standing point. This is the main reason why a significant portion of this thesis is dedicated to the meaning of culture, language and everything they influence.

The subject of research in this study is the mutual influence of language and culture, which produces different modes of communication and meaning. This direction towards systematizing the relationship between language and culture represents a continuation of all previous research endeavors and is a certain evolution of the views of this subject. Throughout the centuries, linguists have seen numerous theories rise and fall, failing actually to close the gap in our understanding of culture and language. Even fewer applied approaches tackled this problem. These updated linguadidactics and language teaching, thus synchronizing the theory with the practice.

The first phase of the development of a theory of a mutual relationship between language and culture is associated with the idea of Wilhelm von Humboldt on language as *'the spirit of a nation'*<sup>5</sup>. A statement can be viewed as a direct reflection of culture on language and vice versa. In turn, Humboldt's words inspired American linguists Edward Sapir, Benjamin Lee Whorf and Franz Boas. To those who still have not heard of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf – they are some of the major representatives of the second phase of anthropological

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<sup>5</sup> Wilhelm von Humboldt is the author of major linguistic and philosophic research and books, such as the unfinished "Über die Kawi-sprache auf der Insel Java" (1836-1959). This book is considered to be the first work where he introduces the concept of the "inner form of the language". He is considered to be the originator of various scientific trends in linguistics, such as comparative linguistics, ethnolinguistics, comparative grammar study and linguistic typology. His influence in Linguistics led to the creation of new, Humboldtian movement that combines Humboldt's linguistic and philosophical views (allegedly he also applies some of Kant's ideas on language). The central place in this movement is occupied by the understanding of the relationship between language and national mentality and the understanding that language does not represent a finished product, but it is a work in progress. Humboldt's work contains the link with today's linguoculturology: the spirit of the nation reflected and expressed in its own language through linguistic units.

research in linguistics. Their Hypothesis of linguistic relativity states that the essence of every nation is that it possesses a language which, in a way, lights a path of how the nation sees the world. According to the American linguists, each language possesses an absolute and universal power; therefore, it sets the standards for thought and behavior, directs information, influences the way people categorize the world around them, how they create concepts, and influences culture by accompanying every speaker on every single step.

The third phase begins with the idea of the relationship between culture and language, or, in other words, the exclusion of one and the other. The Hypothesis of language relativity was then developed even further, and from it, the Hypothesis of the Language Image of The World<sup>6</sup> formed. During the 1970's, Noam Chomsky dazzled everyone on the linguistic scene with his Universal Grammar<sup>7</sup>. His universality was introduced in a period of intense developments in linguistics, which succeeded in changing the paradigm of research. For example, linguistic and cultural specificity (determinism) were set aside until the beginning of the next phase in linguistics. This phase was marked by the denial of linguists to follow the extremes of different approaches towards a research of the interrelationship between language and culture.

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<sup>6</sup> The Language Image of The World represents a form of the conceptualization of the world characteristic for a given culture. The system of values, created within the culture, has its reflection in the language. Moreover, according to W. von Humboldt, each language reflects some definite worldview. Consequently, "to the extent perception and activities of a person depend on his views," person's attitude towards "objects" are completely defined by the language ... V. Malakhov comments the thesis in the following way: "Our reasoning and superstitions are determined by the language we think in. That means that, firstly, our thoughts—at predication level—are defined by the inner structures of the native language. Secondly, our reasoning— 'the experience of reasoning' is determined by 'the experience of the language'—by the history of the culture created in that language" ... Thus, for the native speaker, the mother language represents a form for the conceptualization of the world, characteristic for that given culture (Modebadze 2013).

<sup>7</sup> Noam Chomsky is the author of the Universal Grammar. According to Chomsky, acquiring language cannot be reduced to simply developing an inventory of responses to stimuli, because every sentence produces totally new combination of worlds. When we speak, we combine a finite number of elements—the words of our language—to create an infinite number of larger structures—sentences. In Chomsky's view, the reason that children so easily master the complex operations of language is that they have innate knowledge of certain principles that guide them in developing the grammar of their language. In other words, Chomsky's theory is that language learning is facilitated by a predisposition that our brains have for certain structures of language ... Universal grammar, then, consists of a set of unconscious constraints that let us decide whether a sentence is correctly formed. But according to Chomskyan theorists, the process by which, in any given language, certain sentences are perceived as correct while others are not, is universal and independent of meaning. Nevertheless, opposition to the Universal Grammar in the last couple of decades has been mounting. Since Chomsky first advanced these theories, however, evolutionary biologists have undermined them with the proposition that it may be only the brain's general abilities that are "pre-organized. Another approach that offers an alternative to Chomsky's universal grammar is generative semantics, developed by linguist George Lakoff of the University of California at Berkeley. In contrast to Chomsky, for whom syntax is independent of such things as meaning, context, knowledge, and memory, Lakoff shows that semantics, context, and other factors can come into play in the rules that govern syntax. In addition, metaphor, which earlier authors saw as a simple linguistic device, becomes for Lakoff a conceptual construct that is essential and central to the development of thought (Dubic).

Extreme views were abandoned during the 1970's, their place being overtaken by a new idea of a “middle ground”. The unilateral, extreme characterizations pertaining to the mutual relationship between language and culture were renounced, because language itself was seen as an instrument for expressing culture.

Novel viewpoints about the complex relationship between language and culture created new directions in the search for linguaculture. One of those new directions focuses on three sections: *language + linguistic personality + culture*, because the *relationship between language and culture can be adequately understood only in the context of the wider problem at hand, which may be conveniently named 'people and culture'* (Tarasov, 2000: 45). Speaking of *people and culture*, we are speaking of the linguacultural approach in the study of cultural units. The content of linguacultural research includes the study of language expression, the life of a nation, as well as the people and their traditions. The mentality of the people is a *psychological determinant of the behavior of millions; a kind of an invariant in sociocultural changes* (Воробьев 1997: 305), which is also in the focus of linguaculture, as manifested through language.

Besides mentality, *linguoculturology also includes the linguistic works dealing with "extra linguistic spheres", i.e. the cognitive, cultural and social explanations of facts in language* (Кибрик 1994: 128).

Therefore, it is necessary to reach out towards the extra-linguistic reality. This is conditioned by the fact that a full description of linguistic structures is impossible without addressing linguoculturology.

The goal of this research is to propose new ways of creating materials for the learning of foreign languages. The author's idea is conditioned by the research in the area of linguoculturology, whose field of research is broad, multidimensional and multimodal.

Considering that the direction of linguacultural research takes many forms, we should also include several different approaches from the area of linguoculturology within the objectives of this research. Here, I should note that the term *linguaculture* itself has various meanings and applications in different research projects and areas, depending on the object of research and its approach. One of these areas includes the idea of the *national language image of the world*, developed in a different manner during the past several centuries. During every single stage of development, linguacultural research has seen the introduction of different

methodologies and analytical procedures. Naturally, that fact creates only more space for multilateral conclusions.

Before the current stage of contemporary development of this idea could even be reached, there was Wilhelm von Humboldt and his idea of language as ‘a spirit of the people’. The advancement of his ideas in contemporary linguistics was enabled by developments in the communicative approach in language, as well as in pragmalinguistics, cognitive science and the studies of the subjective factor in language.

This broad front of linguistic research provides us with the opportunity for reaching broad conclusions. On the other hand, the contemporary approach toward problems in linguaculture is associated with the “semi-paradigmatic state” of contemporary linguistics, which is why so many terms and interpretations appear.

Accordingly, one of the problems we need to solve is to define the basic linguacultural keywords, along with the obvious results in the relationship between culture and language.

We can propose three prospective approaches to solving this task.

First, there is a need for a gradual display of the developments in the language system in order to demonstrate the connections between language and culture. Additionally, we can employ another approach – starting from the distinction of the three functions of language<sup>8</sup>:

1. Informative language function,
2. Expressive language function,
3. Directive language function.

Accordingly, we can distinguish between three formal devices of language. With this in mind, we find that linguacultural research can be conducted within the three linguistic paradigms in correspondence with the formal apparatuses of language: semantics, syntax and pragmatics. Moreover, linguacultural research can be based on the idea of the organizational structure of personality. Namely, from the standpoint of linguistic personality, this idea is compositionally one of the most important aspects of this work, because it takes the latest achievements in the fields of linguistics and linguaculture into account.

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<sup>8</sup> Without a doubt, identifying just these three basic functions is an oversimplification, but an awareness of these functions is a good introduction to the complexity of language. (Philosophy courses at <http://philosophy.lander.edu/index.html>)

Another approach that helps reveal the relationship between language and culture is by reviewing the system of language and the way it is used by people. In this case, we are dealing with the structure of the linguistic personality, which, in a way, combines the lexical, grammatical, cognitive and pragmatic models of language description.

The theoretical observations in this thesis will help us create new kinds of textbooks for teaching language at an advanced level, along with a couple of additional benefits this new learning material should deliver.

## ***1. On Culture***

### ***1.1. What Does “Culture” Mean? Why Is It Important?***

Can you name one of the greatest advantages humans have over animals? If I had to guess, I think most people would say it is the ability to teach and learn through interaction with others, but most importantly – to transmit knowledge to other generations and improve upon it.

While some animals can do particular things, they cannot transfer any newly learned abilities onto others – mainly due to their lack of language. And when it comes to the human race, language played a vital role in the "explosion" of human culture during the course of history. Only when a certain group agrees to combine several sounds to make them sound like ‘fire’ or ‘wood’, can they communicate messages to one another. Furthermore, as human language separates us from animals, writing, too, separates primitive cultures from civilizations.

Before writing was invented, humans transferred limited amounts of cultural information from one generation to another. Of course, those who had the ability to memorize a large number of cultural elements were considered "wise" and regarded as defenders and teachers of traditions, values and other cultural elements.

It is understandable that this has its own limitations - man has limited memory and every piece of cultural information has to be extremely simple in order for it to be transferred to others. However, the invention of writing changed everything. It allowed humanity to keep every single detail about the lives of everyday people, but not only that: values, traditions, norms, the use of tools and technology - everything has been put on paper or some other material, transferred, and in turn further reproduced by future generations. This allowed for culture to improve upon itself, for technology to develop and civilization, as a whole, to improve drastically.

When it comes to this chapter, an overwhelming number of thoughts come to one's mind. How to even begin to explain what *culture* is? Where to begin? What worldview and discipline should we address in order to give a simple answer? Are there any objectified points of view and definitions?

From a narrative point of view, culture (as taken in a wide ethnographic sense) consists of all the knowledge, art, beliefs, morals, laws, customs and other capabilities and habits which



are learned by every human being as a member of society<sup>9</sup>. In order to understand something, it is not always necessary to define it by any means. Definitions sometimes fail to clarify the misunderstandings, but we can try to analyze the connections between humans, culture and language, and then maybe things will become clearer.

Philosophers and thinkers from all ages and epochs have tried to define the meaning and purpose of culture, but just a few of them came close to understanding it. For some of them, culture comes as a “ray of light” in this universe. Others think that culture is a means for the self-perfection of human nature, a tool for the continuous enrichment of the human experience with material, intellectual and spiritual resources. In modern philosophy, many concepts of culture are represented by the ideas of Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Nietzsche and others. Psychoanalysts like Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung made an effort to explain culture through the prism of psychoanalysis. Of course, many other philosophers described the concept of *culture* in detail as well, and in a great number of books.

Rather than embark on a theoretical journey in order to provide a short overview of philosophers' thoughts on culture, the aim of this thesis is to deal with the more practical aspects of culture. Therefore, there is no need for a detailed consideration of the many philosophical definitions of culture.

The term *culture* once used to mean the literal cultivation of the land (as in ‘agriculture’), while at other times referred to any elitist group that possessed certain knowledge.

As time went on, this concept lost old meanings and gained new ones – today, it represents the variety of human behavior, as well as the totality of human activities in everyday life. Presently, we say that a certain man is "cultured" when he is adept at speaking foreign languages, is polite in dealing with others, acts politely to other people in the immediate society and is skilled in using the tools he comes in contact with... Very often culture is defined as the spiritual side of human activity, which tends primarily to include education, arts, music, and so on. We must add that sometimes the term "cultured" referred to special intellectual or artistic endeavors, or products we might nowadays call "high culture", as opposed to "popular culture"

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<sup>9</sup> Edward B. Taylor, *Primitive Culture* 1 (3d ed. 1889).

(Spencer-Oatey 2012: 2)<sup>10</sup>. Nevertheless, it was eventually used to refer to a quality possessed by all people in every part of the world.

Franz Boas went a step further from the universal viewpoint of evolutionists - he dismissed previous views of culture and presented a new one, stemming from his belief that every culture is unique. We should exercise caution, however, and point out that not every material or spiritual product created by man is covered by the concept of culture. For a certain product to become *culture* it should be adopted by most members of a given society (or a smaller number of people, a subculture); furthermore, this product has to materialize in their consciousness. This way, the cultural pattern is learned and can be transmitted to other people and future generations using the contemporary media available. Judging from this, each individual considers culture as a part of a social heritage, a tradition transmitted to them by their ancestors.

There is also the notion of *cultural blindness* used in the humanities. It refers to the predisposition to perceive everything that is happening in the world from the point of view and values adopted in one's own culture; the inability to understand or feel the worldview and opinions representative of other cultures or fail to make a link between certain events or people's relations (Reber 2001). One of the aims this thesis has is the creation of analytical competency, or the ability to identify and define problems; or, if used in a culturological context – the ability to find and identify relations inside and outside of a certain culture.

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<sup>10</sup> Spencer-Oatey, H., What is culture? A compilation of quotations. GlobalPAD Core Concepts. 2012.

## ***1.2 What is Culture Made of?***

Kroeber and Kluckhohn find that culture consists of explicit or implicit patterns of (and for) the behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and – especially – their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action (Kroeber & Kluckhohn 1952: 181).

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*In a publication originally published in 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963) collected **156 definitions** of culture [Piller 2011: 9].*

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In general, culture is associated with a particular society, nation or a social group. For example, people say that there is an Italian, Serbian, French, or an Argentinean culture; then, an urban and rural culture, and so on. This means that every society has a specific, distinct form of culture, system of values, customs and rules that are shared by most members of society. Before they go somewhere to eat, people often have to make a choice of what kind of restaurant would suit them most. We all give some preferences to particular cuisines – Italian, Mexican, Chinese, you name it; furthermore, these restaurants with their particular cuisines come with a prearranged interior to suit the culture. It is not by chance that we consider restaurants as part

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*Apte [1994: 2001], writing in the ten-volume Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics, summarized: 'Despite a century of efforts to define culture adequately, there was in the early 1990s no agreement among anthropologists regarding its nature.'*

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of some national culture. This national culture presents itself in the form of the dishes, glasses, tables, colors... along with the main object in restaurants – the food.

Edward Sapir would suggest that culture is the complexity of ways and beliefs that make up the fabric of our lives. For anthropologists, *culture has long stood for the way of life of a people, for the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes and material things* (Hall 1959: 43). I would like to add that culture can simply be described as a way of life, something that defines us as social beings in society. Now, does "a way of life" also involve a standardized way of doing things, which we have learned in early childhood? Of course, it does. And it is not just civilization that possesses culture - even "uncivilized" tribes have a culture that they teach and transmit to every new generation. By "teach culture", I do not mean that culture can be *taught* in the literal meaning of the word. It is the whole set of customs, attitudes, institutions, behavioral paradigms – everything that human beings learn from the moment they are born, regardless of whether they are savages or civilized people.

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*Most social scientists today view culture as consisting primarily of the symbolic, ideational, and intangible aspects of human societies. The essence of a culture is not its artifacts, tools, or other tangible cultural elements but how the members of the group interpret, use, and perceive them. It is the values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized societies; it is not material objects and other tangible aspects of human societies. People within a culture usually interpret the meaning of symbols, artifacts, and behaviors in the same or in similar ways.*

*[Banks, J.A., Banks, & McGee, C. A. 1989]*

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Some would say that culture is a recurring phenomenon, repeated and reproduced by the members of an organized society. If we go one step further, we can even add an explanation from an intellectual point of view and say that culture is the implementation of intellectual ability. In our 'humancentric' (anthropocentric) view, we are the only species on Earth that possess the intellectual ability to create symbols (mental and material) that are transferred to our offspring. *Any child, from the time it is born, without culture, until the time it is four or five,*

*absorbs what goes around him at a rate which is never equaled again in his lifetime* (Hall 1959: 106). Culture is an attempt to bring a common semantic foundation for the perception of the world. It gives people a sense of the world around them – but only to the extent that they are satisfied with that sense. Therefore, the use of culture is one’s preparation for the meaning of everything that surrounds humans. If a man can be thought to see and understand symbols in society – he can address the meaning beyond those symbols. However, this can confuse him as well. One can grasp the meanings of symbols and cultural contents without even being aware of the true reality of things.

Theories that place the emphasis on the symbolic objects of culture are dominated by psychological reductionism (Orlova 1994: 111). Additionally, some would argue that culture is the only thing that distinguishes humans from animals. Others, still, oppose this argument, arguing that some animals possess rudimentary skills which are transferred to their offspring. It could even be said that *culture* has a lot to do with ideas like that one. It is interesting that we speak of ‘ideas’, because, as we know, ideas are transferred through language. Would that mean that language is the primary requirement for culture and a product of culture<sup>11</sup>? If we acknowledge the fact that our complex ideas can be transferred to other humans using even more sophisticated language – then one could say that culture is a typically human phenomenon.

Culture exemplifies the features and knowledge of a particular group of people defined by language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts<sup>12</sup>. The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition goes a step further, describing culture as shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs and understandings that are learned by socialization. Thus, **culture can be seen as the growth of a group identity fostered by social patterns unique to the group**. The essential feature of every human being is that the environment in which they exist is created by themselves. People's experiences give us a reason to believe that they create not only the material world around them, but the world of human relationships as well, such as systems of social behavior, and various rules and principles that meet the basic needs of every man. The world around us is infinitely diverse, and the same

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<sup>11</sup> Russian linguist Hrolenko Aleksandr Timofeevich concurs with this idea in his book “Fundamentals of linguoculturology” (Rus. “Основы лингвокультурологии”) (2005) he adds [original citation in Russian]: “Язык — один из продуктов духовного творчества данного культурно-исторического коллектива — народа — стоит в одном ряду с письменностью, наукой, искусством, государством, правом, моралью, но при этом занимает особое положение, поскольку он одновременно составляет условие всех других культурных образований. У языка и истории народа, носителя этого языка, отношения сложные. Язык — не только зеркало истории народа, но и часть этой истории, одно из созданий народного творчества.” (2005; 14).

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html>

could be said about the relationships between people. It does not matter where people come from – Macedonia, Japan, Australia, Brazil or Norway – all of them live in a world that has its own rules and regulations, customs and traditions; and each of those finds expression through a particular way of thinking, language, religion, system of values, social institutions... Every person has a unique pattern and their own display of relationships in society. Thus, both individual and common patterns of relationships, along with the specific corresponding materials and spiritual products of human activity comprise the sphere of human culture. That is why culture, as a concept, is extremely diverse.

Hofstede, for example, would say that *culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another* (Hofstede 1994: 5). On the other hand Matsumoto would add that *it is a set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next* (Matsumoto 1996: 16). Others claim that culture represents the learned and shared human patterns or models for living; the day-to-day living patterns. These patterns and models pervade all aspects of human social interaction. Culture is mankind's primary adaptive mechanism (Damen 1987: 367)<sup>13</sup>.

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*Culture-level measures can  
best be used to explain  
culture-level variation;  
individual level measures  
can best be used to explain  
individual-level variations.*

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So many definitions, and yet we cannot dismiss even one of them! And how could we!? We still do not even know what constitutes culture. Some would say that *culture* is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language (R. Williams 1983: 83). An important delineation, however: one should always bear in mind the distinct difference between culture and reality, or how reality determines culture. That will reveal the scope of cultural

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<sup>13</sup> Damen, L. (1987). *Culture Learning: The Fifth Dimension on the Language Classroom*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

expression as the habitat for the behavioral code and way of life – as a certain kind of activity, and a system of symbols.

Culture has been defined in a number of ways, but one of the simplest definitions pegs it as the learned and shared behavior of a community of interacting human beings (Useem 1963: 169)<sup>14</sup>.

However, one of the most common misconceptions about culture is that every culture is homogenous. Of course, this assumption arises because it is easier for the human mind to simplify relations in its immediate surroundings by conceptualizing and categorizing everything it encounters. This misapprehension eliminates the possibility that there are internal contradictions within a certain culture and, instead, uniforms the behavior of every individual within a certain culture. As an example, it comes very easy to say that "Russians are prone to have dictatorial leaders", or "Macedonians are politically passive", "Serbians are nationalists", "Italians are too irresponsible", "the French enjoy life too much" and so on. Generalizations like these eliminate individual action. Additionally, another misconception is that every culture is uniformly distributed among the members of a group. This is another oversimplification which ignores any possibility of individualism between members of a certain culture, as well as any deviations from it. Not only that, but such misconceptions ignore the possibility that one can possess artifacts of several cultures. The root of this misconception stems from the favoring of what we can call a tribal culture, ethnic culture, or a national culture, over cultures that are connected, as we shall see, to very different sorts of groups, structures, or institutions (Spencer-Oatey 2012: 17)<sup>15</sup>.

If we are to explain, evaluate or compare one culture with another, it is recommended that we take the average values a nation has – things like religious background, the wealth of a nation, minorities that live within a nation etc. But when it comes to explaining and comparing the differences of an individual, we should employ an individual-level analysis.

Let us say that that we want to measure the productivity of a certain individual in a certain culture. First of all, we will have to take into consideration the values in the national culture, or, in other words – consider the average values in a particular culture. Then we can

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<sup>14</sup> Useem, J., & Useem, R. (1963). *Human Organizations*, 22(3)

<sup>15</sup> Spencer-Oatey, H. (2012) What is culture? A compilation of quotations. GlobalPAD Core Concepts. Available at GlobalPAD Open House <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/globalpadintercultural>

determine whether the individual is highly productive, or goes below the nation's average level of productivity.

Due to the versatility of the concept of *culture* itself, every definition that I have considered so far reflects different aspects of the concept. All definitions are important, because they are related to the development of culture as one of the main objects, and concepts of this thesis. Therefore, embracing a larger number of viewpoints in this research will enable us to better define the specifics and the definitions of culture's conceptual field.



### ***1.3 What Role Culture Plays in The World?***

Culture signifies itself through the materialization of the activity of every single human being. Those activities vary in different cultures and across different societies. Every human being employs its own, subjective, activities within a culture during its development from the moment it is born. Therefore, the human being, the individual, is the subject, creator and carrier of culture. That is why culture studies take a different approach than socio-philosophical studies. All cultural heritages can be seen as a synthesis of the material and non-material culture. Non-material culture contains the language used by the people, their ideas, habits, customs, and beliefs. On the other hand, material culture consists of all the man-made objects such as buildings, automobiles, pictures and other physical products that are used by people. Comparing both types of culture, we come to the conclusion that material culture has emerged as a result of non-material culture. For example, the football ball is a part of a certain sport's culture throughout most of the world. If, for some reason, football ceases to exist, the football ball will just be another kind of ball. It has been shown that even after major cataclysms, people always rebuild their material life the way it used to be, because that knowledge is already fixated in their minds or on different information mediums.

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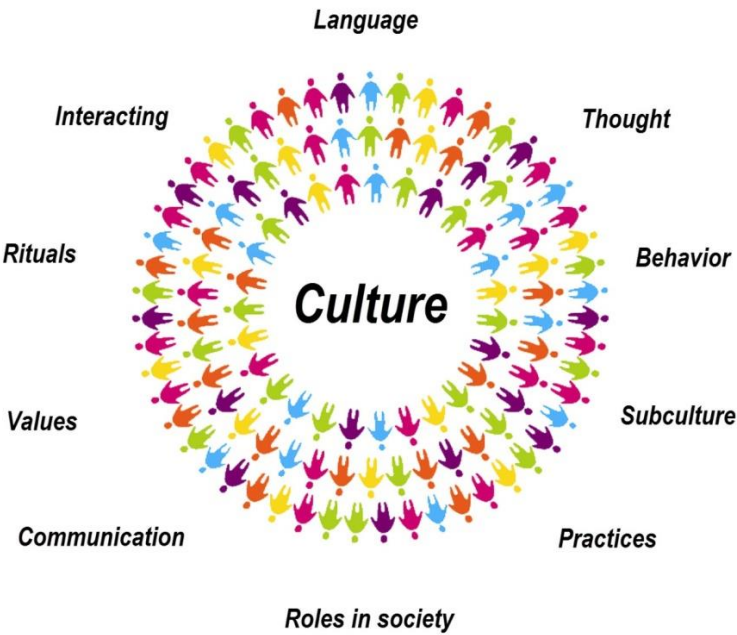
*It is commonly accepted that language is a part of culture, and that it plays a very important role in it. Some social scientists consider that without language, culture would not be possible. Language simultaneously reflects culture and is influenced and shaped by it. In the broadest sense, it is also a symbolic representation of a people, since it comprises their historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as their approach to life and their ways of living and thinking.*

*(Jiang, W.)*

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Researchers who employ cultural methods bring the study of culture to a socio-psychological level. In other words – they work with the national character of a nation, the people's mentality, such as their way of thinking, their way of looking at the world and how their specific morality is being manifested. Unlike the philosophical approaches in previous

centuries, contemporary researchers in cultural studies can use every human as a measurement value, because humans, as subjects, create the cultural identity of a particular group through traditions, customs and language. Therefore, there are almost infinite cultural and linguistic ties that cover the vast area where culture itself is manifested. As we will mention numerous times in this text - **Culture is Language and Language is Culture**. That is why the study of linguistic and cultural ties<sup>16</sup> and their correlations bring our attention to the linguistic components of culture. Using this approach, an opportunity better to explain the specifics of the culture-language machine that drives the world presents itself.



**Figure 1: What constitutes culture?**

We would oversimplify the meaning of culture if we were to define it just as a set of customs, moral standards and daily traditions. Culture turns out to be much more than just some organized system of behavior that dictates our daily routines. The anthropologist E. Adamson Hoebel describes culture as *an integrated system of learned behavior patterns which are*

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<sup>16</sup> The study of culture in philology was initially associated with the orientation towards studying the past of one or another group of people, which eventually produced ethnolinguistic results. However, with the emergence of synchronic linguacultural observations began the country-specific studies (or the study of purely external differences in the life, such as the behavior and communication of the representatives of distinct language communities). Country-specific studies, in turn, became the stepping stone for linguaculture and intercultural communication, which seek to reveal the mental specifics as objectified in communication, with the goal of preventing mutual misunderstandings between representatives of different cultural and language groups.

*characteristic of the members of a society and which are not the result of biological inheritance.*

This definition tells us three important, interrelated things about our subject:

- 1) Culture is holistic;
- 2) Culture is learned; and
- 3) Culture is social.

In short, it involves people – the manner in which they think (‘how’), the contents of their thoughts (‘what’), and finally, the ways in which they combine their thoughts into an integrated system with an overarching narrative, maintained and transmitted by various techniques<sup>17</sup>. E. Hoebel also defined the *cultural element* as the smallest unit of culture. *Cultural elements* can be found anywhere – they are such things as a desk, a pencil, the chimney, doors... Of course, these are cultural elements of a material nature; there are cultural elements of a non-material nature as well, such as the way people kiss, hug, shake their hands, smoke and numerous other gestures, ideas and behaviors. Every single cultural element of both the material and non-material culture creates a coherent whole. What is more – every single cultural element can be a part of numerous other cultures, coming from different times (chronologically) or different societies (spatially).

Every society has a certain set of cultural models that are accepted by (almost) all members of the society. This set is often called the *dominant culture*. In order for a person to be considered “normal” in a given culture, he has to accept the vast majority of values and practices that dictate behavior. Furthermore, there are groups of people in a society that do not share the values that others do. This can be the result of: 1) people who do not agree with the contemporary practices and values of a society, or 2) immigrants who do not wish to integrate or have problems adapting to the society they have chosen to live in. Difficulties with accepting language and the inner culture every language consists of will be the matter of discussion in another chapter.

Other reasons for developing resistance towards the dominant values and practices of a society can be due to differing financial levels of distribution of the nation's wealth. Poverty is known to increase dissatisfaction with the whole system of values, which, in turn, can create strong waves of anger that in time may grow into a movement seeking to change the established system of values; or alternatively, can result in the creation of a new subculture with a completely different set of rules.

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<sup>17</sup> <http://thestyle1972.tumblr.com/post/58143335240/how-to-transform-a-culture>

Age is another factor that plays a role into developing subgroups – such as the youth culture. The young often have their own ideas about the world and their own set of values, which frequently collide with the values that adults share. But, as E. Hoebel wrote, culture can be learned, which means that as young people become adults, they learn new patterns that are *normal* for the majority in society.

Subcultures are extremely important in every society, especially because there is not only one general type of culture, but a wide range of interacting subcultures that in time change the mainstream culture in society. Everyone of us is part of a certain subculture, which is a part of a general culture. Musicians, politicians, artists, writers, workers, students, military personnel – everyone is a part of a particular subculture and exercises a particular lifestyle. These subcultures are not only different from the dominant model of culture, but also challenge its values and even change it as time goes by.

Culture plays a very controversial role in the life of every individual. As it is known, this phenomenon secures and transfers patterns of behavior to next generations. Culture is the main thing that distinguishes humans from animals, and it also creates a spiritual world that unifies people. Nevertheless, while it can unify people, unfortunately, culture can also act as divider of people and nations. This leads us to “ethnocentrism”, an idea often found in the cultural lexicon. It is the belief that every individual or group judge the world through their own eyes, i.e. their own perceptions and view of the world; or, as the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary would describe it: [ethnocentrism is] *an idea that your own group or culture is better or more important than others*. Urban Dictionary, on the other hand, puts it this way: *Ethnocentrism is the attitude and/or ideology concerning the relationship between an individual's own group and other groups. Ethnocentrism occurs when negative value judgments are made about others based on the differences between one's own culture and a*

*foreign culture. Ethnocentrism occurs when an individual considers their culture/nation to be absolutely superior to other nations or cultures.*

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*Ethnocentrism is the belief of superiority is one's personal ethnic group, but it can also develop from racial or religious differences.*

*Ethnocentric individuals believe that they are better than other individuals for reasons based solely on their heritage.*

*Clearly, this practice is related to problems of both racism and prejudice.*

*(www.yourdictionary.com)*

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In fact, ethnocentrism turns one's own culture into a standard, and then that standard is used to measure and judge all other cultures<sup>18</sup>. Those judgments can be good or bad, true or false – but one thing is certain: they are all in relation to one's culture. Ethnocentrism appears in all sorts of societies, regardless of whether they are advanced or backward<sup>19</sup> – every single society has a sense of superiority over other societies and cultures. For example, "backward" cultures often think that the supposed advanced and rich societies lack qualities that they possess, and vice versa. So, is ethnocentrism good or bad? Posing that question illuminates a certain conclusion: we cannot answer that question without bias. And while ethnocentrism can play a major beneficial role in times of crisis (by increasing the homogeneity and loyalty of a group, thereby better preparing it for certain kinds of actions), it can also be the reason for the emergence of nationalism. Of course, there is a place for a "middle ground", a place where ethnocentrism can take more tolerant forms. All major cultures in the world have experienced times of intense and low manifestations of ethnocentrism, but I will not be spending time on the historical perspective since it is not the goal of this thesis.

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<sup>18</sup> I have already mentioned the idea of *cultural blindness*, or the predisposition to perceive everything that is happening in the world from the point of view and values adopted in one's own culture; or, the inability to understand, or feel the worldview and opinions representative of other cultures, or to make a link between certain events or people's relations. Even though *cultural blindness* and *ethnocentrism* can be mutually interchangeable, I find more than just a mere semantic difference in them. *Cultural blindness* can be benign and it often lacks the aggressive standpoint of ethnocentrism, while the latter employs subjective and irrational superiority claims over all other cultures.

<sup>19</sup> Even making the distinction between *advanced* and *backward* societies can be seen as controversial, but I primarily base those distinctions on the basis of technological connotations.

It is also worth mentioning that certain periods of intense manifestations of ethnocentrism have brought many cultures in a position of status-quo. Times, in which members of a culture think they have the best culture in the world, are also times of a low point for debates and ideas that argue for change and advancement within that culture. History offers us numerous examples, but since our historical experience has made these self-evident and self-explanatory they will not be included in the text.

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*Cultural relativism is the principle  
of regarding the beliefs, values,  
and practices of a culture from  
the viewpoint of that culture itself.  
(www.chegg.com)*

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Opposite of ethnocentrism is the idea of cultural relativism. In ethnocentric societies, the members of the culture cannot accept values and traditions of other cultures as "normal"; this makes it very difficult to come to a mutual understanding and cooperation with outsiders. However, there is an approach which can facilitate this, and make the relations with other cultures far more tolerant and productive – that approach is "cultural relativism". It employs the view that all values, rituals and habits should be understood and analyzed from the light of the other person's culture. Every cultural element should relate to the characteristics of the culture it comes from.

Even though I have a bias in favor of cultural relativism, I feel that I must underline that the most rational approach regarding this matter is a combination of features from both ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. One should be proud of one's own culture but should also keep an open mind toward other cultures and try to be analytical when speaking about, thinking about or judging various other cultures.

## ***1.4. Language and Culture***

### ***When Did It All Start?***

For the sake of science, linguistics and the point I want to make in this chapter, I am inviting you to construct a fantasy world in your minds. Create a world that has the people of your choosing, no matter the number – thousands, millions, billions... Now that you have imagined such a world, I would like you to also imagine that none of those millions or billions of people use language. Just imagine that language does not exist, nor has ever existed. Surely, at this point, things become a little complicated in your newly created fantasy world. Now ask yourself a question – what does that imaginary world look like without a language?

I, too, have tried to imagine such a world, and these are my first thoughts (which turn out to be mostly questions): How do so many people exist in the first place? Seeing that, without language, even the most basic relationship between two people in love cannot exist in the way we know it? My next question was, what would be the level of technological development in this world devoid of language? How is knowledge transferred? Furthermore, do people from separate continents have some kind of communication or contact, at all? Where is all the literature? How do they grow food? What does music look like?

Questions like these can go on forever.

Now let us observe some basic models of life without language – no communication between people (or even if some form of non-verbal communication exists, it will be crude and not effective). There is not a way to explain deep emotions and feelings to others; no individual could be in contact with someone on the other side of the globe; books would not exist; written language would not exist; we would not know what Nikola Tesla, Albert Einstein or Friedrich Nietzsche thought of the world around them...

Then, the main question arises – would civilization as we know it even exist?

There are multitudes of definitions on the meaning of *civilization*, and in order to clarify, or at least arrive at an approximate meaning of the term, we would like to add several definitions of what "civilization" is, at least according to dictionaries:

- *An advanced state of human society, in which a high level of culture, science, industry, and government has been reached*<sup>20</sup>;

- *Any type of culture, society, etc., of a specific place, time, or group (Greek civilization)*<sup>21</sup>;

- *The act or process of civilizing, as by bringing out of a savage, uneducated, or unrefined state, or of being civilized*<sup>22</sup>;

- *Cultural refinement; refinement of thought and cultural appreciation*<sup>23</sup>;

- *Modern comforts and conveniences, as made possible by science and technology*<sup>24</sup>;

- *A word that simply means 'living in cities' (Standage 2005:25)*<sup>25</sup>;

- *Civilizations are intelligible fields of historical study..., which have greater extension, in both space and time, than national states or city or city-states, or any other political communities. (Toynbee 1935, I: 44-45)*<sup>26</sup>;

- *Civilization is fundamentally a cultural infrastructure of information and knowledge that serves survival and continuity...In ordinary cultures, the passing of information and knowledge may depend upon imitation or oral communication; in civilizations, this cultural memory, etched into clay or drawn into papyrus, takes on a life of its own. (Bosworth, 2003:1-2)*<sup>27</sup>

At this point, I cannot help myself but remark that one can be astonished by the abundance of definitions found in dictionaries. There are still hundreds of definitions describing what this term means; but in order to save space and time, as well as not to veer off topic, we will just have to work with the listed ones.

Please ask yourselves again – when have you used the word *civilization* in a sentence and in what context? If I can hazard a guess, I would say that most people find themselves using the word in the following sentence: "Finally back to civilization!" or "There is no civilization

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<sup>20</sup> Dictionary.com

<sup>21</sup> Dictionary.com

<sup>22</sup> Dictionary.com

<sup>23</sup> Dictionary.com

<sup>24</sup> Dictionary.com

<sup>25</sup> Standage, T. (2005). *A History of the World in 6 Glasses*. Walker & Company

<sup>26</sup> Toynbee, A. (1935). *A Study of History*, 2d ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. I: 44-45

<sup>27</sup> Bosworth, A. (2003). "The Genetics of Civilization: An Empirical Classification of Civilizations Based on Writing Systems," *Comparative Civilizations Review*, 49, 9



here!” meaning that technological development or a certain high-end technology is a prerequisite for a civilization to exist. I cannot overstate my position that a statement like that is totally correct. But we will be back to that in a moment.

The term *civilization* has been used many times in many different contexts. And with a good reason – there is still no generally acknowledged consensus of what *civilization* actually is. Despite the fact that the term is regularly alluded to society overall, it is also used as a synonym for "culture". Some even say that *the most advanced state of a culture at any given time is "civilization"*. Maybe... One cannot fully disagree with this definition.

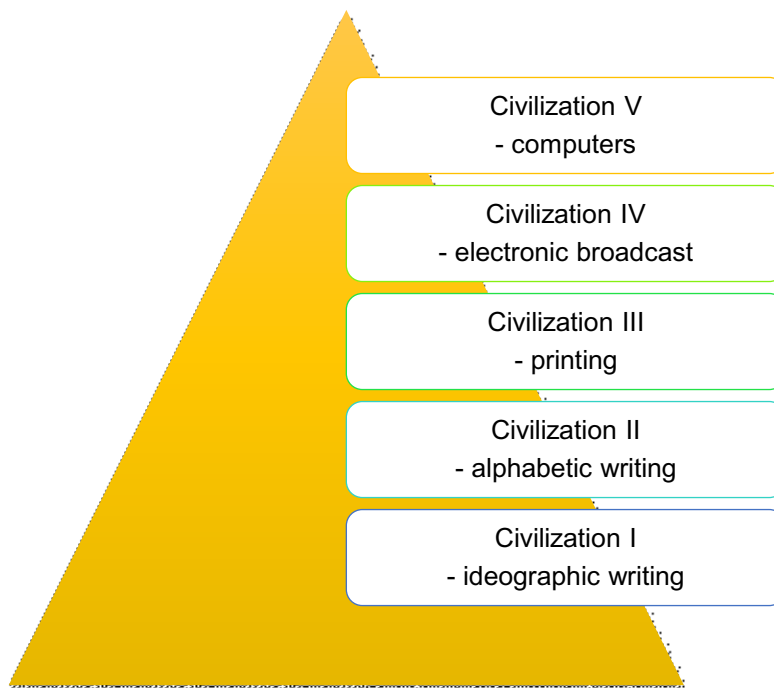
Let us take a closer look at the last definition from Andrew Bosworth: "... *the passing of information and knowledge may depend upon imitation or oral communication; in civilizations, this cultural memory, etched into clay or drawn into papyrus, takes on a life of its own.*" In my opinion, this definition is the closest one to my personal ideal of what *civilization* actually is. Let us not forget history class – the first civilization in the world was Mesopotamia. According to historians, the Mesopotamian civilization first emerged around 3.300 BC. That being said, it is natural that a big "Why Mesopotamia?" question will start blinking in your minds. As the records show, Mesopotamia was the place where people first started to keep records (albeit these were mostly records about basic things, like the amount of food, wood etc.). Early Mesopotamians did this by using sticks, but latter Mesopotamians invented the world's first writing system. By doing this, they were able to record data that are more complex and to pass it on to the next generation. This way they learned to do things better – to create better tools, use new materials, use different kinds of metals etc. What I would like to say and I think most the people would agree with it, is that **the basic requirement in order for a culture to be called *civilization*<sup>28</sup> is the placing of words on some kind of material, so that the next generation can learn from previous experience and improve upon it.** This is what Andrew Bosworth meant when he said the "*passing of information ... etched into clay or drawn into papyrus*".

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<sup>28</sup> “After the end of the last Ice Age, around 12.000 years ago, the Middle East witnessed a series of startling transformations that were unprecedented in human history and have shaped its course down to the present day. By 8000 B.C. the world’s first substantial and permanent settlements had been established there, accompanied by the earliest domestication of cereal crops and herd animals. Over successive millennia farming spread to neighboring regions, including the Mediterranean and northern Europe. But in the Middle East itself, further developments unfolded that would remain alien to most of Europe for many thousands of years. By 4000 B.C. cities of great size and complexity had appeared along the rivers of the Tigris and Euphrates, in what is today Iraq. The invention of the earliest known system of writing followed in that region (referred to by historians as ancient Mesopotamia) around 3300 B.C., echoed to the west along the Egyptian Nile, where a distinct group of scripts emerged at much the same time” (Wengrow 2010, Preface)

However, although it may sound reasonable and makes perfect sense, Bosworth's definition does not show why we use *civilization* in other contexts. It can simply be that we "upgrade" the meaning of the term as society develops. On the other hand, William McGaughey explains it this way: *[Civilization]... human community — a society — located in a particular place and time with government and social order, or is it a more abstract cultural configuration that describes the state of society at particular times in history? A civilization is a type of human community or society that has achieved a certain level of culture. It is contrasted with primitive communities lacking this culture. The culture must be comparatively advanced or developed. It would include large-scale political organization and sophisticated expression in a medium such as writing. The term advanced here implies (perhaps wrongly) that one culture is superior to others. Furthermore, he emphasizes the role of communication in cultural advancement as follows (McGaughey 2000):*<sup>29</sup>

#### Levels of Civilization according to William McGaughey



What becomes apparent from looking at this pyramid is that William McGaughey puts an emphasis on the cultural aspects of civilization. He is not wrong in this, because the medium

<sup>29</sup> McGaughey, W. (2000). *Five Epochs of Civilization*. Minneapolis, MN: Thistlerose Publications.  
Melko, M. (1969). *The Nature of Civilizations*. Boston, MA: Porter Sargent Publisher

of communication does indeed create different kinds of public spaces where intelligible messages can be expressed.

Along with the development of the means of communication, culture also develops. Let us go back again to the imaginary world without language – such a world would have had a very short-lived, primitive culture. A world like that would not be able to transcend itself to a new state of being. Everything would feel like a constant loophole because every new generation would have to invent the same things over and over again. So, does writing, or in other words, passing down of experience and information through written and oral language improve culture and society? Most definitely, yes it does. **Language (oral and written) mediates cultural heritage.** It is exactly with its help that we create a better future generation, which in turn transfers its experience (along with the experience acquired previously) to the next generation, and so on.

Even though it may sound naive at this point, the question about the connection between culture and language is brought up and reevaluated in linguistic circles repeatedly.

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*language (flesh) + culture (blood) = living organism*  
*(Jiang, W.)*

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In several linguistic schools of thought, culture has always been seen as something intimately linked with language. Take, for instance, the scholars operating in the Prague school of linguistics, or those inside the Firthian-Hallidayan functional systemic of British Contextualism, who described and explained language primarily as a social phenomenon; a phenomenon naturally and inextricably intertwined with culture. In these two, as well as other socio-linguistically and contextually oriented approaches, language is viewed as embedded in culture in such a way that the meaning of any linguistic item can only be properly understood with reference to the cultural context enveloping it.<sup>30</sup>

There are other views as well. The National Center for Cultural Competence defines culture as an *integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications,*

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<sup>30</sup>Julian House in *Intercultural language use and language learning*. 1. ed., 2nd print. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer.

*languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations* (Goode, Sockalingam, Brown & Jones, 2000). This means that language is not only a part of how we define culture – it also reflects culture. Thus, the culture associated with a certain language cannot be learned in a few brief lessons about celebrations, folk songs, or costumes from the area in which the language is spoken. Culture is a much broader concept that is inherently tied to many of the linguistic concepts taught in second language classes.<sup>31</sup>

In order to spare myself and others from the description of the "intimacy" between language and culture, I would like to add that this thesis is based on the axiom that language is culture and culture is language. This means that I consider the question about the reflection of culture on language and vice versa to be already answered, and answered clearly. I used the previous several pages as a means to provide the reader with a better picture of the idea that advanced cultures depend on the developments of language and writing.

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<sup>31</sup> It is worth mentioning that human consciousness plays the role of an intermediary between culture and language. The study of the interaction between language and culture would certainly be incomplete without this binding element. Cultural information enters the consciousness; it is then filtered, processed and systematized. Consciousness is also responsible for the selection of language tools that express information in certain specific communicative situations in order to achieve communication goals.

### ***1.5 Is it “National” or Just “Language” Identity?***

What is “nation” and “national identity”? What creates national identity? Do we choose national identity, or it chooses us? How are language and national identity related?

If we pose these questions to a couple of people and ask their opinion, we can be sure that they will produce answers that reflect the state of socio-political processes in a certain society. It is symptomatic that these answers will almost never match; that is because they also reflect the personal view and priorities in every individual. Moreover, there are claims that national identity is a permanent category, something that never changes, but on the other hand there is also the opposing view that conscious assimilation into another’s community is sufficient to change one’s identity.

We can certainly claim that ‘nation’, ‘identity’, and ‘ethnic group’ are one of those broad concepts that cannot be explained precisely but should rather be taken for granted. We should also bear in mind, that very few researchers are able to give a straight answer to the question of ‘What is identity?’. Be as it may, the quality of this thesis is not necessarily related to the ability of the author to interpret the meaning of the used terms, but to create a model for the hypothesis at hand. On the other side, this terminology should be taken for granted due to the vast literature on the question of identity, nation, ethnic groups etc. As I am not really a sociologist nor a historian, but a linguist, this chapter will be rather short. That way I will spare the readers from some extensive explanations of what exactly these terms mean and leave the citing of relevant authors who deal with this matter more profoundly for another time.

Instead, this chapter will tap into the questions of identity, nation and language from a contemporary point of view, and will try to provide an alternative explanation of how national identity emerged, as well as its connection to language and what kind of forces drive them. As we go along, we will be deconstructing the meaning of this terminology as we will continue to encounter it even more frequently in various social sciences and contexts, but also in order to clarify the reasons behind the different answers to the above-mentioned questions. Furthermore, I will also try my best to provide an alternative explanation of the origin of national and linguistic identity; and finally, we will try to place a rational model framework around the term “national” and explain its relation to language.

In order to clarify these objectives, it is necessary to begin with the deconstruction of what the phrase 'national identity' means, at least according to experts in this field, even at the price of taking an exotic detour and a daring approach to complete my goal. Due to the complexity of this subject and the unavailability to prove the development of language many thousands of years ago, I will start modelling theories and facts that support my hypothesis.

### ***1.5.1 Defining ‘Nation’ and ‘National’***

*The word 'nation'*<sup>32</sup> *is used in most books since the beginning of human history, since human beings have always been organized in groups* (Anderson 1993, 77). Nonetheless, the word 'nation' has taken, across the centuries, various meanings. The word derives from the Latin (“natio”), meaning “birth” and was referred to individuals who have a common origin. But let us err on the side of caution and clarify the meaning of this Latin concept. ‘Natio’ in Roman times was not used for nations in the contemporary sense of the word, but, its meaning was rather associated with small communities. **When it comes to the Roman Empire, it was not ‘nations’ that were the discriminating factor, but language**<sup>33</sup>. Hence, the notion of *Nation* during Roman times was not linked to the concept of state in any way. Only after the peace of Westphalia, when the nation-state came into being, did the link between the term of *nation* and *state* become forged.

Many different definitions of what ‘nation’ and ‘national’ exist in a wealth of literature coming from all scientific fields. Let us introduce ourselves to some of them.

The Global Policy Forum<sup>34</sup> defines “nation” as “a large group of people with strong bonds of identity – an "imagined community," or, something akin to a tribe on a grand scale. Nations seem so compelling, so ‘real’ and so much a part of the political and cultural landscape, that people think they have lasted forever. The reality is something else, however. Nations come into being and dissolve all the time depending on the changing historical circumstances, which sometimes happens over a relatively short period of time, like in the cases of Czechoslovakia

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<sup>32</sup> “More recent research into nationalism rightly emphasizes that the ‘nation’ was a draft, an artefact which was based on the will for collective action and commonality. Out of this came emphatic national self-discovery in the form of a common national history, language, and culture, ‘as well as the need for demarcation ... A more compelling concept of the nation can be seen to have developed out of an oscillation between two poles: national self-definition, on the one hand, and the image and idea of the enemy, on the other ... This self-definition comes from the idea of being the ‘chosen people’: every nation believed that it embodied the greatest attributes of ‘humanity’, values which it was its duty to protect” (Baycroft & Hewitson 2006; 18/19)

<sup>33</sup> “In empires consisting of different nationalities, the language question always has played a great part. The ruling people generally considers its own language as far superior to that of the other nationalities and very often is intolerant toward other languages, even if these languages are not those of savages, not yet fixed in literature, but are languages which have been fixed in literature long ago connected with a high civilization” (A. Kampmeier [1921] in his article introduction on the Roman tolerance toward the Greek language).

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.globalpolicy.org/nations-a-states/what-is-a-nation.html>

and Yugoslavia for example. This seems to support the claim that “national identity is typically based on shared culture, religion, history, language or ethnicity. “

*The Reference Dictionary*<sup>35</sup> provides us with a simpler definition: “a nation is a large population that shares the same culture “, then proceeds to add clarification on the differences between “state” and “nation”: “Nations have a population that shares the same language, traditions and religion. This is not necessarily true of states. States often have diverse populations consisting of various groups, or nations. One example of a diverse state is Canada. Although the majority of the country is English-speaking, a large minority speaks French and has different cultural traditions than the majority. “

Contrary to the aforementioned definition, Abolishina E.V.,<sup>36</sup> states that “*Нация – народ, который создал себе зависящее от него правительство и имеет в своем распоряжении территорию, границы которой более или менее уважаются другими нациями. Другими словами, нация – это народ, организованный в государство.*“ That is, she fully identifies the existence of a nation with the existence of the state, whilst Alina Grey<sup>37</sup> adds that “nation” is a „*исторически сложившаяся общность людей, имеющих собственную государственность и объединенных проживанием на одной территории, единым языком, культурой и национальным самосознанием. Нация без суверенной государственности является народом, или этносом.*“

But there are more definitions.

*The Nationalism Project*<sup>38</sup> justifies its name and its romantic view on the topic at hand with the definition that “a nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form.“ This explanation continues in another paragraph, adding that “a nation is therefore a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future.“

The nation state does not interest us more than this, however, because it is not a significant topic of this thesis. Still, it needs to be noted that it is a “vessel” which is controlled

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.reference.com/government-politics/difference-between-state-nation-86aa671393051d6e#>

<sup>36</sup> [http://vtk34.narod.ru/abolshina\\_obchestvoznanie/book/book10.htm](http://vtk34.narod.ru/abolshina_obchestvoznanie/book/book10.htm)

<sup>37</sup> <http://megapoisk.com/chto-takoe-natsija-kratko-i-ponjatno>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.nationalismproject.org/what/renan.htm>



by the nation and it possesses national consciousness. With the aforementioned definitions and citations, I have tried to bring to your attention the four main components of the national state: population, sovereignty, territory, and government. As it will be shown later, out of those four components we are only interested in the first one – population.

### ***1.5.2 Population and Identity***

*It's not easy being green;  
Having to spend each day the color of the leaves.  
When I think it could be nicer being red, or yellow, or gold...  
or something much more colorful like that.<sup>39</sup>*  
- Kermit the Frog

A huge number of disciplines, including social sciences, have the term ‘identity’ in their terminology banks. In most of the literature I have analyzed, the notion of *identity*<sup>40</sup> appears to be transitory, ephemeral, and even confusing. We can always talk about identity, but we cannot fully understand what it means. Identity is something that only some sociologists, historians and linguists came close to understanding, and always from a particular angle, depending on the research methods. *Identity appears to be impossible to bring together to truly make sense of and explain. Yet, when investigating real people in their everyday lives identity emerges; it becomes visible, explainable, and graspable. When investigating identity in everyday life, identity suddenly appears loud and clear.* (Norris 2011). Only when we try to observe what people actually do in their everyday lives, what TV station do they watch, what do they talk about, what music do they prefer, how they bring up their offspring, how they make and talk to friends, what is their worldview – then we can actually interpret their actions, make connections between actions and belongings, between individuals and society, and between what is hidden and what is not. Only then, we can make some sense of what *identity*<sup>41</sup> really is.

Within political science, for example, we find the concept of *identity* at the center of lively debates in every major subfield. Students of American politics have devoted much new

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<sup>39</sup> “(It’s Not That Easy) Bein’ Green” (from ‘Sesame Street’), NIEHS Kids’ Pages.

<http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/games/songs/movies/greenmid.htm>

<sup>40</sup> Gonul Pultar in his book “Imagines Identities: Identity Formation in the Age of Globalism” cites Claude Levi-Strauss and his view on ‘identity’: “*Identity is a sort of virtual home which we find indispensable as point of reference when explaining a certain number of things, without, however, it ever having any real existence*” (Pultar & Yalman 2014)

<sup>41</sup> While reading the prologue of “Identity shift: where identity meets technology in the networked-community age” (2012) by Allison Cerra and Christina James, I could not but notice the introductory citation ‘It’s not easy being green’, as told by Kermit the frog. Not only did this short overture to their book took my attention, but I also decided to use part of Kermit’s song, as being sang on *Sesame Street* in 1970. Kermit’s plight seems to be a constant struggle of anyone who has been confused and not clear about oneself. It is a plight of a society wrestling with one of life’s most profound questions: Who are we? (Cerra & James 2012)

research to the *identity politics* of race, gender, and sexuality. In comparative politics, *identity* plays a central role in work on nationalism and ethnic conflict (Fearon 1999). Also ...*in political theory, questions of „identity“ mark numerous arguments on gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnicity, and culture in relation to liberalism and its alternatives.*

Lloyd Fallers argues that (national) identity becomes a major problem with the advancement of globalization. As a set of system-forming elements, according to Fallers, identity serves as the basic criteria for country's legitimacy followed by a set of state symbols, public education, leisure activities, national holidays etc. We cannot concur with Fallers' opinion, as he does not focus on identity's root.

Identity, in common talk, *'is something which people have or search for. One might think that people today go about their daily lives, carrying with them a piece of psychological machinery called 'a national identity'. Like a mobile telephone, this piece of psychological equipment lies quiet for most of the time. Then, the crisis occurs; the president calls; bells ring; the citizens answer; and the patriotic identity is connected'* (Billig 1995). Common people link *identity* to religion, but mostly nation, seldom thinking that identities are mobile, interchangeable, something that can be forgotten, acquired, switched on or off during times of need<sup>42</sup>. Having a certain identity (a religious identity, for example) one needs to be situated physically, socially and emotionally among other people who accept the same identity. Same applies for national identity (even more in this case); one has to be connected emotionally, if

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<sup>42</sup> Michael Wearing in his "Social Identity" (2011) suggests that we are all fixed in time and place by our identities within the culture and society in which we live. Also, he also goes to remind us not to take identity as something that is fixed and unchangeable - ...*we are also part of the moving flows and fluid relations of identity construction that come out of the social interactions, networks and institutions of our societies. The concept of social identity helps us self-consciously realize that society is intricately involved in shaping our being and our identity. There is also a reverse affect through relationships communication and interactions where identity can shape the kind of society we live in and want to live in. We are living in times of fluid identity where the 'light capitalism 'of the modern period enables those in better paid work to move locations even internationally if need be and change jobs or careers a number of times. This acknowledges the broad conceptual picture of modernity as involved in constant flows of identity in the network society where powerful communication networks of social actors organize and in many cases manage and control identity formation* (Wearing 2011). Even though this thesis is not supposed to be a ground for detailed definitions and explanations in the realm of identity theories, it should be mentioned that there are two kinds of identity theories which should not be confused: *identity theory* and *social identity/self-categorization theory* as two perspectives on the dynamic mediation between the individual social behavior and society. Identity theory comes from the realm of sociology, while Social identity theory comes from the discipline of psychology. The latter deals with the structure and function of identity as related to people's membership in groups. *Identity theory is a perspective of the relationship between the roles people play in society and the identities that such roles confer. The focus of the individual behavior as it is mediated by role identities. In contrast, social identity theory concerns intergroup relations and group processes, with a focus on the generative role of identity in group and intergroup aspects of behavior.* Authors of this excerpt (Hogg et al. 1995) believe that the latter theory is more suitable to link individual social behavior to dynamic features of social structure, as it is also described in Wearing's book.

not physically to a homeland which is situated within the world of nations. Only if people believe that they have this identity, nation-states can be reproduced.

The research on the term *identity*, especially the meanings found in dictionaries, shows a continuous “freeze” of meaning and notion. Given that social sciences widely use this term, it is almost inconceivable that we still lack well-defined meanings of what constitutes identity, besides being presented as a complex social construct. That is why the use of this term by authors is frivolous, without further explanation to readers, believing that they should decipher the meaning of the term.

While the origins of our present understanding of „identity“ lie in the academy, the concept is now quite common in popular discourse. Since we all know how to employ the word and we understand it in other peoples’ sentences, why bother with definitions or explanations? Secondly, in popular discourse identity is often treated as something ineffable and even sacred, while in the academy identity is often treated as something complex and even ineffable. One hesitates to try to define the sacred, the ineffable, or the complex... (Fearon, 1999).

There are also other, shorter definitions of what *identity* is:

1. Identity is “people’s concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others” (Hogg and Abrams 1988, 2).
2. Identity is used in this book to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and the manner they are defined by others based on race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture (Deng 1995, 1).
3. “Identity refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities” (Jenkins 1996, 4).
4. Identities are relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self (Wendt 1992, 397).
5. The term [identity] (by convention) references mutually constructed and evolving images of self and other (Katzenstein 1996, 59).
6. Identity is any source of action not explicable from biophysical regularities, and to which observers can attribute meaning (White 1992, 6).
7. Indeed, identity is objectively defined as location in a certain world and can be subjectively appropriated only along with that world. ... [A] coherent identity

incorporates within itself all the various internalized roles and attitudes." (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 132).

Apart from these, there are hundreds of different formulations for this term. Looking at the abovementioned meanings, we can conclude what are the differences between the formulations. What is common to all explanations is the highlighted meaning of "commonness", that is *that what can be recognized and what makes us part of something*.

On the other hand, Brubaker and Cooper (1999) conclude that "*the wholesale, chaotic spread of 'identity talk' in popular and academic language has deprived it of any meaning at all*", i.e. the term is so often used in variety of meanings, that it begins to lose its meaning.

### ***1.5.3 Ethnicity***

Whilst reading “Ethnicity and nationalism: anthropological perspectives” (2010) by Thomas Hylland Eriksen, I have come across one of the best compilations, explanations and history on the term ‘ethnicity’. Even though this word first came in *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1972, its first usage is attributed to the American sociologist David Riesman in 1953. On the other hand, the word ‘ethnic’ is older and derived from the Greek *ethos* (*ethnikos*), which originally described anything ‘heathen’ or ‘pagan’. It came as a surprise to me to find out that ‘ethnic’ was used in this sense in the world from the XIV till the XIX century, and then gradually changed and began to refer to ‘racial’ characteristics. ‘Ethnics’ was used in the United States of America during the mid-XX century to denote (politely) Jews, Italians, Irish and other people considered inferior to the dominant white Anglo-Saxon Protestants. Since the 1960s these words were common in social disciplines, although very few people in that period tried to define them. In everyday language these words mostly have ring of ‘minority issues’ and ‘race relations’. Social anthropology uses these terms to refer to the aspects of relationship between groups which are considered to be culturally distinctive.

In the contemporary world of the XXI century words like ‘ethnic groups’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘ethnic conflict’ seem to be popping out of the mass media all around the world, flowing into political discourse and causal conversations along with words like ‘nation’ and ‘nationalism’. Surely, ethnicity has been a focus of research in anthropological disciplines since the late 1960s and this word has been more visible in many societies. However, before 1960s many social scientists, including Max Weber, *considered that ‘primordial phenomena’ like ethnicity and nationalism would decrease in importance and eventually vanish as a result of modernization, industrialization and individualism* (Eriksen 2010: 2). Not only that these scientists have been proven wrong, but this form of identity increased its importance in the late XX and the beginning of XXI century. Just the sheer mention of Rwanda, Congo, Sri Lanka and Bosnia rings a bell in our minds, and this bell has an *ethnic conflict* ring to it.

It is difficult for people to make a difference between *ethnicity* and *nation*. Once one tries to explain what ‘nation’ is, it immediately becomes evident that ‘nation’ and ‘ethnicity’ rely on the same background for their constructed reality. ‘Ethnicity’ is a term that underlines

the culture of people in a given region; by ‘culture’ in this sense, I mean language, heritage, religion and customs. In order to identify as a member of some ethnic group, one must conform to some or all of the abovementioned practices. If race is defined according to biological traits – ethnicity is defined according to *common origin, language, religion* etc.

This is also the reason why political agendas are full of discourse that attempts to consolidate national identity all over the world. Many indigenous populations in North America have organized politically, demanding recognition of their ethnic identities along with other entitlements. On the other side of the world the Soviet Union fragmented into dozen states, almost all of them split by ethnic and linguistic identities. Very similar process developed also in Yugoslavia, where nations divided themselves on ethnic, religious and language grounds. Opposite processes are also developing (e.g.. European Union), sadly, at a much slower pace.

Ethnicity has been described as residing in:

- the belief by members of a social group that they are culturally distinctive and different to outsiders;
- their willingness to find symbolic markers of that difference (food habits, religion, forms of dress, language) and to emphasize their significance; and
- their willingness to organize relationships with outsiders so that a kind of ‘group boundary’ is preserved and reproduced<sup>43</sup>.

This basically means that ethnicity is not something that can be inherited biologically or genetically. One can be born in Russia but live all of their life in the United States. If that person decides to adopt the language, culture, symbols, traditions in the USA, they may as well consider themselves to be American, rather than Russian.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Culture</b>
Refers to people who identify themselves based on common ancestral, cultural,	Refers to the country of citizenship	Refers to the beliefs, values, norms and practices that are

<sup>43</sup> National Youth Council of Ireland (<http://www.intercultural.ie/content/ethnicity-and-ethnic-groups-%E2%80%93-explanation-these-terms>)

national, and social experience		learnt and shared generation by generation
Pashtun, Bengali, English, Scottish, American Indian, Welsh etc.	Americans, Germans, Russians, Nigerians, British, Greeks etc.	African, American, Austrian, Asian, Russian etc.

**The difference between ethnicity, nationality and culture<sup>44</sup>**

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<sup>44</sup> Source: <http://theydiffer.com/difference-between-race-ethnicity-nationality-and-culture/>



## ***1.6 A New Phenomenon on the Rise***

Professional and science communities have agreed that ‘nation’, ‘nationalism’, and ‘national identity’ are phenomena that occurred in the modern era and modern society, starting from the XVIII century onwards. They are the result of the process of modernization, integration, and transformation of human society; result of the development of applied modernistic values on all levels of people’s lives; rise of industry, capitalism, modern transformation of education, rapid developments of urbanization... These novelties created collectivities in which people join each other in completely new macro communities of linguistic, cultural, educational, political, economic, and social nature.

Previous use of the concept of ‘nation’ tended to mean something quite different, namely a small local self-sufficient community, group, or subgroup within larger group on a specific territory.

As historical entities, national communities and national identity are a modern phenomenon. Created and developed with the social changes and processes during the XVIII century, they still continue to develop in our time not just as individual and group identities, but also as national and collective identities.

Modern nations, ethnic and national identities, ethnic communities, and collective identities appeared in Europe in the late XVIII century with the advancement of Modernism and the fulfillment of the trends and changes that came with it. This is a period when European nations achieve progress in all areas of life, create new national values and are seeking to establish multiple social identities as the result of the constant social and national changes. Needless to say, this process is an ongoing one and is not yet completed (nor it will be).

A human being in the Middle Ages had indeed cultural tradition made up by language, history, religion and so on. But it had little role in his life. It was not important if other people outside one’s village or city shared the same cultural values; rather, it was way more relevant who was the landlord whom to pay taxes to, which was the religious authority (in the Middle Ages he was pretty much the only 'official' tangible presence in people's life). After the invention of tradition, it became important for a human being living in the mid XIX century to

know that he was surrounded by people who shared his same cultural tradition and cultural beliefs (or by people who did not, in case of people living near borders). The transformation that occurred in the early XIX century had a dramatic importance: culture is not a feature any more it becomes identity<sup>45</sup>.

The beginnings of early capitalist economy with its trade, monetary institutions, science and education, the new vision of modern culture in the field of literature, painting, philosophy etc., as well as the general progress of society beyond its feudal constraints brought societal changes that transformed the majority of European communities. These advancements in the legal system, economy, politics, and state created the basis for a civil society and thus entirely new social systems. Contemporary Europeans still build their future on the foundations of these concepts from this era. Some would say that its beginning is to be found with the emergence of Humanism and Renaissance. Either way, there is no doubt that Modernism completely reshaped human society and introduced the industrial civilization and technical progress. It is natural that this progress did not encompass everybody, which is the reason for the following bourgeois revolutions that pulled down a long era of feudalism and feudal order. Completely opposite of feudalism, which is based on privileges and hierarchical order that maintain inequality between people and create various hierarchical relationships – Modernism offered new historical narrative and order.

This narrative gave the start of a new modern global societal system. Feudalism is in shambles and people are free. In addition, as history teaches us, the transformation of one order brings another one. Throughout Modernism, during the process of educational and cultural revolution, every nation in its midst organizes national movement, starts building its own national culture, develops a standard modern literary language, creates modern literature, develops science and scientific institutions, creates art, and organizes entirely new national institutions and values. Every nation builds its own cultural identity on these foundations.

This modern society started developing an entirely new political system. A new era began; people gradually acquired civil liberties, free democratic elections, new system of parliamentarism and representative government. This is the time when the most important national institutions are formed; national sovereignty is achieved; principles of equality and freedom established; the nation and the nation-state are born. These are the basis that every

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<sup>45</sup> Barbirotto Patricio Ignacio. 2015. The Caspian Region: Politics, Economics, Culture, No. 3 (44).

nation uses to organize public life and mobilize its public. These are the ground basis that created the modern nation and national identity.

## ***1.7 Deconstructing 'Nation'***

Every theoretical deconstruction or construction requires a thorough explanation of the terminology being used. This part considers mostly culture and language as a substantial part of 'nation' and 'identity'.

Culture as phenomenon was described in the first part of this thesis, so I will now try and direct the reader's attention to the deconstruction of the terms 'nation' and 'identity'. I will leave language behind for now, because, as I have said earlier, and you will see again in the following chapters – I take language to be part of culture as well as culture being part of language, therefore, speaking of language, we mean culture and vice versa.

The problem with defining these terms is caused by conceptual and categorical difficulties in social sciences, where we find large number of different explanations regarding the meaning of 'nation' and 'identity'.

It is often told that till the moment we are asked to define "what is a nation?" we have a clear picture in our minds about the nature of 'a nation'. However, when we are asked to explain that phenomenon – we seem to have a memory block or problems dealing with words and concepts.

Most famous approaches dealing with the term 'nation' are primordialism and constructivism.

If primordialism refers to the idea of a natural beginning, i.e. objectivity in the existence of every single nation, constructivism does the opposite. It puts an emphasis on the artificiality of this concept and directs its power on researching subjective factors that explain the occurrence of 'nation'.

Professor Ilija Aceski gives us a thought that no matter which school or approach theorists and researchers belong to, primordialists and constructivists try to define what *nation* is by establishing one or more constituent elements.

Thus, for example, Anderson, Herder, Kautsky emphasize *common language as the basic requirement for the existence of a nation*. According to Giddens, Hastings, Bielig - *the*

*control over a certain territory*; Stalin, Smith, Walker – *economy*. Habermas defines the nation as a *pre-political unity of the community*, whose members share the same fate; according to Giddens, a nation exists only when the state has an *administrative control over the territory over which sovereignty is declared*.

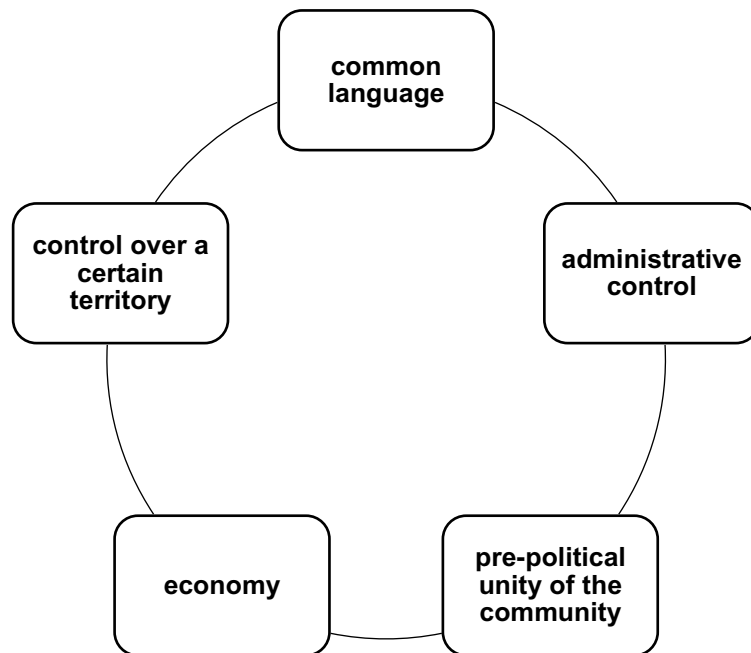


Figure 2. The prerequisites for the existence of a nation

Certainly, the reader of this paper will agree that couple of pages is very limited space to explain the whole specter of thoughts and writings dedicated to the demystification of ‘nation’. I present an ultra-short attempt to convey the development of the idea of the ‘nation’: Enlightenment brought the idea of the ‘nation’ with expectations of progress. Jean-Jacques Rousseau reasoned that ‘forces in society’ (nations) could effectively bring progress; developments around the time of the French Revolution created an atmosphere when nation-states and nationalisms were associated with economic and political improvement. By the time world wars ended, nationalists were seen as forerunners of Italian fascists, German Nazis and other authoritarian regimes of that time (Baycroft & Hewitson 2006: 313/314). Baycroft and Hewitson also argue that *recent research into nationalism rightly emphasizes that the ‘nation’ was a draft, an artefact which was based on the will for collective action and commonality. Out of this came emphatic national self-discovery in the form of a common national history, language, and culture, as well as the need for demarcation* (p. 18).

The decline of traditional symbols of power and authority during the XIX and the XX centuries enforced the role of some of the pillars of modern nations. One example of this can be seen through the policy of teaching French language in France in primary schools, which became compulsory, secular and free in the early 1880s. Before this, a report from Abbé Gregoire during the French Revolution called for uniformity of language throughout France; during this French elites agreed that it is imperative for the members of the nation to become fluent in French. By speaking a uniform language, people could participate fully in national life. Around this time German nationalism was also flourishing, but it was doing so through factors like blood, common traditions and language, rather than politics. Thus, this takes us to the next subchapter, where Language, according to the author, takes the main role in national identity.

## ***1.8 Language as a Precursor to National Identity***

The author of these lines considers himself to be a constructivist when it comes to defining what ‘a nation’ means and he is advocating that language is the basic condition for the existence of what we define as a *nation*; as I will explain hereafter, I do consider language to be the “father” of the idea of ‘a nation’.

My point of view adds to Menno Spiering’s opinion that constructivists “*seek to account for the differences between nations; they argue that national characteristics are neither congenital, nor are they the organic consequence of soil, climate or geography... They prefer the term ‘national identity’ to ‘national character’ and insist that this identity is based on perceptions that are in no way rooted in nature, but are instead the result of ‘nurture’*. National identity is an ‘intellectual artefact’ or a ‘cultural construct’” (Spiering 1999, 152). There is no doubt that constructivists acknowledge the existence of sentiments that foster national identity, but they also try to explain that the ideas of national identity exist only within the term, i.e. each country determines the content of national identity. Spiering considers this when he says that national identity is "an artifact" and a result of "construction". Benedict Anderson also sees the nation as an imaginary political community. According to his belief, every nation is a fictional political community because its members will never get to know all other members, but despite that, their minds possess an image of their communion. Simultaneously ‘nation’ as a community has a limiting, or exclusive factor – those who do not identify as members of a particular nation are excluded from it (Anderson 2006). As he puts it: “*It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion*” (Anderson 2006, 6); “*The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind. It is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm; Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much*

*to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings*” (Anderson 2006, 7). Anthony Smith also goes along the line that nation as a *human population shares historical territory, common memories and myths of its origin, standardized public culture, a common economy and territorial mobility, mutual rights and responsibilities for all members of the collective* (Smith 1992, 55).

The main objectives of nationalists everywhere are virtually the same. All of them want to unite the nation by adding elements (mostly of historical value) that make a particular nation unique. Even though all nationalists aspire to unite a nation, none of them aspire to unite humanity. ***Nations exist only when they differentiate from other nations.*** Otherwise, there would be no nations in existence (as we can see from utopias that exist in sci-fi movies). Unification of humankind is not the motive that drives nationalists; rather, it is division on which they flourish.

The emergence of early capitalism and industrialization also coincides with the rise of national consciousness for several reasons. With the emergence of industry, a new need for standardized occupations arises. The only way to create a “standardized worker” was to create a standardized educational system. Creating a centralized public education leads to the dissemination of national ideas to every layer of society, or, as Weber would put – “*it has turned the peasants into Frenchmen*”. Along with that process, nationalism took ground as an ideology for creating cohesion and loyalty among individuals.

During the dawn of the first traces of capitalism in the world, the emergence of massive book printing (the printing capitalism) gave a new strength to language and its meaning, “*which on the long run helped to build an image of antiquity, a feature so central to the subjective idea of the nation*” (Anderson 2006, 72).

People categorize the outside world, refer, and convey about it through language. Everything we see with our eyes is transformed in our minds to mental words and pictures. We use language to learn how to accept the outside environment; according to the rules of the community we learn how to refer to an appropriate situation. But that is just one side of the coin. Through language people, in their own way, learn to interpret the outside world and affect its modification and creation. While it may not be easy to recognize, language is anchored in culture, and culture is the number one component of nationhood. Many lexical and grammatical expressions, as well as manners and content of communication are specific to one cultural community, and completely strange and rather “unnatural” for another. Social scientists often



assume that it is natural that speakers of the same language should seek their own political identity. The author of the book *Varieties of Nationalism* wrote the following: “*in the search for security, people who speak the same language are irresistibly drawn together*” (Snyder 1976, 21). The word ‘irresistibly’ suggests that this is an inevitable part of the human nature (Billig 1995, 14).

‘Printing capitalism’ established language as a power that is much different from the older administrative colloquial language. This power was driven largely by processes that did not have a conscious mechanism of its own but was *the result of the explosive interaction between capitalism, technology and linguistic diversity*. It created opportunity for a new kind of imagined community, which in its basic morphology drafted the stage for the modern nations. (Anderson 2006, 74).

Ernest Gellner offers a concise definition for nationalism as a political principle which extends the state border to the ethnical frontier. Moreover, according to Gellner, nations define themselves by means of their culture – people want to be politically united with all those who share their culture and language. In this case, political groups want to expand their boundaries to the limits of their culture and then to impose their power within these borders (Gellner 1998). John Edwards has observed that “*language is still commonly taken to be the central pillar of ethnic identity*” (Edwards 1991, 269). Indeed, it is sometimes assumed that nations, comprising different linguistic groups, are fragile compromises, which might be torn apart by the next set of crises and insecurities (Connor, 1978, 1993). This way of thinking is not new. In the eighteenth century, Herder and Fichte were declaring that the basis of a nation, and indeed its genius, lay in its language (Billig 1995, 14).

If we consider that ethnic groups use the same language (and culture), then we completely agree with Gellner’s claim that language and culture are the initial motives for extending the boundaries of the nation-state. This backs my thesis that language (and culture) is a precursor of national and ethnic consciousness, national and ethnic movements, and the nation-state. Nationalism in the hands of the state creates the nation through a revival and reproduction of culture and cultural memory and heritage of an ethnic group. By no means we can accept the notion that nation creates nationalism, but vice versa. Nationalism is a tool that selectively chooses cultural resources through which it creates the nation and directs its development through additional selection of cultural resources. By cultural sources, I mostly mean “language resources”. As Gellner puts it „*mrtve jezike je moguće oživjeti, običaje izmisliti, posve izmišljene davne čiste vrijednosti ponovo ustoličiti*“ (Gellner 1998, 76).

Anderson's and Gellner's theories refer to identification as a result of modernization – national consciousness is a product of the development of means of communication, the emergence of capitalism, the larger role of the state on the population, the reorganization and implementation of public education, symbols, printing etc.

Gellner notes that **nations would not even exist if politics and culture would not come to merge in the first place**. He adds that nationalism creates nation by using culture, which chronologically precedes nationalism. This notion further confirms my claim that nation is the “child” of language and culture. Without them no nation would have existed, as it would lack the basic cohesive elements that make a nation. Our identity and feeling that we belong to a nation does not develop in isolation, says Trajče Stojanov but they are the result of culture, history, tradition, media, education, surrounding environment, personal relations between people and their life stories – all connected by the thread of language. All we know is learned and created through the process of cultururation; we are a “random product” of the environment we were born and raised in.

## ***1.9 From Language to Nation***

Approximately seventy thousand years ago, at the beginning of the cognitive revolution, Homo sapiens began spreading out of East Africa and were settling all over the world. Around this time, he became the most powerful animal on the planet – his intellectual powers increased even faster and with greater intensity. Never before our ancestors had managed to invent so many tools, become a sea faring society, use needles, new clothing, boots, new kinds of knives, hammers, axes etc. Up to about seventy thousand years ago, Neanderthals, Erectus and Sapiens have been making the same tools and clothes for thousands of years without change.

Scientists say that most of the achievements came as the result of increased cognitive abilities. Homo sapiens changed the way of learning, thinking, and even speaking. This change of the way Sapiens was talking and thinking is called the *Cognitive Revolution*. Some even go as far as to say that this revolution was in fact the beginning of history. Prior to the cognitive revolution humans were no different from any other animal. They had biology and not history. History begins with the cognitive revolution (Harari 2014). But one of the engines of this revolution was **language**.

Languages are a feature of the natural world. Animals communicate in various different ways. What we consider to be “screaming sounds” coming from monkeys – are in fact instructions or warnings to other monkeys etc.

But human language is amazing. Its amazingness comes from the complexity of how information about the world is transmitted. We can create enormous number of sentences with distinct meaning using limited amount of sounds.

**Language played the most important role connecting people in larger numbers** (through a more sophisticated language).

A more sophisticated language created the ability for people to transmit complex information about the surroundings and other people, i.e. to gossip<sup>46</sup>. We think that gossiping

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<sup>46</sup> *Gossip is community-regulated speech, holding important positive virtues that inscribe and reify social values (Gluckman: 308). Far from dangerous, gossip is seen here as a fundamental component of a healthy society ... Unlike Gluckman's functionalist perspective on gossip, for Robert Paine, gossip is about information control serving the specific interests of those engaged in the discourse. This transactionalist perspective on the*

nowadays is a bad habit, but this habit actually did humanity an enormous favor. Gossip created even more complex language and an opportunity for Homo sapiens to talk about others for hours. That is what gave a member of a particular society the ability to acquire information about other members of the community, which led to stronger and more sophisticated ways of cooperation with other members. Social cooperation played (and still does) a major role in our survival and reproduction. For our ancient ancestors information about their predators was crucial for survival, but even more important was the information about other members in the group (who is easily scared, who is trustful, loyal, unreliable), so one could know who to rely on in case a lion attacks or a storm comes.

Today we may be free from fear of lion attacks, but we still depend heavily on information about other people in our immediate surrounding.

However, back then and even now – this method has had limitations. **The number of the group that is connected based on gossip can reach maximum 150 persons** (Dunbar 1993, 189). This is considered to be the “natural limit” even today. One can maintain a maximum of 150 social connections (in the near surroundings or distant connections). Same goes for companies and organizations. In most cases, the “magical number” 150 is the limit for humans to function without the need for additional discipline, rules, and laws. A company of 20, 50, even 100 employees can function normally and without the need for restrictions and rules that exist in large companies and corporations.

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*phenomenon concentrates on how such talk is deployed by persons in an attempt to control the construction of reality or identity in a particular way. To be precise, gossip seeks to evince a particular construal of the subject (or event) and to get others engaging in the talk to agree, and so co-construct the subject or event (Paine: 283). Thus, gossip may help one attain high social status at least in terms of possessing information (Paine: 279). Gluckman and Paine together are representatives of the pioneering efforts in gossip research in the XX century, each emphasizing different variables of the social process (Daniels 2012). John Daniels continues to praise gossip in his work, as it represents an evaluative talk between two individuals about an absent third-party subject. As a process, gossip evaluates events and actions by socially reconstructing them (either positively or negatively). During a gossip event, the absence of the third party creates social space for the construction of a “generative event”, which main role is to regulate the relations between members of a particular society. Richard Rohrbaugh identifies four functions of gossip: **1) clarification and enforcement of group values; 2) group formation and boundary maintenance; 3) moral assessment of individuals; 4) leadership identification and competition.** Even the New Testament is not free of gossip. Eventually even Jesus inquires among his disciples how his identity is being constructed by the talk among outsiders: “Who do people say that I am?” (Mark 8:27).*

A military platoon of 30 can function much more perfectly in condition of combat due to the personal acquaintances of troops from the platoon. Any increase of the number of soldiers requires introducing hierarchy, rules, and laws.

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*Richard Rohrbaugh identifies four functions of gossip:*

*1) clarification and enforcement of group values;*

*2) group formation and boundary maintenance;*

*3) moral assessment of individuals;*

*4) leadership identification and competition*

*[Richard L. Rohrbaugh. 2007]*

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Scientists have observed other animals, especially different kinds of apes, and found they have keen interest in social information, but unlike Homo sapiens, they have trouble gossiping effectively due to the limitation of their language. Same applied for the Neanderthals one hundred thousand years ago – due to the limitations of their language they could not gossip and share information with large groups. Homo sapiens later did not have problem with that and soon after developed more sophisticated ways of cooperating with other members of the group.

This theory of language as a means for gossip may sound like a joke, but there are numerous studies in all kinds of fields, psychology, sociology, even economics and biology, that support this idea. Even today, this is something that sociologists have studied deeply, - what people talk about today in the twenty-first century. Today majority of human communication in the world is gossip. Emails, phone calls, newspaper columns, TV shows, most of the information that you get is gossip, not necessarily about people you know, but about leaders and film stars and so forth. From all the conversation topics in the world, the topic which is of greatest interest to people in all cultures, Americans, Chinese, Israelis and Palestinians, they all like to gossip, even professionals. Gossip usually focuses on wrongdoings of people, breaking the norms doing what they should not do, because this is the main function of gossip. It serves as a kind of police, and it served this job tens of thousands of years ago, when there were no police, gossip was the police and the court. People talked about other people breaking

the norms or doing what they should not do. People were frightened of breaking the rules of doing what they should not do for fear that others would gossip about them, then nobody would like to be their friends and to cooperate with them. 50,000 years ago, if nobody wanted to cooperate with you, you were as good as dead<sup>47</sup>.

So how did Homo sapiens manage to cross this critical threshold (groups of 150), eventually founding cities comprising tens of thousands of inhabitants and empires ruling hundreds of millions? **The secret was probably the appearance of fiction. Large numbers of strangers can cooperate successfully by believing in common myths** (Harari 2014, 29). These myths were produced by the appearance of a more complex language that was capable of creating **abstraction**. This led to the creation of **collective imagination**. The truly unique feature of our language is not its ability to transmit information about other people. Rather, it is the ability to transmit information about things which do not exist at all. Legends, myths, gods, and religions appeared for the first time with the cognitive revolution (Taylor).

Yuval Harari gives two typical examples:

1. If two Catholics happen to meet, though they never knew each other before, this will not prevent the two of them to go together on a Crusade or to build a church and spread Catholicism just because of the common belief that Jesus allowed himself to be crucified for the sins of humankind;
2. Two Serbs who have never met might risk their lives to save one another because both believe in the existence of the Serbian nation, the Serbian homeland and the Serbian flag.

We are the only species with this ability. Only Homo sapiens can devote his life and create relations with other people just on the bare belief that something imaginary exists. No other animal can even conceive something like this.

Humanity's cultural history can be viewed as a starting point of differentiation from one another. In early and primitive societies, because of their small numbers, these identities and differences were limited. But as societies became increasingly sophisticated, the number of societies that differed from one another grew<sup>48</sup>. From a subjective point of view, **there can not**

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<sup>47</sup> Taylor, Louise. "The Cognitive Revolution". E-Learning. N.p., 2016. Web. 16 Nov. 2016.

<sup>48</sup> Smith, A.D., 1992. National Identity and the Idea of European Unity. *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), 68(1), p.55

**be a cultural identity without common memories and beliefs or sense of continuity by those who believe that belong to a certain collective.**

Catholics and Serbs can cooperate and believe in their cause just because of the stories they tell each other; considering that gods do not exist, same as nations, money, human rights, laws – it is all part of human's imagination (Harari 2014). Needless to remind – **collective imagination was made possible by the emergence of a more complex language**, which provided opportunity and place for abstraction to flourish.

Religions, nations, states, money, etc. – it all belongs to language's constructed reality. Languages help to create myths, and myths are passed from generation to generation, sometimes changing their beliefs only through a simple change of the myth.

Do you remember how gossiping helps create relationships and groups of maximum 150? Well, **the ability to believe in myths and fictional reality enabled a revolution in human behavior**. If simple gossip can bring together a maximum of 150 individuals, the belief in myths and fiction can bring together billions. Unlike lying, fictitious constructs are things in which we all believe, and until there is a collective belief, they will represent something in the world.

The belief in the myth that socialism will bring brighter future in the Soviet Union brought together approximately 250 million people; they lived, cooperated, and worked together – all in the name of a brighter future under socialist sun. As soon as enthusiasm and belief in that myth started dissipating, the Soviet Union started to fall apart faster than a house of cards.

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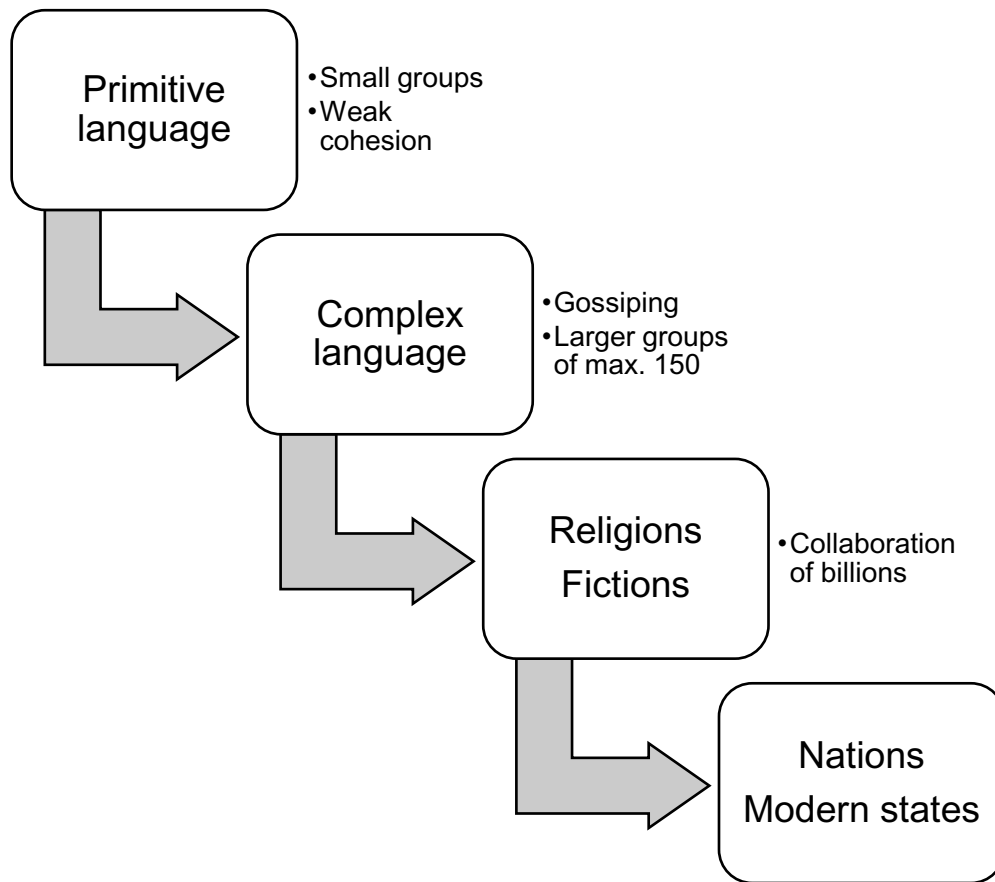
*Any large-scale human cooperation –  
whether a modern state, a medieval church,  
an ancient city or an archaic tribe – is  
rooted in common myths that exist only in  
peoples' collective imagination.  
[Harari, 2014]*

The belief in the myth that different nations can live and prosper peacefully under “brotherhood and unity”, brought six states and many different people under one federation called Yugoslavia. Same as the Soviet Union, as soon as people started to suspect the myth that we are all equal and brothers – Yugoslavia also fell apart in less than a year.

In other words, the ability to create myths and fictitious realities makes it possible for millions of people who do not know each other to communicate and collaborate. That “mythical miracle” enabled us to cooperate in the thousands without the need to know one another. This cooperation transformed us into amazing creators, or destroyers. Creators for producing positive values under the code of fictitious reality and myths, and destroyers because of the desire to preserve those myths.

One would have thought that believing in myths is actually a disadvantage for Sapiens, not an advantage. Needless to say, fiction and all kinds of legends and myths can be dangerously misleading or destructive. If you go in the forest looking for the frog that turns into a prince, you seem to have less chance of survival than if you go out to the forest and you look for some berries, mushrooms, or animals you could eat. Similarly, if you spend hours each day praying and dancing for a non-existent guardian spirit, are you not just wasting precious time, which you would be better off spending foraging or having sexual intercourse or doing something for your survival and reproduction? These are good questions, but history tells us that fictive language has not been a disadvantage (for most part) but the most important advantage of Sapiens over other human species and over other animals. This fictive language is so important because it enables Sapiens not merely to imagine things individually, but it also enables us to imagine things together, to imagine things collectively. This enables us to start weaving common legend and myth and stories such as the Biblical creation story or the nationalist myth of model states. It is such myth that gave humans the unprecedented ability to cooperate flexibly in very large numbers and this is really the biggest key of all. The ability to cooperate flexibly with large numbers of individuals is what really made our species masters of the world (Taylor).





**Figure 2. How nations came to be**

### ***1.10 How is This Important?***

After spending more than twenty pages writing about how nationalism emerged through language, the reader feels a discontinuity from the main object of this work. Let me explain why the sharp and radical turn from culture and language to nation and nationalism.

1. Nationalism has always captivated us with its irrational nature and destructiveness, therefore the interest to create a model that tries to explain the creation of nationalism; to break the common belief that it has always been around us and it will continue to be in the future.

2. Language plays a vital role in the operation of ideology and in the framing of ideological consciousness (Billig, 1995).

3. There are very few cases in the world when linguists thought of language teaching as “politically engaged” activity, as language in reality is.

4. The goal of this work is the proposal of a new kind of language teaching material, a kind that takes advantage of language a *basic source of social, cultural, and political identification*.

5. None of the language materials we have been in contact with offers a broad use of the non-neutral domains in language, which is almost absurd, as total language neutrality is a myth, and yet, language textbooks still deliver one-dimensional (quasi-neutral) view on linguacultural realities.

Rogers Brubaker (2013) has an interesting article regarding language, religion, and the politics of difference. In his article, he makes a rare attempt to explain the commonalities between language and religion, but in doing so he aligns them also with ethnicity and nationhood. Every ethnicity is a vessel for one (or more) languages and religion(s). Language and religion, same as nations and states, *are domains of categorically differentiated cultural practice that simultaneously unite and divide*. Also, language and religion are the *basic sources and forms of social, cultural, and political identification*. They are central or even constitutive of most ethnic and national identifications, markers, emblems, or symbols of such identifications.

Another important characteristic of language and religion is that during the process of socialization they are taken for granted, as something that is given and primordial. A newborn child always learns the language its mother uses – the *mother's tongue*. Same goes for religion – a newborn child almost “routinely” accepts the religion that its parents practice. There is a sense of continuity and “normalness” by doing so. Regardless, the religion in contemporary societies is chosen. A child later in life can choose (or not choose) whatever religious practice he considers best for him. The same cannot be said about language. Language is here to stay.

Religion has elusive analytical object. Language does not. Language has definiteness and regularity that religious phenomena lack (Brubaker 2013, 8). When we speak a language, we are well aware about the topic we talk about, but we cannot say the same about religion. Religion also used to be far more politicized than it is today. Moreover, all that has to do with the role of political authorities in establishing priorities. In the Dark Ages kingdoms were far more central to the religious reproduction than language's reproduction. The political and religious elite were interested in propagating religion and reproducing it in society. Language, on the other hand, was not in their interest. So, guess when all of this changed? With the birth of the nation state, language took the place of religion. After all, language is *universal and pervasive medium of social life*, while religion is not. Religion cannot be seen as a universal social phenomenon, especially not in the liberal states that came to be in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and onwards. With the creation of the modern nation-state, a need for a direct rule appeared, and consequently, the need for intensive communication with citizens. With this, language's status rose, as public life can be a-religious, but it can never be a-linguistic. The modern liberal state must privilege a particular language or a set of languages, but it need not privilege a particular religion, at least not in the same way, and not to the same degree (Brubaker, 2013).

The rules and practices that govern the language of public life directly affect the material and ideal interests of people with differing language repertoires (Zolberg and Long 1999, 21). This holds a fortiori in an economic context in which work is increasingly *semantic and communicative rather than physical* (Gellner 1997, 85), involving the manipulation of meanings, not of things. Therefore, language is politicized chronically and pervasively in linguistically heterogeneous modern societies (Patten and Kymlicka 2003; May 2001). Brubaker adds that religion is also politicized, but not as previously in time. The state now privileges language(s), not religions. And as for politicized languages, complete neutrality can never take place, and is recognized as a myth (Bader 2007, 82).

Secularization in reality caused a de-politicization of religion, which is particularly felt in the last couple of decades. Religion now is more individual, subjective and thought of as a private experience. The new realm of de-politicized religion and pluralism also brought fewer conflicts in the public sphere. Because religion had become less central to the public sphere, language moved forward and became more politicized than ever before.

**As the state became central to linguistic reproduction and language itself became much more politicized, it is quite unusual why the system of language reproduction has not invested heavily in the introduction of a politicized language in language learning.**

If we acknowledge that total language neutrality is a myth, then we should also acknowledge that the non-neutral language in public sphere must be represented in language teaching, at least at advanced levels of language learning. This would greatly boost the linguacultural competence in speakers, and also prepare them to a fuller degree for the real-life communication that awaits them. As you will see in the last chapters of this work, we will employ a fully politicized language from at least three (political) perspectives in linguacultural concepts in contemporary Macedonian language.

## ***2. Origins of the Study***

### ***2.1 Personal Experience in Language Teaching and Learning***

Author's own experience as a young linguist during his bachelor studies proved that there is much more to language. As a student, being one of the best in my group created conditions for me to receive much needed scholarship, so I could further pursue my professional choice. At this time, the motivation to improve my language competence in the country of the language I was studying (Russia) was not only subjective, but also objectively necessary. That is why I decided to spend all my scholarship funds on language competence improvement courses in Moscow. During the course of my studies, I had the chance to go through this process twice.

Why is this important? Edward Hall's "Beyond Culture" reminded me of the first experiences in Russia. When I found myself on Russian soil, I felt secure about my language proficiency, the flawless knowledge of verb conjugation, accurate writing, and volumes of different Russian language grammars... I assumed that the transition from a classroom to the real world would not be that difficult. The first couple of days immediately proved me wrong. I did not realize that communication is much more than speaking a language without grammatical errors. In addition, later I realized that communication looks differently among different cultures. I had a lot to learn about intercultural communication.

The New Shorter English Dictionary gives the following information for the term 'intercultural': 'taking place or forming a communication between cultures, belonging to or derived from different cultures. Turning to the entry 'cultural' - a derivation of 'culture' - I found the following wording: 'of or pertaining to cultivation, especially of the mind, of manners etc. and, of or pertaining to culture in a society or civilization'<sup>49</sup>.

Going back to the point - language does not have a secondary language system that can describe the meaning that lies beyond plain language units. My personal experience was the breaking point that determined my later interest in linguistics, and as you can witness, this thesis

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<sup>49</sup> Julian House in *Intercultural language use and language learning*. 1. ed., 2nd print. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer.

you are reading. This paper tries to decipher the relation between language and culture, and also to bring language realities closer to the language student in a way I was not able to learn about them.

Not long after graduation I started working as a Russian language lecturer at one of the state universities in Macedonia. Just a couple of months before that I was in the position to evaluate the compatibility of text books for learning a foreign language with the realism of being in the country where the language is spoken. That is why I cannot agree with Claire Kramersch<sup>50</sup> when she says that *culture has always been an integral component of language teaching* (Kramersch, 1993). If what she means is that culture was never a practical source of language learning, but only a "sterile" component in texts and dialogues used to teach language, in the case, she is right. But the experience as a student proved to me that textbooks are disastrously out of sync with the realities of the language requirements outside the classroom.

When I started working as a lecturer at the local university, I was given liberty to decide on my own what kind of textbooks and methods I will implement in classroom. At this point a new problem emerged - I could not find even one text book that would fully satisfy my view on what should be used during classes. Then the solution came - electronic selection of materials. I immediately started selecting various parts from various text books, dictionaries, and grammars that were compatible with my view on how and what should have been taught in class; after the selection came the implementation; sometimes even those materials were not suitable enough for Macedonian students, so I started creating my own materials and exercises.

What was disappointing, actually, was the absence of cultural contexts in text books. **Most units deal with a single context that is "frozen in time"** and have little to no real effect in real life communication, nor translating or teaching. That was the reason I had to combine different contexts from several sources in order to create something that had bigger value from a linguacultural standpoint. I would also like to add - the process of selecting new cultural contexts continued during the next eight years while I held the position of a university lecturer. Why? Because every single year something new emerged, some new context was created that enriched substantially the language picture of the given language.

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<sup>50</sup> Professor of German and Education at Berkeley University in California. Author of Context and Culture in Language Teaching. Kramersch, C. J. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Not long after I started teaching I realized that language teaching is a living process that cannot stand stagnancy. Even Wilhelm von Humboldt says that language is not something that is frozen in time - *Language*, regarded in its real nature, is an enduring thing, and at every moment a *transitory* one. In itself it is no product (*Ergon*), but an activity (*Energiea*)<sup>51</sup>. Language is a continuously changing action, and that is why teaching language should follow its example. Alexander Potebnya adds that "...язык есть полнейшее творчество, какое только возможно человеку, и только потому имеет для него значение" (Потебня 1989, 198)<sup>52</sup>. If I am to interpret these words from Potebnya, I would say that language as *Energiea* is a creative way of each man's understanding and perception of the world, which means that learning a language, is a form of art. And as a form of art it evolves all the time, as it is open, dynamic, energetic and personal; and it encompasses the rich complexities of communication (Shohamy, 2007: 5). Language as activity is created by every single member of the collective, which means that language persona is the sole creator of language (Naumov 2007).

So, can we conclude that language is much more than just a code? Absolutely. It's not only a code, as linguists love to say, but also a home for social practices and people's habits.

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*With a death of a  
language, a culture dies.  
[Underhill, 2009: 5]*

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During my life, I have had a number of language teachers for various languages: Macedonian, Russian, English, French, Serbian, Czech and Old-Slavonic. In some cases, several teachers were teaching one language during the years spent in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Every single teacher applied various approaches in language teaching. The way they teach reflected the way I understood language. Even without the background knowledge I have today regarding language competences, I could easily determine each teacher's understanding of language, especially their cultural knowledge.

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<sup>51</sup> Humboldt. On Language, On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species. Edited by Michael Losonsky, CUP 1999, p.35

<sup>52</sup> Потебня, А.А. and Байбурын, А.К., 1989. *Слово и миф*. Правда.

In conclusion of this part I would like to add that contemporary teaching materials still have not adapted to the real needs of this era. Instead of applying multiple reference points and views, a language that is free to use all kinds of jargons, subculture speech and political discourse – today’s political correctness influences the creation of “sterile” textbooks that distance the language-learner from reality. Instead of protecting ourselves from “uncensored language”, we should be protecting ourselves from the lack of common knowledge, the inability to think and articulate ourselves more than in one viewpoint.

Another view on language-teaching is needed; another kind of language-teaching is possible.



## ***2.2 The Basis of Linguoculturology***

In the history of humanities, and particularly linguistics, there have always been two positions and scientific approaches: comparative-historical linguistics and systemic linguistics. These two are well-known and featured in the works of linguists that are active in the XIX and the XX centuries. There is, however, a newer approach in linguistics – anthropocentric. Although its appearance on the science podium is relatively new, its roots are deep and connected to the works of scholars like Wilhelm von Humboldt, Alexander Potebnya, Lev Vygotsky, Baudouin de Courtenay and many others. The anthropocentric paradigm represents a shuffle in the interests of researchers – usually from the object of research to the subject, which means that man becomes the main interest of anthropocentric linguistics. This paradigm suggests that one becomes acquainted with the world around through oneself, thus the “linguistic persona”, which has the central place in linguoculturology. Accordingly, linguoculturology is a direct product of the anthropocentric paradigm in linguistics and has been actively developing in recent years.

In a time of active interdisciplinary processes, a time when new disciplines are being constantly formed, linguoculturology plays an even more important role in the stagnant state of modern linguistics and its application in linguadidactics. As a fairly new and promising discipline, linguoculturology started to appear up in books, monographies and articles in the 90’s, bringing with it a goal to integrate cultural studies and linguistics. Its appearance was also due to the interest in the interaction between language and culture, even though the awareness that language and culture influence each other has been present in the works of philosophers and researchers that date back to Ancient Greece.

One of the topics in linguoculturology (and in this thesis) is the problem of human adaptation in the surrounding cultural space, a controversial subject which nevertheless I intend to deconstruct and solve in this work. In addition, the next important task is to resolve the problem of the practical application of linguoculturology by creating linguacultural techniques that will help language-learners to comprehend the culture through an in-depth understanding of the target language.

When it comes to the source of linguoculturology, it is difficult to say who came first with the idea of linking culture and language together. Due to the axiomatic nature of this phenomenon, we will probably never be able to give a precise answer. One of the possible explanations is to suggest that Ancient Greeks came first with this idea when they described everyone who did not speak Greek as “barbarians”.

Moving fast forward into the beginning of the XIX century, we come across the name of Wilhelm von Humboldt, who is considered the founder of the general linguistics, philosophy of language and also the fundamentals for linguoculturology. He was the first among linguists of any era to consider the anthropological nature of language, intertwining linguistic, cultural and sociological problems. *We must look upon language, not as a dead product, but far more as a producing object and instrument of understanding... [that is] closely entwined with the inner mental activity* (Humboldt & Losonsky 1999: 48). Humboldt substantiated the systemic character of language, clearing the field for work on linguoculturology. He also succeeded in theoretically substantiating the balance between language, culture and thinking, thereby additionally providing a theoretical basis for the fundamentals of linguoculturology and its development. Humboldt’s main thought regarding the connection between culture and language is his famous saying about language being *the spirit of the people - ...language is the outer appearance of the spirit of the people; the language is their spirit and the spirit is their language; we can never think of them sufficiently as identical. How they actually conjoin with each other in one and the same source, beyond the reach of our conception, remains inexplicably hidden from us* (Humboldt & Losonsky 1999: 46). One of his best works in the field of linguistics is considered to be *On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species*. Here Humboldt sets forth his general theoretical views on language. In addition, the problems of general linguistics and certain aspects of language are examined and refined in some of his numerous articles in this book. The depth of Humboldt’s linguacultural conception is also manifested in the fact that philosophically comprehending the problem of the genesis of language, he then takes it to a place where the time factor is almost irrelevant or represents it as irrelevant. His research on language is not focused on external factors, but rather on internal genesis of language.

According to Humboldt, the power of the cultural principle is not available to the individual on demand. Culture opens up indirectly to him through its manifestations like language and civilization. Since direct cognition of culture is impossible, every attempt to do so is considered to be a mere reconstruction of its features.

In Humboldt's works and ideas language represents the main manifestation of human culture, and that is why the problem of the relationship between language and culture is one of the central topics in his work. Mutual supplementing is the main feature of their relationship. In his understanding, language is closely connected with the cultural development of mankind and accompanies it at every stage of its development, reflecting on the way every stage of cultural development.

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*Humboldt is often forgotten and often pushed to one side. This reflex is recurrent throughout history, but it is not so difficult to explain. Humboldt is the guilty conscience of modern linguistics. He is there to remind us that language is not simply about parts of speech, grammar, structure, rules and norms; language is about us. Speaking involves speakers.*

*(James W. Underhill. 2011, 16)*

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Humboldt's linguacultural conception criticized the idea [that was popular at that time] that language is a product of the conscious efforts of people. According to him, language cannot be explained as a cognitive conscious effort of the human mind. He thereby emphasizes the uniqueness of language as a cultural phenomenon and highlights the unconscious form of his existence, as well as the fact that the world around us is translated in thoughts and language. This means that language is dependent on man. It is not *some kind of dead mass that lies in the darkness of the soul, but determines the functions of human cognition*. One of the most important topics regarding Humboldt's linguacultural concept is the problem of how language and thought work, which is the reason why almost all of his works to a greater or lesser degree reflect on this question (especially in his essay *On Thinking and Speaking*). Within the framework of his linguacultural conception Humboldt expresses the idea that the individual is always in a search of a sign through which he could present the whole as a totality of entities. During this process of searching, the individual's mind is occupied with differentiation and analysis. He then constructs a whole, synthesizes concepts that allow processing, secondary differentiation, and new construction process.

Humboldt recognizes the connection between language and thinking to be unconditional, and that language represents itself as an indispensable prerequisite of thinking even during moments of total isolation from the human being.

**Language develops only in society.** It develops only when a person can understand themselves and only when he knows that other people around understand them. Certain writers (Adorno, Williams and Foucault) work within the framework of social sciences, and therefore tend to consider the individual as the 'product' of social systems (James W. Underhill. 2011, 3), and **language acquisition as a part of social systems is dependent upon the level of socialization.** This would mean that individuals are pressured to adapt to group's social system, which by itself evokes the deterministic view of language and individual's place in society.

Humboldt even goes to say that language (and thinking) is the only factor that makes any person a man, distinguishable from the rest of nature.

In his book '*On Language: On the Diversity of Human Language*', Humboldt puts forward his famous words and thesis that *language is not a product (ergon), but an activity (energeia)* (Humboldt & Losonsky 1999), meaning that language has been a subject of scientific scrutiny as a finished product, a complete work, rather than a *work in progress*. He highlights that language is a constantly renewed work of the spirit, aimed at making sounds suitable for expressing thought. In the same time the form of language is seen as something that is constant and in sync with the *activity of the spirit*. This way of understanding takes language on a level where it is not being understood and taken as a scientific abstraction, but a process that is constantly upgraded. Humboldt writes that each people receives its language from previous generations, and the activity of the spirit, has before itself a finished product that can only be enhanced and transformed in the future. This signifies that language is a continuous work of the spirit, without any moment of stagnation or stopping, continually developing under the influence of each and every speaker. Each person constantly strives to bring something new into the language, so that, by embodying the new material, it could again become under language's influence. As an example, Humboldt considers the adoption of language by children, which is not only a simple familiarization and learning of words, but a continuous growth of linguistic competence. According to his linguacultural concept there is an obvious connection between language and man's cultural activity. Since language is a cultural activity, as we said previously, this activity (or Energeia) can go in a certain way, i.e. in a certain form (this form ensures the systematic and unique nature of language activity). In simpler words, the distinctiveness and the systematic character which we see in language – is conditioned by its

connection with the people, with its national character, the way a nation thinks, the structure of its worldview. This lets us assert that **languages always have a national form, as they are clearly a people's creation**. But please make no mistake and deterministic claims – even though every language is a continuous activity of the people who use it, making it unique in some ways, still, there are essential features in all languages that can be found in all of them. Having a basic command of a certain language, no matter how different from ours, will enable us to ask for directions, order food or have a simple talk with someone.

Only when we want to go deeper and communicate at near native level, we encounter the *inner form of language*, in Humboldt's words. This principle is one of the signs that anticipate the modern understanding of language. *The inner form of language* represents the principle of how language is changing, making it different from others. There is also the *external form of language*, which effectively is the sound and grammar form of language, through which the inner form is manifested.

Breaking language into words and rules is the opposite of the goals linguoculturology has and this activity represents a sterile product of scientific analysis. Studying the *external form of language* is just the first step in understanding the secrets of language and its essence.

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*The form is contrasted, indeed, to a matter; but to find the matter of linguistic form, we must go beyond the bounds of language... In an absolute sense, there can be no formless matter within language, since everything in it is directed to a specific goal... The real matter of language is the totality of sense-impression and spontaneous mental activities which precede the creation of the concept with the aid of language.*  
[Humboldt & Losonsky 1999, 51/52]

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Russian linguist Alexander Potebnya, a follower of Humboldt's works, also adds that language is an absolute form of creativity only important to man (Potebnya 1993), which is why it has meaning only to man. This would also mean that language as *Energeia* is a creative

way for each man's understanding and perception of the world. If we were to go even further, we would say that, according to this, learning a language should be considered a form of art. Guy Deutscher (2011) also considers every **language to be a tool that grasps new aspects of the world other languages do not see or think about**. Until recently, linguists considered that only people's faces are different, and everything *on the inside* is the same, universal. Even though generative and cognitive linguists claim the opposite, the second generation of these groups believes that *each language system opens up for us 'a whole new world', a world in which 'objects of understanding', the concepts with which we speak and think, are shaped differently* (James W. Underhill. 2011).

The first chapter of this thesis contained a whole part dedicated to the questions of what *nation* is and how it is important to us. Humboldt also deals with important concepts like "nation" and "language". It is of the utmost importance to remember that **he understood "nation" and "people" to be nothing more than culture**. That is why there was a large portion of text in this thesis explaining the sources of 'nation' and 'nationalism'. Additionally, this is an indirect confirmation of my axiom that *language is culture and culture is language*.

Humboldt considers 'nation' and 'people' to be a form of the human spirit, which has a *linguistic status*. Every single language in the world, according to him, coincides with the number of nations, or, in his worlds – the number of cultures in the world. It is quite obvious from Humboldt's research that *the spirit of the people* and *nation* represent the culture of the people in its broadest sense. In his understanding, the richness of a language is directly related to the proportional impact and strength of national culture. He also has a thesis that different languages do not represent different designations of the same thing, but *different visions* of it, that is, a different view on the subject from different cultural positions.

To understand the contemporary state of linguoculturology, it is important to know that **Humboldt produced a position that language determines person's view of objective reality and his behavior**, a position that later was used as the basis of Sapir's and Whorf's Hypothesis of linguistic relativity, according to which language is determining the flow of reality in every single man.

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis was anticipated in Humboldt's words, envisaging the thought that language is used to form thoughts. Without language, concept forming is an impossible task. A concept cannot be created without a word attached to it – the word signifies the unity of the sound and the concept. However, more importantly, *the spirit of the people*

constantly strives to free itself from the bonds of the language, since words restrict inner evolving feelings. Language is something that is permanent, and at the same time is something that constantly changes. Continuous change and development is the key to the existence of language. As a cultural phenomenon, language evolves in individuals and in the collective. It can be revealed only when used, in writing or in speech. We can say that language is a collective organism, but it lives only in the speech of the individual. *Languages do exist, certainly, but they have no real existence outside of the minds of those who speak them. Of course, texts do exist. These very paragraphs prove this. Only the mind can reorganize the text into a meaningful discourse. It is our dynamic understanding of the relations between concepts that makes it possible for us to recognize the words of the text and to link them together to form a coherent, meaningful whole. Living languages live on in us* (James W. Underhill. 2011). The peculiarity of language use can be found in the idiosyncrasies of language perception. The object and the subject perceive the same language but produce different meaning and content. Hence, it follows that nobody perceives words exactly the same way and small shades of meaning run across the entire language space. Therefore, even when speaking the same language, two native speakers can also sometimes produce misunderstanding. Sapir and Whorf have a saying on this, claiming that language allows us to assimilate the world into consciousness, but this ‘world’ will always be transferred as a representation, not a model that can be learned. It is important to add that the “strong version” of their Hypothesis was never considered by Sapir and Whorf; they never tackled with ‘reality’, but rather, the different means that individuals use to grasp reality when we conceptualize the world and/or discuss during exchanges with others<sup>53</sup>. Even

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<sup>53</sup> Lera Boroditsky has an interesting TED talk on “How language shape the way we think” at TEDWomen 2017 ([Link](#)): ... *there isn't just one language in the world, there are about 7,000 languages spoken around the world. And all the languages differ from one another in all kinds of ways. Some languages have different sounds, they have different vocabularies, and they also have different structures -- very importantly, different structures. That begs the question: Does the language we speak shape the way we think? ... until recently, there hasn't been any data to help us decide either way ... Recently, in my lab and other labs around the world, we've started doing research, and now we have actual scientific data to weigh in on this question. I'll start with an example from an Aboriginal community in Australia that I had the chance to work with. These are the Kuuk Thaayorre people ... What's cool about Kuuk Thaayorre is, in Kuuk Thaayorre, they don't use words like "left" and "right," and instead, everything is in cardinal directions: north, south, east and west. And when I say everything, I really mean everything. You would say something like, "Oh, there's an ant on your southwest leg." Or, "Move your cup to the north-northeast a little bit." In fact, the way that you say "hello" in Kuuk Thaayorre is you say, "Which way are you going?" And the answer should be, "North-northeast in the far distance. How about you?" ... They stay oriented better than we used to think humans could ... Languages also differ in how they divide up the color spectrum -- the visual world. Some languages have lots of words for colors; some have only a couple words, "light" and "dark." And languages differ in where they put boundaries between colors. So, for example, in English, there's a word for blue that covers all of the colors that you can see on the screen, but in Russian, there isn't a single word. Instead, Russian speakers have to differentiate between light blue, "goluboy," and dark blue, "siniy." So, Russians have this lifetime of experience of, in language, distinguishing these two colors. When we test people's ability to perceptually discriminate these colors, what we find is that Russian speakers are faster across this linguistic boundary. They're faster to be able to tell the difference between a light and dark blue. And when you look at*

one single noun like 'freedom' can mean something completely different between different cultures (and diachronically in the core of one single culture). The fundamental concept of 'freedom' would mean one thing for Macedonians and something completely different for Germans or Americans. A citizen in Macedonia could say that 'freedom' is basically the freedom of speech, whilst for Americans 'freedom' evokes the freedom of the individual, as well as the freedom to express on all levels of societal life. Nevertheless, if we compare this example diachronically in the course of one culture, we would also get different results. The concept of 'freedom' during the existence of Socialist Federal Republic of Macedonia meant freedom from poverty, freedom to have a guaranteed job, equal rights to education and freedom from hunger and homelessness; in the XXI century this concept is mostly referred to freedom of speech.

Humboldt formulated two main ideas that are part of modern linguoculturology: the idea that language is a product of national culture and society and that language system and language organization have impact on the nation's world picture and the behavior of every human being (granted that every person is a member of some nation/culture).

Following from the positions described so far, language does not exist outside of culture as it represents an inherited set of practical skills and ideas that characterize people's way of life. As a part of human activity, language is an integral part of culture, which is defined as a set of actions, human activity in various parts of a person's or nation's life.

Additional important component and a kind of an incentive for learning foreign languages with an applied cultural aspect is the thought that language is not only part of culture, but also its developing fragment, evolving under the influence of the current zeitgeist. This way language creates certain linguacultural field that causes other cultural elements to unfold in various ways in culture, religion, art, literature etc.

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*people's brains as they are looking at colors -- say you have colors shifting slowly from light to dark blue -- the brains of people who use different words for light and dark blue will give a surprised reaction as the colors shift from light to dark, as if, "Ooh, something has categorically changed," whereas the brains of English speakers, for example, that don't make this categorical distinction, don't give that surprise, because nothing is categorically changing ... Languages have all kinds of structural quirks. This is one of my favorites. Lots of languages have grammatical gender; every noun gets assigned a gender, often masculine or feminine. And these genders differ across languages. So, for example, the sun is feminine in German but masculine in Spanish, and the moon, the reverse. Could this actually have any consequence for how people think? Do German speakers think of the sun as somehow more female-like and the moon somehow more male-like? Actually, it turns out that's the case. So if you ask German and Spanish speakers to, say, describe a bridge, like the one here -- "bridge" happens to be grammatically feminine in German, grammatically masculine in Spanish -- German speakers are more likely to say bridges are "beautiful," "elegant" and stereotypically feminine words. Whereas Spanish speakers will be more likely to say they're "strong" or "long," these masculine words.*



Another person that touched the surface of linguoculturology was August Schleicher, a XIX century German linguist, famous for his attempts to reconstruct the Proto-Indo-European language, but even more famous for his theory that language is an organism.

Linguists usually consider August Schleicher to be the creator of the naturalistic conception of language, as he considered language to be no different than living organisms. He considered that languages are born, grow, develop and die.

Following the publication of Darwin's famous Theory of Evolution, the XIX century was a big leap forward for biologists and naturalists. The idea of evolution penetrated linguistics, producing the abovementioned theory. Without going into much details, it should be mentioned that the natural principle assumes, according to Schleicher, that languages as a *natural organism* exist independently from man and it cannot be changed (Шаклеин 2012). Life of a language is the same as the life of a man and its substance and maturity is reflected in its dialects, which in time are lost and die along with language; linguistics should be based on the precise observation of organisms etc.

In my opinion,, comparing languages with biological organisms is meaningless. Another disagreement with Schleicher's view on language has to do with his postulate that language as a natural organism functions and exists outside man's will and thus, it cannot be changed. Also, August Schleicher argues that linguistics should be researched the same way as a biological organism is. Later in his works he makes a turn in his view on language as an organism, recognizing that *only the main features of Darwin's views can be applied to language*, adding that *languages are too different from the realms of vegetables and animals; thus, Darwin's reasoning cannot be applied in its full sense on languages*. Linguists like Roman Jakobson write *...для всех людей – и не только для людей – язык является средством умственной и духовной жизни и средством общения* (Якобсон 1998: 306)<sup>54</sup>. Taking this into account, it means that language and culture connect outside the biological needs of people and it cannot be studied as a natural organism.

Going fast forward to the XXI century, according to the position of modern linguoculturology, language does not exist outside culture as a socially inherited set of practical skills and ideas that characterize our way of life. Language is one of the types of human activity, and as such it is an integral part of culture, integrating the totality of human activities in different spheres of human life. Paraphrasing Humboldt, **language exists as a tool for the process of**

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<sup>54</sup> *Якобсон Р.* Избранные работы по лингвистике. - Благовещенск: БГК им. И.А. Бодуэна де Куртене, 1998

**thinking in line with culture.** As we are dealing with language units in this thesis, it is natural to say that they represent the language as the leading component, and the cultural realities come afterwards. At the same time language units are bearers of culture - we cannot just see language as purely a mixture of language signs. Those language signs are reflection of a certain national culture. Along with these, language becomes a cultural phenomenon.

When analyzing from the standpoint of the structure and the way language works (no matter if it is native or foreign), we can see that languages are components of culture. At the same time, the cultural component is not just some kind of cultural information that is communicated by language. It is an inherent feature of language, essential to all its levels (Ju. D. Apresjan. 1995; 348). Language is a powerful social tool that shapes people into ethnos, and by doing so, it creates what we call a “nation” through collecting and transferring culture, traditions and the peoples’ consciousness (Gak 1998; 16). Even Yuri Lotman shares the opinion that languages take the first place among the national-specific components of culture; language contributes to the fact that culture can be both a means of communication and a means of separating people; language is a sign of belonging to its bearers (Ju. M. Lotman. 2002; 84).

The language every group of people uses is an integral part of the national culture, and this fact is recognized today by many researchers, even though this realm of linguoculturology is just beginning to be taken into consideration. To some extent language as a phenomenon of national culture is analyzed by sociolinguistics, which examines the problems of bilingualism and the preferences people have when using certain languages, including jargons, slang, argot

speech etc. Ethnolinguistics<sup>55, 56</sup> goes even further into the study of the relation between language and culture, but unfortunately it does not cover the whole specter of tasks set by linguoculturology. Russian linguist Valentina Teliya considers linguoculturology as part of ethnolinguistics, and that ethnolinguistics is devoted to the study and description of the synchronous interaction of language and culture. I, however, do consider that the study of language-culture interaction should remain within the sphere of the spiritual culture of a given nation, along with its literature, art, education, science, religion. This framework is broader than the goal of ethnolinguistics, giving linguoculturology a wide space to include, for example, national mentality.

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<sup>55</sup> I do anticipate that there may be many questions on the relation/difference between linguoculturology, ethnolinguistics, sociolinguistics etc. which is why I feel it is important to share a rather large part from [“Лингвокультурология и этнолингвистика как смежные науки о языке и культуре в российском и германской научных пространствах”](#) (Mark Oparin) in original writing: Каково же место лингвокультурологии среди наук о языке и культуре? Многие российские ученые указывают на родство лингвокультурологии с этнолингвистикой и социолнгвистикой. Так у Н. И. Толстого мы находим: «Этнолингвистика и социолнгвистика могут расцениваться как два основных компонента (раздела) одной более общей дисциплины, с той лишь разницей, что первая учитывает, прежде всего, специфические - национальные, народные, племенные - особенности этноса, в то время как вторая - особенности социальной структуры конкретного этноса (социума) и этноса (социума) вообще, как правило, на более поздней стадии его развития применительно к языковым процессам, явлениям и структурам». Более общей дисциплиной, по-видимому, и является лингвокультурология. В. А. Маслова указывает на существенные различия между тремя вышеупомянутыми дисциплинами, подчёркивая, что лингвокультурология имеет глобальный характер, исследуя как исторические, так и современные языковые факты, в то время как этнолингвистика исторические, а социолнгвистика только современные языковые факты. Если этнолингвистика оперирует преимущественно исторически значимыми данными и стремится в современном материале обнаружить исторические факты того или иного этноса, а социолнгвистика рассматривает исключительно материал сегодняшнего дня, то лингвокультурология исследует и исторические, и современные языковые факты сквозь призму духовной культуры.

Сопоставляя российскую лингвокультурологию и этнолингвистику в западном понимании, мы имеем дело, как с общими чертами, так и с различиями между данными дисциплинами. Целью западной этнолингвистики является изучение языка и речи в культурном контексте, она является частью лингвистики, которая определяет место лингвистики в культуре, в то время как цели и задачи лингвокультурологии сосредоточены на изучении взаимоотношений языка и культуры, то есть находятся между двумя данными понятиями и имеют ярко выраженный междисциплинарный характер. Анализ ряда смежных с лингвокультурологией и западной этнолингвистикой дисциплин позволяет сделать вывод о том, что аналогом лингвокультурологии выступают несколько устоявшихся в немецком языковом пространстве наук. К ним относятся уже рассмотренная этнолингвистика и теория межкультурной коммуникации.

As it can be seen from this rather large excerpt, the West lacks analogous discipline like linguoculturology, as most of its efforts are directed towards more “practical”, everyday use of the relation between language and culture in business, administration, finance, trade etc.

<sup>56</sup> Another point of view on the relation between cultural linguistics and language is given by Baydak Alexandra V., Scharitho Claudia, Il'yashenko Irina A. (Baydak et al., 2015): Cultural linguistics is closely related to the other cognitive area – ethnolinguistics. The fundamental difference in these two areas, scientists see in the object of study. In the center of ethnolinguistics are only those elements of the lexical system of language, which correlated with certain material or cultural and historical complexes. It should be noted that ethnolinguistics is much “older” than cultural linguistics and is rooted in Western science to von Humboldt, E. Sapir, B. Whorf, and in Russian science – to the research of A.A. Shakhmatov, A.A. Potebnya and others. Cultural linguistics and ethnolinguistics unite on the basis of common objectives: to study the interaction of two different codes – language and culture. Ethnolinguistics, as well as cultural linguistics, is a complex science, but ethnolinguistics studies the interaction of linguistic, ethno-cultural and ethno-psychological factors in the functioning and development of the language.

The foundation of linguoculturology is developed via the idea that there is an inseparable link between language and culture. In order for the researcher even to start working on the problems mentioned in this thesis, he has to be convinced that language does not fall out from the general laws of development of culture, and thus, he can use the whole specter of methods used in the analysis of culture. It can be said that linguoculturology deals with culture and language in the synchronic development, but if necessary, it can base its results also on diachronic studies.

### ***2.3 The Development of Linguoculturology***

- Area studies and Cultural studies;**
- The role of ‘background knowledge’ in language-learning;**
- Pluricentric languages and conceptual cores**
- Language realia**

As the name itself suggests, linguoculturology signifies the relationship between culture and language. In this thesis, we use the term *linguoculturology and linguaculture* along with *cultural linguistics*<sup>57</sup>, as both of them denote the relation between language and culture.

Karen Risager (2010) from the Department of Language and Culture at the University of Roskilde in Denmark, who actively deals with the questions of culture and languages, adds: *linguoculturology encompasses three interrelated dimensions: a semantic and pragmatic potential, a poetic potential and an identity potential. Linguoculturology may be a key concept in the understanding of language as both social and a cultural phenomenon.* As it was said earlier in this thesis, ethnolinguistics is also dealing with the relation between language and culture, but its newer sister-discipline goes step further and taps into the synchronic and diachronic development of language and culture, including the national mentality and its influence on lexical units.

When it comes to the emergence of linguoculturology and its application in foreign language learning, Karen Risager also writes about pre-national, national and post-national phase of language teaching. Before the mid-XIX century, language teaching was not nationally

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<sup>57</sup> Cultural linguistics is a philological discipline that describes the correspondence of language and culture in their synchronous interaction. The term "cultural linguistics" clearly indicates the interrelation between two fields - linguistics and cultural studies. It is also a branch of cognitive linguistics and cultural studies, studying the expression of the people's culture that has been captured and entrenched in the language. While cognitive linguistics aims at answering the question of how in general the human mind is organized, how a person explores the world and what information about the world becomes knowledge, cultural linguistics focuses primarily on a human being in his culture and his language. Cultural linguistics studies and describes the means and methods of interaction of language and culture; it is aimed at the study of how the forms of existence of culture of various ethnic groups are reflected and fixed in language. How does a person see the world? – That is the principal question to be answered by cultural linguistics, which studies language as a cultural phenomenon (Baydak et al. 2015).

oriented. As an example of a pre-national textbook, the Latin *lanua linguarum reserata* (Comenius 1649) had a universal and encyclopedic content divided into 100 chapters on topics such as the elements, the earth, the body, the economy, grammar, music, geography, history and angels. It was translated into several languages and it appeared in multilingual editions with reading passages divided into, for example, a Latin, a Greek and a French column (Risager, 2010).

During the XIX century, as it was explicated in the first chapter of this work - the nation-building in Europe began. That process found its place in the language teaching process, when language found its place in the new paradigm of nation-building. Even though we live in an age when a general deconstruction of the nationalistic paradigm is taking place, boosted by growing internationalization - national focus in language teaching is still present and it continues to be for many decades to come. When it comes to English, we have a slightly different situation. Some view language merely as a code, something that can be learned without the need to go deep in cultural concepts. Of course, teaching English as an international language today can be viewed as a fact that supports this point of view, but that can be true only if we are talking about fast, practical, and applied language learning. In other words - language is always cultural, and if a language learner wants to discern the language they learn - it must be followed by the cultural concepts.

### **Area and Cultural Studies**

Even though discussion regarding teaching culture started long time ago, practical inclusion of culture in language classes started in the second half of the XX century. Edward T. Hall considered that introducing cultural facts about the country would generally improve the intercultural and communicative competence of the person who actively interacts with foreigners. Before starting his work, he explicitly accused Americans of ethnocentrism when dealing with foreigners *...insisting that everyone else do things our way When Americans are sent abroad to deal with other peoples they should first be carefully selected as to their suitability to work in a foreign culture. They should also be taught to speak and read the language of the country of assignment and thoroughly trained in the culture of the country* (Hall 1959, 13).

According to Hall, culture can be learned. If culture can be learned, it can be learned alongside with language, and not just being taught independently.

Cultural studies appeared in curriculums around the world during the second half of the XX century, introducing the everyday culture of people around the world. What strikes most about these cultural studies is the fact that learning about cultures had to do a lot with binary learning: learning what is right to do, and what is wrong to do. Either you break a rule in a foreign culture or you do not. Almost like learning a language at that time.

The appearance of university programs for *Language and Cultural Studies*<sup>58</sup> seemed to be the next step in the conjoining of language and culture in linguaculture. Even today such programs are broad and can be found in major universities.

The Department for Continuing Education at Oxford University offers a program for *Language and cultural studies*. Besides basic information regarding the place and courses, this is what the web-site offers as a description:

**Why study a language?**

- To discover new cultures;
- To become more open-minded;
- To meet new people and develop friendships;
- To gain a practical skill;
- To connect better with the locals when travelling;
- To communicate more effectively in business;
- For an intellectual challenge;
- To gain an international outlook.

Studying a foreign language brings benefits, such as acquiring a practical skill, getting to know the nuances of a foreign culture, and engaging in study as part of a small group<sup>59</sup>.

Quite interesting to see that there is no mentioning of culture even in the “Why study this?” section, explaining the benefits of taking this program. The first answer to “Why?” is *To discover new cultures*. Strangely enough, culture is not even an “equal” during the process of studying languages. If I were to interpret this, even *Language and cultural studies* at Oxford University takes culture as a process that starts after language studies, which comes to be quite absurd, given that culture and language are intertwined and should be taught appropriately. On

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<sup>58</sup> Such programs are still to be found around the world. Some examples of that are: University of Oxford, Trinity College, University of Missouri-St. Louis, Malmö University, Deakin University, Suffolk University, University of Alberta, Eastern University and many more.

<sup>59</sup> [www.conted.ox.ac.uk](http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk)

the other hand, Summer Institute of Linguistics in Dallas, Texas, has an introductory text that could satisfy even the most demanding cultural linguist:

*On a practical level, language has to do with sounds, symbols and gestures that a community puts in order and associates so that they can communicate. On a deeper level, language is an expression of who we are as individuals, communities, nations. Culture refers to dynamic social systems and shared patterns of behavior, beliefs, knowledge, attitudes and values. Culture provides the environment in which languages develop, even as it influences how they are used and interpreted. For example, in many European cultures a “good day” is a sunny day, while in many African cultures a “good day” is a rainy day. Different culturally shared values provide the context for interpreting the term for “good”<sup>60</sup>.*

In the last two decades of the XX century, the term ‘cultural linguistics’ has been increasingly used in conjunction with the term ‘linguistic, area studies’, ‘cultural studies’ etc. Prior to that, the idea of introducing culture in language teaching and research was done by ‘cultural studies’ or ‘area/geographic studies’. No one can be completely sure as to the names of the disciplines that deal with the introduction of culture in the study of foreign languages, which is why we will use only the two previously mentioned terms in the text, which are also the most common linguistic literature. What comes to mind is ‘Cultural Studies’ or ‘Лингвострановедение’ [in Russia]) as part of language science and studies that includes teaching of language and giving certain information about the country of the language that is being studied. In the process of language teaching, elements of regional specificities are combined with linguistic phenomena, which act not only as a means of communication, but also as a way of acquainting learners with the new realities within the language they learn. Along with mastering the foreign language theoretically the student should master the ability to understand the mentality, the points of view of the foreign language speakers.

‘Area and Cultural studies’<sup>61</sup> represent a part of linguistics, but also are (or were) part of language teaching, as their primary function was to provide information about the target language and the country (or countries) where this language is spoken. During the process of language teaching cultural elements are combined with language teaching text/exercises, acting

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<sup>60</sup> <https://www.sil.org/why-language-culture-studies>

<sup>61</sup> Language and cultural studies goals are commendable and have a lot in common with the idea in this thesis, but it is my opinion they still lack a more sophisticated analytical substance, something we will discuss about further in the text.



not only as models/prototype for communication exercises, but also as a way of acquainting students with the cultural realities within the target language. During the process of language-learning, these disciplines helped mastering cultural knowledge and the ability to understand the worldview and mentality of speakers of the target language. Therefore, the educational value lies in the fact, that the introduction with the culture of the target language goes along with the comparison of the concepts in the native/first language (L1) and the newly learned concepts in target language. Thus, area and cultural studies main goal was to create cultural competence in students using intercultural communication, primarily through adequate perception of the interlocutor's speech and understanding the concepts in the language that is being learned.

## Background Knowledge

*Although our schools do comparatively well in teaching elementary decoding skills, they do less well than schools of some other countries in teaching the background knowledge that pupils must possess to succeed at mature reading tasks.*

(Hirsch et al. 1987, p.27)

The expectation that foreign language students should master the target language also assumes the necessity of forming cultural and linguistic competence that is also an integral part of communicative competence. The basis of area and cultural studies competences is represented by the **background knowledge** the typical native speaker has (the same background knowledge the language student should acquire). In this context ‘background knowledge’ also represents **the knowledge of language and cultural realities needed for the execution of standard communication between the speakers of two different languages, one of which learns/speaks the interlocutor’s language**. The presence of common background knowledge is the main prerequisite for adequate and successful communication, especially when participants in the communication situation belong to different linguistic cultures. Building background knowledge in beginner level classes creates more interest in the object of study. When teachers link the new material with the concepts students already know, they stimulate student’s interest and motivation, giving them a purpose for learning. However, my opinion is that this can be applied at beginner and/or intermediate level language teaching. When it comes to advanced level language teaching, as it is the case in this thesis, background knowledge should be acquired analytically and through individual efforts.

According to E. Vereščagin and V. Kostomarov (E. M. Vereščagin & V. G. Kostomarov, 1990), the main goal of area and cultural studies is to provide communicative competence for intercultural communication, primarily through adequate perception of the interlocutor’s speech and understanding authentic texts. They also add that the basis for linguistic and cultural competence is comprised of the background knowledge that a typical representative of the target language possesses. In their view, ‘background knowledge’ is the

awareness and basis needed for two parties (native speakers or otherwise) to mutually understand each other. The Free Online Dictionary by Farlex offers another definition: *information that is essential to understanding a situation or problem.*

Literary texts, journalistic articles and other kinds of materials can be used as main material in language and cultural studies, since texts found there clearly manifest cultural and regional specificities. Thus, the main goal of language and cultural studies is to provide communicative competence and a ground for solid intercultural communication. This implies that this program should present basic background knowledge to language students about the studies language and its community, and also ability for students to use that background knowledge to achieve mutual understanding in intercultural situations.

The so-called ‘cultural background knowledge’ contains nominative units that often possess extralinguistic content that reflects national culture directly or indirectly. This background knowledge often references to the history, geography, folklore, traditions, and politics of the country. In other words, background knowledge represents the *national and cultural component* of nominative units.

As it is commonly known, lexical units contain conceptual core with various vocabulary interpretations, as well as other non-conceptual meanings that reflect expressiveness, appreciation, emotionality, associations that are peculiar to the speakers of a peculiar language. The totality of these incomprehensible meanings, along with the different conceptual meanings words have is all known by many terms, but mostly by *background knowledge, linguoculturology, national-cultural components* etc. **Every single language has its own conceptual core that differs from cores in other languages**, but it also happens that different countries and people that speak the same language also have different cores within one common language. The best two examples would be German, English and Spanish. German is spoken in large parts of Switzerland, Austria, and, of course, Germany. Even though these countries speak the same language, at the same time they “speak” different conceptual cores. Apart from differentiating between different words that have appeared in the German language varieties in these countries, their unique historical, cultural, political experience produced linguacultural cores that in some cases make these language varieties incomprehensible to citizens of these

countries. After Austria became a member of the European Union in 1995, Austrian variety of a pluricentric language<sup>62</sup> became the only one to be recognized as such under EU primary law.

Another example is English and Spanish. They are both pluricentric languages, even to a more advanced level than German. Spanish as a pluricentric language is spoken in more than twenty countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Spain, the United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela... Each of these Hispanic countries has its own linguistic norms, some of which are shared with all the others, some of which are shared with neighboring countries, and some are possessed uniquely (Michael Clyne 1992; 45). One can only deduct that all of these countries have different conceptual and cultural codes, making their language variety even slightly incomprehensible to other Spanish speakers from other countries. Same goes for English in the United States of America, Canada, Britain, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, India etc.

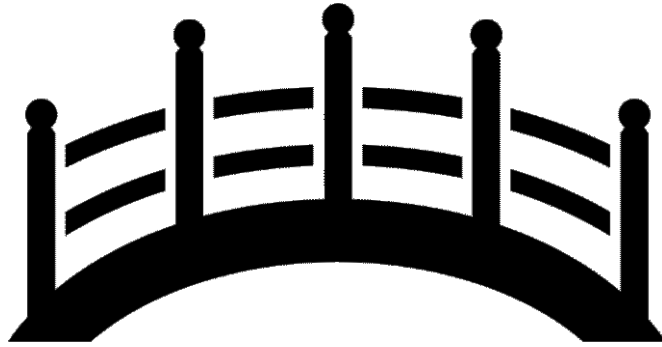
Today this is mostly recognized even by companies that produce language learning software. *Rosetta Stone* in its latest version as of 2018 (5.0.13) has two versions of English: *English (American)* and *English (British)* and two versions of Spanish: *Spanish (Spain)* and *Spanish (Latin America)*.

It is commonly accepted in today's language teaching that English is learned as *American* or *British English*, not because of the different pronunciation or the different words that differentiate these polycentric versions of English, but because of the different conceptual cores and the non-conceptual meanings.

Martha Young's (2013) graphic representation on bridging different conceptual cores and background knowledge is simple, yet powerful enough:

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<sup>62</sup> The term *pluricentric* (also polycentric) was employed by Kloss (Winter & Kloss 1953) to describe languages with several interacting centers, each providing a national variety with at least some of its own (codified) norms. Pluricentric languages are both unifiers and dividers of people. They unify people through the use of the language, and separate them through the development of national norms and indices and linguistic variables with which the speakers identify. They mark group boundaries indicating who belongs and who does not. (Michael Clyne 1992)



Bridging background knowledge by native speakers (home culture, home language, prior learning, prior experiences, etc).



Bridging background knowledge by L2 language learners (new culture, new language, no prior experience, new cultural expectations, academic literacy and language demands).

During the process of language-learning one will surely identify national and cultural components that differ from those in one's native language. When this happens, comparison is necessary, because words that do not have equivalents in the target language, as well as those who have different background meaning – do not fall in an absolute category (*linguistic determinism*), but to a relative one. In addition, in reference to words that do not have their own equivalents in the target language – this can be the case only in relation between two languages. What is dissimilar in one set of languages does not have to be true in another set.

Nonequivalent or words with different background meanings are the subject of area and cultural studies. Identifying such words is done by comparing the first and second culture and language, which allows us to identify specific features of culture that are most common in the second language.

The analysis of the main standpoints of ‘Area studies’ and ‘Cultural studies’ allows us to conclude that it is impossible to achieve adequate mutual understanding between two persons with different language and cultural background without the knowledge of nominative units that carry dissimilar semantic and background meaning. One way of solving this problem is to identify these lexical units (language realities, connotative lexical units [similar nomination but different cultural associations], background language units [similar nominations in both languages, but different national features and meanings]). The identification of these lexical units should be carried out according to several criteria: cultural and regional value, frequency of use, word’s place in the conceptual core, thematicity and popularity. Identifying these lexical units leads us to the problem of their selection and classification for further use in the language class, which is why this issue is closely related to the issue of ‘language realia’. The term “language realia” is widely used in linguistics and translation studies. Even though it is widely used in Academia today, there are still no clear criteria on what ‘language realia’ is in research literature. Faculty of Arts (Charles University) in Prague hosts a team of researchers that investigate Czech language realia and produce texts that should educate expatriates, migrants, and local people on current language realia. This team’s project is named “Alphabet of Czech realia”, and language realia is defined among the members of the team as concept/phenomenon that is connected to history, culture, the way of life of Czechs, phenomena that is unique just to them and plays crucial role in defining Czech people.

My view on language realia goes even deeper. I view them as a kind of **reference objects in objective reality; precedent phenomena of every single culture; objects of thought with which intracultural communication is correlated**. Speaking of intracultural and intercultural communication, language realia can be divided into three groups:

1. **Universal language realia** – lexical units that have identical attributes in any compared culture;
2. **Quasi language realia** – lexical units that have identical primary attributes, but have different secondary attributes;
3. **Unique language realia** – lexical units with unique primary and secondary attributes when compared with any given culture.

Alongside lexical units that exist in multiple cultures but have same or different primary or secondary attributes, it seems logical to conclude that *unique language realia* are, in fact, equivalent lexical units that can be found only in one or few linguacultures.

Researchers working on “Alphabet of Czech realia” direct their effort on creating linguacultural texts that contain core information that needs to be absorbed by immigrants and expatriates that would like to integrate into the Czech linguo-culture. Other researchers group language realia based on thematic associations. Some linguists (Красных 2002) even suggest another approach on the use of quasi and unique language realia in texts – providing linguacultural comment within text or in the textbook’s header. When it comes to language textbooks, it is my opinion that this is the absolute minimum authors should use while creating language textbooks. This approach is essential when it comes to precedent phenomena in language (Jovanov 2011). The aim of linguacultural comment is to form wider background knowledge, which is necessary for a broader reception of the language picture of the target language. Marina Shakhmatova proposed<sup>63</sup> eleven types of linguacultural commentaries that can be applied for quasi and unique language realia: commentaries explaining the lexical meaning coming from information derived from dictionaries; commentaries that use various number of lexical units that explain the cultural background, historical background, commentary containing information on how lexical units came to existence, personal explanatory commentary, etymological commentary, word-formative commentary, contextual commentary, reference commentary, historical commentary, and extended area commentary.

Linguoculturology’s object of study is the spiritual and material culture, as well as verbalized artifacts that help create the language picture of the world, which plays a major role in understanding what cultural linguistics is. **Linguoculturology focuses on the system of cultural values and meanings that exist in every contemporary society, found in the background knowledge of the typical representative on the linguacultural community.** The next step is to transfer these values and meanings to the language student, in order to achieve mutual understanding in situations of direct and indirect intercultural communication; adequately using language realia and applying them in appropriate situations. University campuses are places where students’ mindsets and horizons should expand through both study of experience and exchange of linguacultural information. Cultural education receives increasing attention in the last few decades as one of the main goals of education, one that encourages students to consider diversity and difference in what is often conceived as an expanding and globalized world (Kearney 2008).

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<sup>63</sup> Шахматова, М.А. and Ен, Б., 1996. Типология лингвострановедческих комментариев. *Вестник СПбГУ. Серия 2.*

## ***2.4 Language-learning, Worldview and Concept***

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*Since the 1990s it has become more and more clear that the traditional national paradigm of language teaching and learning is out of sync with the complexity of the modern world. The language teacher of today has to take account of the shifting landscapes of languages and cultures and try to enact an alternative to the national paradigm.*  
*[Risager: 2010]*

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Learning a new language has always been a daunting task for everybody who expressed a wish to embark on such a journey. Just the sheer mention that one would like to learn a new language is seen as a difficult intellectual activity that will take years to complete (given that one chooses to learn a language on a near native level).

Choosing a new language is seen as choosing the level of difficulty in a computer game. Of course, many things depend on the native language one speaks. One would hardly be amazed if a Macedonian speaker says they will learn Serbian or Bulgarian, as those languages are common in the country and almost everybody understands them (and quite a lot people even speak them). But if one chooses German, Japanese or Hebrew – that would leave some open jaws or at least risen eyebrows. Besides the choice of a specific language to learn, learning a language lifts our confidence. Even more so when we meet someone we can speak our newly learned language with. But, surely, the ultimate experience in learning languages is the sudden discovery when one starts to discover new ways of thinking and communicating in the target language.

Everywhere on the planet where developed educational systems are established, people are learning a new foreign language starting at a certain age. Some of us learn it later in life



some learn it earlier. Some people learn a new language with difficulties, some quickly and effortlessly. However, before a child acquires a certain language, certain categorization already takes place (Mandler 1997). But, as Pavlenko (2011) points out, language is immensely powerful and is responsible for a great deal of restructuring of previously formed categories. When a child learns a language, it **undergoes through a cognitive revolution, learning to construct new macro-concepts**. These macro-concepts (which are part of our “cultural baggage”) are precisely the contribution of language to our thinking. Language invades our thinking because languages are good to think with. (Levinson, 2001: 584). Boas also gives a good insight: *...the categories of language compel us to see the world arranged in certain definite conceptual groups which, because of our lack of knowledge of linguistic processes, are taken as objective categories, and which, therefore, impose themselves upon the form of our thoughts* (Boas 1973 in Lucy 1996: 15).

Obviously, as anthropocentric linguistics in the XX century has showed us - language plays a major role in conceptualizing the world around us. This concept continues to develop steadily in the XXI century.

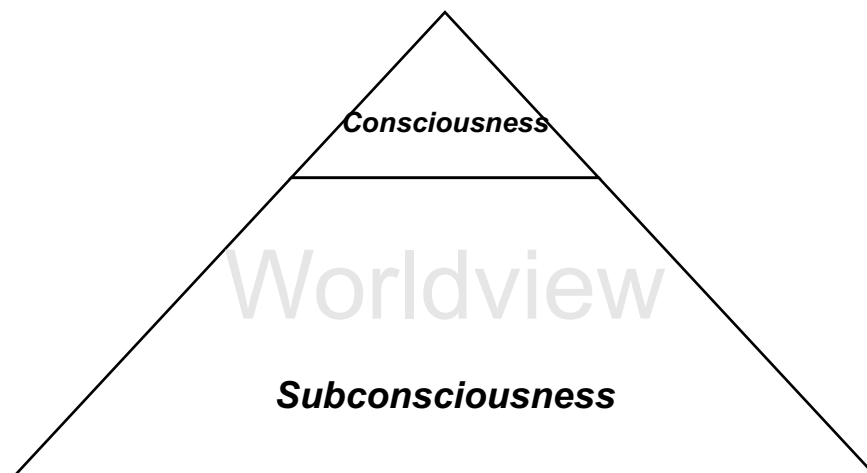
### **2.4.1 Worldview**

Every single human on this planet has a worldview. People from developed and undeveloped countries, continents and islands, mountainous areas and low lands – all have worldviews. One of the most interesting things in this context is that all the worldviews of this world are different (even those of twins who live with each other for years). Worldviews shape our reactions in the world around us. They help us understand the world (although not always successfully), as well as to find an appropriate response to the realities and challenges we face. The worldview guides our thinking, dictates whether what we feel is normal and what is not normal, what is acceptable or unacceptable. The notion of worldview is also connected with such notions as orientation and map. Apostel sees worldview as a map that people use to orient and explain... (Aerts 2011, 140). For example, some societies have been characterized by large levels of crime and corruption during long periods. This situation creates a mental representation (worldview) among representatives of these societies, according to which they consider crime or corruption as completely normal phenomena. Their overall lives are knotted according to their worldview. This creates a state when people's thoughts, actions, and feelings are characterized by mercantile attitudes. They evaluate everything through the prism if one thing can be obtained through money (once it cannot be obtained by morally accepted means).

Danesh (2008) is introducing 'worldview' in a most precise way: *This term refers to a mental framework within which individuals and groups interpret the nature of reality, the nature and purpose of human life, and the laws governing human relationships. Worldviews are shaped by our life experiences, and at the same time they reshape our approach to life.* Both on the personal and the societal level, worldview represents a "mirror" in which we see ourselves, others, and how we see the world. Worldview is not transferred to individuals as a finished product. It is formed and changes just as the conditions surrounding the individual change. It is changed by the family in which we grow up and develop, through the traditions we accept or are imposed upon us, through education, religious views, political orientation, mass media and so on. The worldview develops as a direct reaction to the development of consciousness, which is formed through the sum of all our individual events in our life.

It is important to note that even though we are aware that “some invisible mental program” directs our everyday lives, we are even less aware (or completely unaware) that much of this mental program (worldview) is not available to our conscious thoughts. We are partially conscious of the worldview we hold. Most of what directs our daily practices and thoughts remain below the surface of our conscious awareness (Danesh 2008):

As I mentioned previously, our worldviews are created by the traditions of the societies in which we grow, the educational systems that teach and indoctrinate us, the media and the books that we read and see, but most importantly, all these elements come to us through language. The worldview contains all rational and irrational markers that define us as human beings, but most importantly, whether they are rational or not, they come to us through the language that is common to both. And, as we have already concluded, language is culture, meaning they play the major role in the creation of what we are. When a language "invades" our conceptualization ability, in a way it determines our worldview.



When someone uses the term "worldview" there is a high probability of critique aimed at the author. Mostly because this is a term that still cannot be unilaterally defined. The term comes from Wilhelm von Humboldt, who was a German politician and philologist. It was Humboldt, who permanently linked languages with world views [Weltanschauung-Weltansicht]<sup>64</sup>, arguing that '*the differences between languages are not those of sounds and signs but those of differing worldviews*' (1836, translated in Humboldt, 1963: 246). Nowadays, we see this term operating in numerous disciplines, but in the mid-twentieth century this term was "revitalized" and brought into daylight with the help of Sapir and Whorf and their Whorf-

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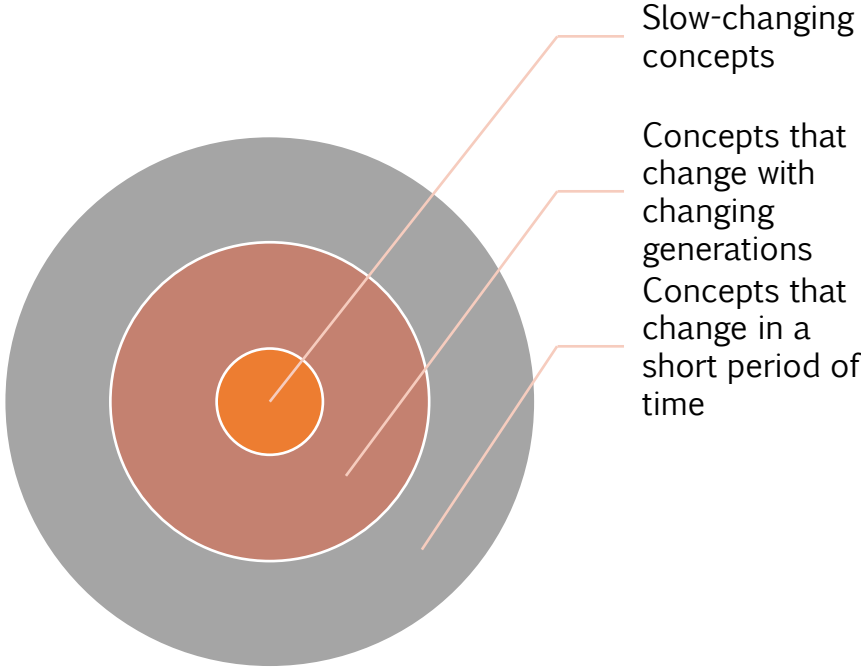
<sup>64</sup> Separate subchapter on this matter is to be found in the text.

Sapir hypothesis, according to which *a language's difference results in a different intellectual and affective structuring* for the mind of the speaker of a language community (Dubois et. al. 1994, 511).

James Underhill (2011) distinguishes three dimensions on worldview:

1. The worldview of the language system, that mode of understanding which provides us with concepts and which organizes the relationships between those concepts.
2. The worldview of each cultural mindset, a worldview which paradoxically must take root within a given linguistic worldview, but which can migrate between language systems (as the spread of Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism and communism clearly demonstrates).
3. The worldview of the individual who finds its highest expression in the works of great writers who cultivate their language as Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Goethe, Shakespeare or Orwell have done.

The worldview system is also a subject to change. Just as society changes every single day (in a slow, but continuous nature), even the most pervasive worldviews change, as worldview by its nature does not exist outside of the human mind but is our constant companion.



**Graph:** A representation of how the system of concepts and worldview can look like and change over time: some concepts that create the worldview are subject to a very slow change that can take up to centuries, some concepts change as generations change and others change according to daily events.

### ***2.4.2 Language and Worldview***

John Locke's empiricist view on language represents language as a mere tool or instrument that helps us pick out objects in the real world via the words we use (that are directly linked to the reality they depict). According to Lock (as found in [Hewitt 2016]), our ideas are derived from our impressions, and our ideas are expressed in concepts. This would mean that impressions come first > then concepts > concepts are to be found in language (constructed based on concepts derived from the impression to which they correspond).

Hermeneutic view on language and worldview signifies that we relate to the world that is already shaped by language, through which we "inherit" a pre-understanding of the world (Hewitt 2016). Coming from this, our experience of the world around us is already "pre-packed" by our various languages. This hermeneutic view on language is typical for the German linguistic tradition and Wilhelm von Humboldt as one of its most famous representatives. Whichever point of view you choose as more acceptable, one cannot deny the fact the language plays the most important role in the constitution of the mental program that we prefer to call 'worldview'. But if you concur with the conclusions of German linguists that the inevitable conclusion will appear to be that there are as many worlds and worldviews, as there are languages on the planet. It should be noted that Humboldt defends the idea that language creates individual perspective, but at the same time, he adheres his own view that language has collective or universal value. In a more graphic sense, different languages represent different 'operating systems' for our consciousness, while at the same time we as individuals can decide to install additional applications that will best suit our experience and needs.

Imagine your ordinary Android or iOS phone (as most widely used in the world today) as a basis that you understand and orient by. Users install different kinds of applications to their mobile operating systems according to their individual needs. Some can get by using only couple of applications, while others can install hundreds. No matter how many applications are installed, the final point is that we have something that is common for all – the operating system, or in this case – worldview.

Humboldt views worldview as a symbolic dimension that is made by language and it creates a certain manner of how we see and conceive emotions, desires, attitudes, things, both

rational and irrational. That chain is interconnected in ways we cannot even fathom, as this takes us in areas under the domain of cognitive linguistics and the work of the mind. Also, word in any language are not isolated, but form a network in which each element is related to another element and affected by its position in this chain (Hewitt 2016). Words (and concepts they represent) may have same lexical forms through different languages, but that doesn't mean that these words will be understood the same way by different individuals that have different native languages. For Humboldt, individuals understand one another 'by striking the same note on their mental instrument, whereupon matching but not identical concepts are engendered in each. Only within these limits, and with these divergences, do they come together on the same word' (Humboldt & Losonsky 1999, 152).

Language forms are relative and different languages encode different worldviews. Intercultural competence is characterized by the ability and desire to engage with realities other than our own (Piller c2011). If intercultural competence represents the ability to desire to engage with different realities and worldviews, linguacultural competence is the ability to *understand* and *embrace* different realities and worldviews. One of the goals of this thesis is to create a textbook that helps create this linguacultural competence.

Edward Sapir compared the pass from one language to another as a psychological parallel to passing from one geometrical system of reference to another (Edward Sapir, as cited in [Pavlenko c2011]). When statements such as this are pointed out, there is a need to explain what is meant by 'world' in 'worldview'. It is both the world of natural sciences and language-independent facts. It is also the morals,

The view, according to which the individual and the common both characterize language, leads Humboldt to the claim that every understanding is at the same time a misunderstanding, as no two individuals ever mean exactly the same thing by the same word. Yet, what seems difficult to grasp is how these subjective, idiosyncratic, elements are to be understood, if understanding is always based on general concepts, not on the individual? To an extent, one could say that the individual characteristics may remain obscured from view but, in certain contexts, could become more clearly discernible. Take the way that words are used in a closed circle of friends, in clubs or in families. Each micro-social setting seems to affect, however slightly, the meaning of words, giving them a certain 'twist' or 'slant' that exists in addition to, or on top of, what may be taken to be their established meaning. What these accretions of meaning actually are can only be – tentatively – gauged through engaging with the individual or group in which they have currency. Some meanings may become more apparent; others will rest obscured. These individual characteristics that are constantly emerging through the use of language show that language cannot be reduced to an abstract static system. It is rather a medium in constant flux that is being continually transformed through usage. (Hewitt 2016, 124)

practices, politics, feelings, aesthetics etc. that give meaning to the language that forms a specific worldview.

Wittgenstein is often quoted for his famous line from the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Wittgenstein 1969b: proposition 5.6, p. 64), which translates as: ‘The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.’ Even though this kind of thinking that often is referred to as ‘Linguistic determinism’ is long abandoned, there is a valid question if each language that forms a worldview can be understood from the point of view of another language that forms a different one. The shortest answer is ‘no’. Although it is known that there are many different ways worldviews are constructed, none is so radical that would prevent us from ever being able to recognize the supported language. Worst case scenario – one being able approximately to translate what they are saying in the second language. Davidson (1973) *does not exclude the possibility of there being radically different conceptual schemes, but there is no way of demonstrating their existence, since a demonstration of their difference would entail recognizing that they are meaningful, which is only possible on the basis of shared understanding. But according to this argument, shared understanding leaves no room for the difference one set out to prove in the first place. A radically different conceptual scheme is by definition unintelligible, and so we would be prevented from identifying it as such* (Hewitt 2016). Rather than imprisoning the mind by different linguistic schemes and worldview, somehow language offers patterns to think with and connect to other languages (Underhill 2009, 130).

The idea that languages are viewed as an isolated system, making communication and translation difficult is long discredited. This extreme view, as well as the idea that languages are identical in what they express, or that they share identical conceptual schemes – is also discredited. There is, however, a presupposition that all languages share a conceptual core that is common for all people on Earth, as we all have identical basic human needs. Being my favorite hobby, astronomy hit me immediately with an appropriate analogy of how languages are the same in their conceptual cores but start to differ the moment one goes further in the socialization process. The planets in the Solar system (and beyond) look all too different, but they all share one thing – their planetary cores. Even gas giants, as well as ‘rocky’ planets, have cores, but that doesn’t mean identical planets should emerge with each core. Depending on the place in space, the speed they travel through space, the distance from their star etc. – all planets look different, but “deep down”, they are all the same. This can also be said for human languages. When it comes to humans, we may travel to different countries and meet radically

different cultures from ours, but we will always find something that is truly relevant to us and we can relate to. H.G. Gadamer (as cited in Hewitt 2016) considers this to be a ‘hermeneutic fusion of horizons’<sup>65</sup>. This ‘fusion of horizons’ can be applied only when we keep the two interlocutors in the ‘world of concrete objects’, which basically is the inner conceptual core of any language. As one moves further away from this ‘world of concrete objects’, the difficulties in the communication process will become even more evident, as understanding or interpreting is being conducted in the light of a shared language background usage. As one is moving from their common background, difficulties between languages will become much more difficult to overcome.

Often, speakers in two different languages use their own languages to describe the same thing, and at the same time the object they talk about has the same meaning in both languages. As interlocutors move into areas that are more abstract and influenced by culture, traditions, values, morals and attitudes, misunderstanding will grow exponentially.

One of the most striking examples I can offer to confirm this is a discussion between me (Macedonian) and Czech on the socialist system, both in our countries and in general. Anyone whose horizons go beyond those of one's own state and experience testify that each country has different understandings with more complex social and political phenomena. Macedonia (within the former Yugoslavia) is one of the countries in which from 1945 to 1991 there was an established socialist order, just like in the former Czechoslovakia. It is one thing to say that both countries had a socialist system in almost the same time, and it is completely another thing to talk about the kind of development those systems had in those two countries and what influence they had on their culture, morals, values and attitudes. This is why the misunderstanding or maybe it is better to say ‘misunderstanding’ occurred. It is commonly known that people living in the countries that gained independence from Yugoslavia generally have a favorable view on socialism because of the different characteristics this system had during the years of its existence. On the other hand, people in the Czech Republic and Slovakia (the successors of Czechoslovakia) generally have a negative view on socialism, again, because of the specific developments, values, morals and attitudes during that time. Hence,

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<sup>65</sup> In bridging the gulf between languages, the translator clearly exemplifies the reciprocal relationship that exists between the interpreter and the text, and that corresponds to the reciprocity involved in reaching an understanding in conversation. For every translator is an interpreter. The fact that a foreign language is being translated means that this is simply an extreme case of hermeneutical difficulty – i.e. of alienness and its conquests. In fact all the ‘objects’ with which traditional hermeneutics is concerned are alien in the same unequivocally defined sense. The translator’s task of re-creating differs only in degree, not in kind, from the general hermeneutical task that any text presents. (Gadamer 1975:389)



misunderstanding occurs between two interlocutors coming from two different places of the world when speaking about one abstract noun. In this particular situation I was aware of the negative views Czech have on their former socio-political system, but the Czech interlocutor was not aware of the general view in former Yugoslavia.

The only way for people to avoid misunderstandings in this kind of situations is for one to be aware of the ‘individuality’ of the worldview in a foreign language. This can be done by expanding the horizons, so that they would include what is different in someone’s scheme within a higher level of ‘universality’, which will effectively expand or even fuse worldviews. There are thousands of communication horizons that need to be addressed, meaning that there is a need for a constant looking of common ground between speakers; even though it may have a slightly pessimistic tone – this is a never-ending process which requires constant expansion of worldviews. Even in everyday actions in the world around us we are fairly certain that the meanings of our words converge fairly accurately, but this is also misleading. One would think that concepts for general things in the objective world would appear to share meanings and are generally the same in different language communities. Reality shows us that even when they are similar, linguistic categories linked to these words do not always match fully: the category of *chair* does not share all members with the categories *silla* (Spanish) or *chaise* (French), nor does the category *cup* share all members with the categories *taza* (Spanish) or *sefel* (Hebrew) (Pavlenko 2009, 129). The object of ‘cup’ in our mental lexicon can be quite different in Japan or China, where they see their mental representation of a cup without handles. As one moves away from the objects of immediate experience and tries to describe the social reality, the difficulty and the danger of misunderstanding grows exponentially. As Humboldt has shown, even in the case of words for the most banal objects, the terms we use will always be triggered with a certain subjectivity that cannot be reduced to their purely referential use (Hewitt 2016). Having this in mind, the goal of this thesis is to present new foreign language teaching/learning material, intended to expand the learner’s worldview and conceptual horizons.

### ***2.4.3 Language and Concepts***

Linguoculturology uses a number of terms, the meaning of which are partly or fully explained in this text ('Background knowledge', 'National mentality', 'Culture', 'Subculture'). In recent time the designation of the unit of language and culture interaction was entrenched by the term 'concept'. In linguoculturology, the term 'concept' can reflect one or more attributes of the object at hand. It should be noted that 'concept' is a broad scientific term, used and defined differently, according to the scientific field it is used.

This term was originally developed in logic, where it defined the set of integral properties an object has. Philosophy and psychology define 'concept' as a 'mental image', 'mental formation' etc. The emergence of this term in cognitology is not at all surprising, as Cognitive Linguistics is one of the central disciplines that operate with this term. According to cognitive science, man's activity is oriented towards the development of skills needed to live and orientate in the world, alongside with the need to identify and compare objects.

One of the first definitions of the concept belongs to A. Wierzbicka: *'concept is an object of the world ideal, having a name and reflecting certain culturally specified representation about the world reality'* (as in Baydak et al. 2015). Russian linguists Kubryakova et al. (in Краткий словарь когнитивных терминов) consider concepts to be some kind of ideal, abstract units that one operates by during the process of thinking. They are the result of all human activity and knowledge from the surrounding world. They reflect the content of the knowledge obtained as kind of 'quanta' of meaning. The process of communication between people and the transfer of information can also be considered to be an exchange of concepts.

Concepts are formed in various ways. Most of them come from the sheer perception in the surrounding world (via the senses and man's activity), some by communication with others, some by the educational process, mental activity, established morals in a certain society, attitudes towards various things etc. There is no clear boundary between concepts that are created by different sources and they often complete each other. Without a doubt, the best way to utilize concept is through language. Some concepts (the more simple ones) can be explained with one word, while others need combination of sentences.

I especially recommend a definition that explains what linguacultural concept is (as in Степанов Ю. С. Словарь русской культуры. – М. : Школа «Языки русской культуры», 1997. – 40 с.): “Концепт – это как бы сгусток культуры в сознании человека; то, в виде чего культура входит в ментальный мир человека. И, с другой стороны, концепт – это то, посредством чего человек... сам входит в культуру, а в некоторых случаях и влияет на нее”<sup>66</sup>.

As we have mentioned before, we conceptually construct the world around us using language as soon as we learn to speak. During this process we listen, evaluate and acquire new concepts. Everything we learn through language, not just while we are young, but also later in life - comes from the conceptual baggage of the language that has been used by all previous generations<sup>67</sup> before us. Even if a society lacks other physical ways of presenting tradition, it still possesses the most powerful tradition - language. One could say that language is a ‘living tradition’. With the acquisition of the language, culture is also absorbed in our mind through language. That bond between culture and language creates a distinct worldview which, in my opinion, is very hard to transcend. Each language may be a world in the sense that it contains a distinct conception of the world, but there are no means of verifying this hypothesis (Underhill, 2009: 13).

Is language a sort of a road sign for our thoughts? In another book (Language, Ideology and Point of View, 1993), Paul Simons argues that language does direct out thinking. David Crystal in "The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language" does indeed say that *it seems evident that there is the closest of relationships between language and thought: everyday experience suggests that much of our thinking is facilitated by language* (Crystal, 2003: 14). Boas also adds that *categories of language compel us to see the world in certain definite conceptual groups, on account of our lack of knowledge of linguistic processes, are taken as objective categories and which; therefore, impose themselves upon the form in our thoughts*<sup>68</sup>.

At this point I can only presume that these lines will trigger red lights in linguists who oppose the deterministic model of the relationship between language and thought. Some clarification seems necessary in order to avoid misunderstanding. The reader must be assured

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<sup>66</sup> The concept is like a clot of culture in the mind of a person; it is a vessel with which culture enters the man’s mental world. And, on the other hand, the concept is a vessel that one uses to enter culture, and in some cases influence it (author’s translation).

<sup>67</sup> Concept is a mental formation, which in the process of thinking replaces an indefinite number of items of the same sort. Some concepts can be considered as schematic representations (Baydak et al. 2015)

<sup>68</sup> Boas, F. (1920). The Methods of Ethnology. American Anthropologist, 22(4), new series, 311-321. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/660328>

that the author of this thesis does not indulge in the theory of linguistic determinism as one of the extreme concepts in anthropocentric linguistics. For those who are new to this term, 'linguistic determinism' came to life in the mid of the XX century from the works of Benjamin Whorf. It is our duty to point that this is a popular misconception of Whorf's principle of linguistic relativity. Linguistic communities still make a big mistake thinking that Whorf and Sapir conceptualized a "weak" and "strong" version of the *Hypothesis of Linguistic Relativity*. Neither Sapir nor Whorf entertained the idea of languages determining worldviews - both saw human minds as capable of acquiring new perspectives and frames of reference through learning of additional languages. If they had said more, then perhaps scientists would have not wasted decades debating the idea of linguistic determinism (Pavlenko, 2011: 18). James Underhill adds that *what starts as a rejection of determinism in the tripartite relationship between race, culture and language ends in a tentative hypothesis that language does indeed do more than simply reflect culture* (Underhill, 2009: 24).

David Crystal also rejects the deterministic model of the relationship between language and thought, but still claims that language can *influence the way we perceive and remember, and it affects the way we perform mental tasks* (Crystal, 1997: 14).

My opinion is that these debates over the misunderstanding of "what Whorf and Sapir had in mind" created enormous energy drains in the process of developing the anthropological view of language. Maybe it is too subjective to say that linguistic determinism itself is too primitive of an idea to be taken seriously. If languages really determined what we see and how we can see, that it would not be possible for other people to learn foreign languages (or it would be too hard), it would not be possible to translate texts and books, it would not be possible to enjoy movies and music...

When it comes to learning a new language - does it mean that any other language being learned puts us in a different position of thought because language directs thoughts? I would agree with this, and so does Epstein. Different languages may, in terms of a multilingual person, attach themselves directly to thought and function, in all modes of perception and expression, independently of the mother tongue (Epstein in Pavlenko 2014).

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*'Chaquepeuple a une fa con particuliere et  
caracteristique de grouper, afin de les  
nommer, les choses et leursproprietes, les  
actes et les rapports' [every nation has a  
particular and characteristic manner of  
grouping things and their properties, actions  
and relations, in order to name them] (Jacob  
Epstein, found in Pavlenko, 2014)*

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During the process of learning a new foreign language we often try to translate foreign words into concepts<sup>69</sup> in our native language. Have you ever felt being very naive while searching for an equivalent of a certain word in dictionaries? It happens so often that even the best dictionaries put us in a more miserable situation. Of course, we are talking about the cultural context capsuled in culture's worldview. One could say that each context is cultural, but that notion will be dealt with in another chapter.

The complexity of the link language-thought-concept comes into being when we try to find out how a certain word is defined in different languages. If we take into consideration that language facilitates a certain worldview, it comes naturally to us that the link between language and thought is evident. Nevertheless, let us clarify certain things. It is one thing to say the Russians, Macedonians, Serbians, Czechs, Germans have unique worldviews, and it is completely another thing to say that Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump or Angela Merkel have different worldviews. The first example shows a difference in the language system within which people think, act and understand of the world around them. The second example portrays the

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<sup>69</sup> The meaning of words is not only presented in dictionaries, but words are also related to concepts. Concepts do not always acquire their meaning from the word, but they are the result of the collision of the vocabulary word meaning with the personal and national experience. This way the concept extends the meaning of the word, leaving space for conjectures (Baydak et al. 2015).

The differences between words and concepts can be summarized in two points:

1. In contrast to the word, concept is subjective. Probably, we should distinguish individual concept and invariant concept, operating in a particular society or culture (Zalevskaya in I.A. Sternin, 2001)
2. Concept differs from the word by the so-called "semiotic density". While the inner content of the word is the total of the semes and its lexical and semantic variants, concept is presented by a number of linguistic synonyms (words and phrases), theme lines and fields, proverbs, sayings, folklore and literary scenes, rituals, behavior patterns, etc. (Vorkachev, 2005).

individual perspectives shaped by ideologies. One would say that politicians also see the world through the system of language and concepts that exist within a certain language.

Having said this, we should add that language, along with its concepts and worldview exists only in our minds, as no language exists outside our heads<sup>70</sup>. As Underhill (2011) adds, texts do exist, but texts make sense only when our mind can recognize and reorganize it into a meaningful discourse. Only when we apply our dynamic understanding of how concepts and worldview work, we can make texts look like a recognizable and a meaningful whole. Words cannot be used as bricks on a construction site; one cannot take various words and assign definite meaning. Words can be deprived of the concepts they are attached to, but by doing so, they will be also deprived from their historical and cultural context.

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*Humboldt insisted that in order to understand the worldview of a foreign language the linguist must not only amass words, grammatical rules, morphological tendencies and concepts. This accumulation of isolated data was indeed important for Humboldt, but more important than this was the act of entering into the understanding of the way a language harnesses and organizes concepts.*

*(James W. Underhill. 2011)*

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<sup>70</sup> When discussing the existence of concepts, one aspect needs to be mentioned. It is necessary to keep in mind that concepts can, but do not necessarily have to be verbalized. Their verbalization depends, above all, on the communication needs of a certain society. Baydak (et al. 2015) thinks that language expresses only communicatively relevant results of thinking; therefore, depending on the semantic structure of the word used, its semantic features, type and amount of information to be transmitted, and primarily on the communication needs, one and the same word can transmit various features of the concept or different concepts. It is important to have in mind that if a particular concept does not have linguistic expression – that does not mean that concept does not exist. Baydak gives these concepts another name – “concept lacunae”. *The total of lacunae, representing a latent part of conceptual sphere, significantly complements the language picture of the world and allows us to make it clear for the modern recipient and save for future generations diverse concepts expressed by lacunae. These objects and processes, of course, exist in the unconsciousness of a particular ethnic group, but are not represented in the language system, as they are not essential for this culture.*

Having said this, we should add that language, along with its concepts and worldview exists only in our minds, as no language exists outside our heads<sup>71</sup>. As Underhill (2011) adds, texts do exist, but texts make sense only when our mind can recognize and reorganize it into a meaningful discourse. Only when we apply our dynamic understanding of how concepts and worldview work, we can make texts look like a recognizable and a meaningful whole. Words cannot be used as bricks on a construction site; one cannot take various words and assign definite meaning. Words can be deprived of the concepts they are attached to, but by doing so, they will be also deprived from their historical and cultural context.

In view of the foregoing, I can say without a doubt that language-learning is highly sensitive to mastering the relations not just between words, but also between concepts. As concepts and worldview are constantly changing, there is a need to explore new ways of describing the world in language textbooks. This thesis explores one solution that can act as a remedy to a continuous change of worldviews, offering a kind of *eternal textbook* that should always be in touch with the changing cultures, concepts and worldviews. We have come to see the changing world of concepts to have a highly political background, which means that appropriate linguacultural approach must be adopted in the creation of future language textbooks. Keeping the worldviews updated demands to stay in touch with the patterning of language, its conceptual frameworks. Unfortunately, despite vast amounts of literature, critical discourse analysis and lack of advanced level language-learning textbooks, little has been done to advance this on the practical field. Even though Humboldt believed that each language explores reality in a manner which is essentially specific to it, texts and discourse have been considered as secondary, as aspirations for ‘objectivity’ are considered by some to be more significant.

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#### 2.4.4 On Humboldt's *Weltansicht*–*Weltanschauung*

Humboldt is often forgotten and often pushed to one side... Humboldt is the guilty conscience of modern linguistics. He is there to remind us that language is not simply about parts of speech, grammar, structure, rules and norms; language is about us (James W. Underhill, 2011). Having talked about Humboldt, we think it is extremely important to add something that "has been lost in translation" during the years. We are talking about the concept of *Weltansicht* (world-perceiving) and *Weltanschauung* (world-conceiving). Let us be more precise and interpret what Humboldt essentially had in mind and why he was talking about language through the prism of *Weltansicht*. *Weltansicht* in Trabant's *Weltansicht*–*Weltanschauung* distinction inspired by Humboldt is the capacity which language bestows upon us, allowing us to form the concepts with which we think and which we need in order to communicate. While the *Weltansicht* of a language is implicit to it and inseparable from it, *Weltanschauungen* are not dependent upon the language system in which they are found. (Underhill, 2011: 283). In fact, *Weltansicht* creates the view we have of the world, creates the patterns we use in everyday life, the way we communicate and live. We are not aware of the function of *Weltansicht*. It is only in different cultural environment, different *Weltansicht*, where we come to see the reflections of our own world-perceiving mode.

For the sake of clarifying the terms that Humboldt used in his writings, we set up a meeting<sup>72</sup> and interview with one of the foremost researchers and translators of Humboldt's work in Slovakia - Slavomír Ondrejovič. He is known for his translation of Humboldt's "On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species" (Slovak: "O rozmanitosti stavby ľudských jazykov a jej vplyve na duchovný rozvoj ľudského rodu"<sup>73</sup>). At the time of the interview (September, 2015) Slavomír Ondrejovič was working as the head of the Institute of Linguistics at the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

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<sup>72</sup> Ondrejovič, S. (2015). *The work of Humboldt*.

<sup>73</sup> Humboldt, W. and Ondrejovič, S. (2000). *O rozmanitosti stavby ľudských jazykov a jej vplyve na duchovný rozvoj ľudského rodu*. Bratislava: Veda.



When we asked Mr. Ondrejovič about his experience in dealing and translating Humboldt's terminology, he provided a descriptive answer:

[Translation of the interview with Mr. Ondrejovič from Slovak into English]

*I am afraid that even Humboldt did not interpret his own terms. That left a lot of space for everyone who works with them to interpret in a lot of different ways. That definitely did not help me in my work.*

*Before my activities regarding the translation of Humboldt started, several other translations of his work "On the diversity..." already existed - in French, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Japanese and English (which is more of an interpretation than a translation).*

*As a part of my preparation activities, I started to read the correspondence between him and his wife. During this process, many of his thoughts became clearer, but there was still work to be done. That is why I decided to go to the place where Humboldt was living. As a part of my research stay in Germany, I travelled to Tegel Palace near Berlin (also known as Humboldt Palace) where he wrote several of his famous works. Even during my 6-months stay at that place, I was not able to fully deconstruct and translate Humboldt. Later I finished my work at Bojnice Castle in Slovakia.*

*Not so long after I finally finished the translation of ' On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species', I received a positive review from Lipetsk in Russia from a professor in the local university. She told me that 'I clarified Humboldt even on places where he was vague in German'.*

### ***3. New Approach to Foreign Language Learning at an Advanced Level***

#### ***3.1 The Motivation to Learn Advanced Level Language***

#### ***3.2 The Communicative Language Approach in FLE***

#### ***3.3 Language Education and Linguoculturology***

#### ***3.4 Linguacultural Competence***

#### ***3.5 Polycontextual approach***

#### ***3.6 National Cultural Units. Language Realia***

#### ***3.7 Authentic materials***

#### ***3.8 Emotions at Advanced Level Language-learning***

#### ***3.9 The Multimodal Method***

### ***3.1 The Motivation to Learn Advanced Level Language***

The current concept of foreign language education acknowledges the need to integrate language-teaching and language-learning based on the mutual integration of language and culture, alongside with the need to deconstruct the dialogue between different cultures. The goal of the proposed concept and approach in this thesis is to introduce an improved way of teaching and learning languages through culture (and culture through language), but even more importantly – it introduces enhanced ways of acquisition of mental concepts in the target language through its culture. The overall motivation to learn foreign languages is related to the success and achievements one received with the study of any foreign language. Achievement in language study has a lot in common with the abovementioned concept of foreign language education, especially when it comes to advanced level language-learning. Speaking of ‘motivation’, I would like to cite Horowitz (as in Engin 2009) on motivation [with reference to language learning]: *motivation is defined as the feelings of the learner towards the particular target language, its culture and the individual pragmatic reasons for learning a foreign*

*language*. Also, Gardner (as in Williams et al. 2002) speaks of ‘integrative’ and ‘instrumental’ motivation to learn a foreign language. ‘Integrative motivation’ means that the student *is studying a language because of a wish to identify with the culture of speakers of that language*, while ‘instrumental motivation’ is basically all the external factors that motivate one to study languages: examinations, future career, financial benefits, work requirement etc.

Even though I expect large amounts of criticism, it is my opinion that advanced level language-learning is not all about stimulating motivation in students – rather, it is the students who need to come with a motivation to acquire excellent command of their target language. One way of keeping that motivation alive and well during B2-C2 level language studies is the use of authentic materials and realia. Authentic materials contribute not only to the formation of communicative and linguacultural competence, but also develop students’ analytical skills to recognize and adapt to cultural concepts in the target culture. Even though I have made no research on how authentic materials motivate advanced-level language students, further in the thesis there is a subchapter where I tried to epitomize relevant researches that deal with authentic texts in language education.

In January 2017, I had an interview with professor Dmitry Gudkov<sup>74</sup> in Moscow, Russia, during which he also affirmed my opinion that very few students do continue from intermediate (B1-B2) to advanced level language course (C1-C2). One of the reasons we both acknowledged is that intermediate level language command allows students to use their knowledge commercially on the job market. Professor Gudkov accepted the idea that students who continue learning language at an advanced level (C1-C2) are mostly driven by their own will and motivation to be fluent and have excellent command of the target language.

This was one of the questions I included in my questionnaire which I sent to language teachers (mostly teachers of Macedonian as a foreign language in different universities in Europe). Professor Zvonko Taneski<sup>75</sup> at Komensky University in Bratislava, Slovakia, has an interesting point of view that coincides with the author’s (in reference to “Why, in your opinion, there are less textbooks for learning a foreign language at an advanced level?”): *Можеби проблемот лежи во фактот што изучувањето на странски јазик на напредно ниво е сфатено повеќе како индивидуална надградба на студентите, кои имаат различни*

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<sup>74</sup> Dmitry Borisovich Gudkov is a professor at the Russian language department for foreign students, which is part of the Faculty of Philology, Moscow State University (2008 – present). Professor Gudkov’s personal page with his published materials - <https://istina.msu.ru/profile/gudkovdb62/>

<sup>75</sup><https://fphil.uniba.sk/katedry-a-odborne-pracoviska/katedra-slovanskych-filologii/clenovia-katedry/zvonko-taneski/>

*афинитети во поглед на збогатувањето на знаењата од конкретниот јазик, па затоа во напредната фаза им се остава повеќе слободен простор за тоа тие самите да си одберат со каква литература и првенствено во која област сакаат најмногу да го усовршуваат дадениот јазик. (Perhaps the problem lies within the fact that learning a foreign language at an advanced level is perceived more as an individual “upgrade” by students who have different affinities in terms of increasing the command of the language they learn. So at this advanced level of learning they have created more space for themselves to choose what kind of literature and area they want to improve in).*

Even though students choose to learn languages at an C1-C2 level mostly because of their own drive and motivation, it is imperative that teachers push this motivation further. But even more importantly – as not all teachers have the same set of competences, textbooks aimed at C1-C2 level must deliver a ‘motivation package’ to further induce interest in students who decided to master a foreign language.

Most pupils start visiting language classes almost immediately after they start going to school. As language classes (almost everywhere<sup>76</sup>) are obligatory part of curriculums all around the globe, pupils get to achieve at least a basic level of communicative competence. Only a small number of those pupils enroll in universities to study language(s), but still most of them do not achieve their full potential if there is no sufficient motivation to do so. Professor Gudkov highlighted commercial motives for students taking advanced language classes, while professor Taneski, even though not directly, points out that students have different affinities and motivation, most likely because of practical reasons.

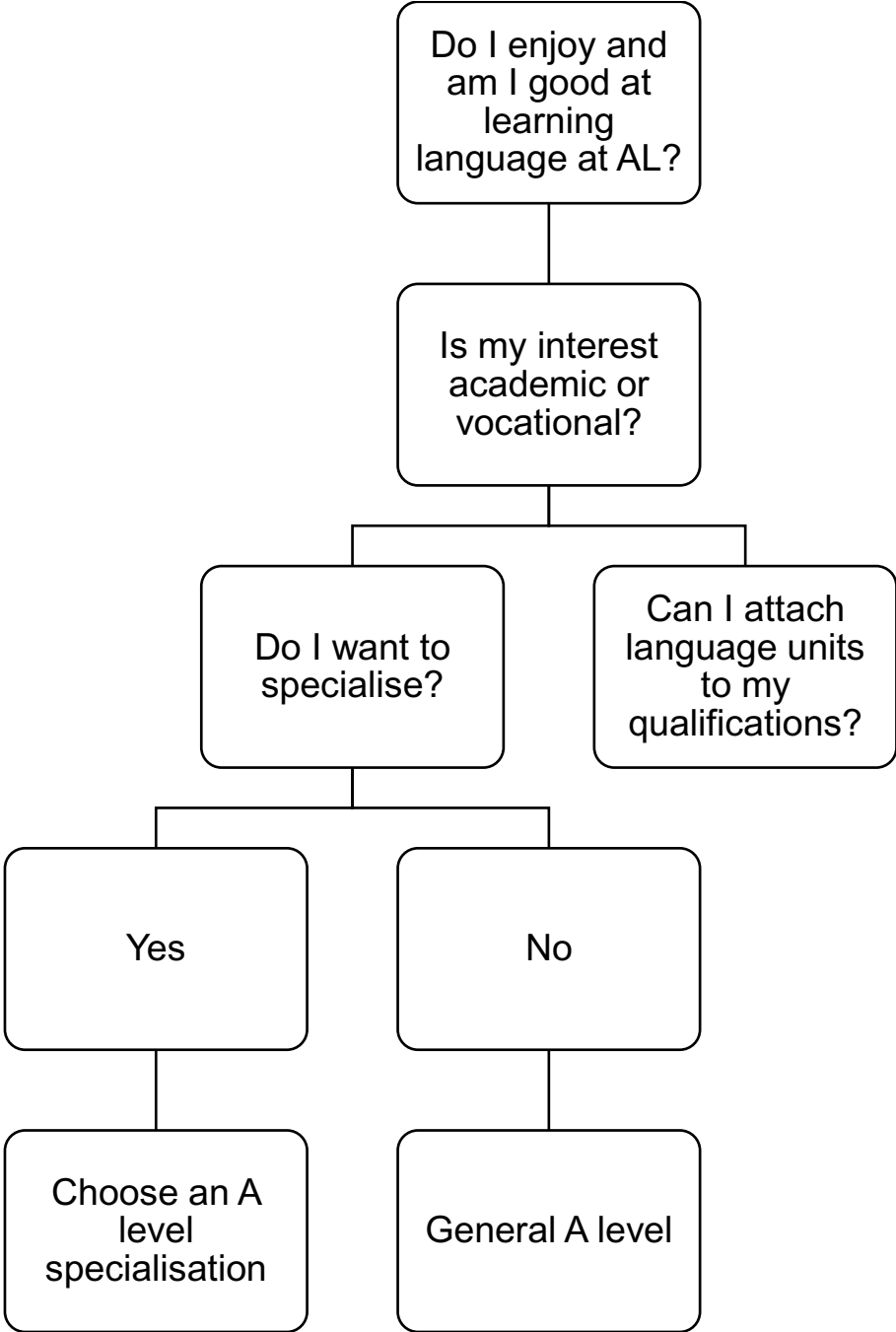
Ema and Zoltan (Ushioda & Dörnyei 2017) are on the same wavelength, as I am when it comes to the motivation to learn English and all other languages. The ‘revelation’ that English is a global language, learned and used all over the world, even in countries like North Korea will not get me a PhD title. It is, though, heavily promoted by modern pop-culture, media, institutions etc., which makes it the only language in the world today that becomes “disembodied” from its own linguaculture, meaning that the vast majority of English speakers (other than native) in the world use English only as tool, often without even basic knowledge of its language realia, linguaculture and background knowledge. English today transcends

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<sup>76</sup> Most countries in the Western hemisphere have compulsory language classes in primary education (at least one foreign language). Only the United States of America, Ireland and Scotland do not have compulsory language requirements (Gaelic is learned in Ireland, but that language is not considered a foreign language). Kids aged 3 start studying second foreign language in Belgium, while the UK has set the compulsory age at 11. Most European countries have introduced compulsory language studies between ages 6 and 9 (Pew Research Center).

everything I am writing about in this thesis. Even though this comes as no breakthrough in linguistics, if we take English out of the picture, we would immediately find ourselves in an environment, where 70% of the studies on language-learning motivation are set in contexts where the focus is on learning English as a target language (Ushioda & Dörnyei 2017).

Kit Field and Shirley Lawes (Pachler 1999) published an explanation why do 16-year-olds choose to continue studying a language at an advanced level (excluding English, as the study is made in the United Kingdom):



**Figure: Choosing to learn a language at an advanced level (Pachler 1999: 8)**

Jim Coleman<sup>77</sup> carried out a survey in the early 90's into the motives of students to learn French. The students were given options to choose from, along with blank spaces to fill other answers:

<i>Why study modern foreign languages at post-16?</i>
(a) Look at the following list of possible reasons for studying a modern foreign language at advanced level and add any others you can think of.
(b) Ask your learners to respond to the questions individually.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Because you like the language</li><li>2. To travel to different countries</li><li>3. Because you are good at it</li><li>4. To become a better-educated person</li><li>5. Because you like the teacher</li><li>6. For your future career</li><li>7. Because your friends are doing it</li><li>8. Because your parents want you to do it</li><li>9. To get to know people who speak it</li><li>10. To have a better understanding of the way of life in the country where it is spoken</li><li>11. (blank)</li></ol>

From this survey the results showed that during the first year of study, staggering 85.6% of students chose 'for your future career', which reduced to 73.5% by their third year. On the other hand, 'because you like the language' received 80.1% in year one, and 84.3% by year three. Other interesting notion is that the number of people who chose 'getting to know people who speak it' rose from 24.3% in year one to 33.3% in year three.

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<sup>77</sup> Coleman, J.A., 1995. The evolution of language learner motivation in British universities, with some international comparisons. *Issues and perspectives in language study*. University of Edinburgh/CILT.

David Phillips<sup>78</sup> writes about five different learner types that advance to advanced level language-learning. His first category is ‘specialists’ or those who would like to continue learning language at a university and for whom advanced level route is not problematic. His second type of students are those for whom modern foreign language is not the primary subject of study; the third type are those who would like to start working after 18 but need a modern foreign language. Phillips’s fourth type are those who want to continue studying foreign language out of interest and those who have no other choice, while the fifth type consists of students who would like to achieve advanced level in a new language within two years.

No matter what category one finds himself into or has a particular reason to study language at an advanced level, it is an imperative that students receive courses that will accommodate different learner types. This is the reason why previous standards in language materials must be abandoned and new kind of materials should be created, ones that will not be like anything we have seen before. To illustrate this point:

*Young teacher: Have you ever thought, headmaster, that your standards might perhaps be a little out of date?*

*Headmaster: Of course they are out of date. Standards are always out of date. That is what makes them standards.*

Different motives should be taken into account, along with the changing nature of the needs for those who do choose to learn AL language.

Isabelle Jones<sup>79</sup>, head of languages at Radclyffe School in Oldham uses music (in her case, French rap music) as a way of motivating students to continue advanced-level language education.

David Ceirog-Hughes at Winchester College uses poetry and short stories as a way to provide real context for learning advanced-level language. Although we cannot fully agree with his method for provoking interest in language learning, we completely agree with him that teaching materials can unlock hidden interest only by making them feel closer to reality.

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<sup>78</sup> Phillips, D. (1981) ‘Innovations in curricula and examinations 16–18+: catering for the non specialist linguist in the sixth form’. In *Modern Languages* 62, 3, pp. 127–34.

<sup>79</sup> Drabble, E. (2017). *How to encourage students to pursue languages at GCSE and A-level*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/may/17/languages-schools-students-gcse-alevels-mfl> [Accessed 12 Jul. 2017].

### ***3.2 The Communicative Language Approach in FLE***

Somewhere in the third quarter of the XX century a new approach and theory (with consequent practical application) appeared and enriched the foreign language teaching and learning paradigm. That new approach and practice today is known as **Communicative Language Teaching** (CLT). The application of this approach in the process of teaching foreign languages provides the inclusion of real communicative situations in the classroom, which greatly increases not only the motivation of the students for language classes, but also their communicative competence. If we ask today our fellow foreign language teachers "Do you use this approach in teaching a foreign language?" - almost everyone will answer affirmatively, especially as communication became something of a 'must have' in language education. This is not surprising at all as the communicative approach offset the shortcomings of other approaches and methods in teaching foreign language, such as those of the grammar-translation method and direct.

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*Communicative Approach aims to: make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication.*

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However, communicative approach today seems to be as a sort of a fetish, as institutions or teachers who do not apply this approach are considered "backward" and "unfashionable". During the IATEFL conference in 1997 there was a note that the methodological framework "of many countries is still in the 50's." This implies that they are backward and "not good enough as we are [who use communicative approach in language teaching]." In addition, during the conference there was no discussion whether other (older) methods work - they simply found



them to be "dysfunctional" because they do not happen to be modern (Bax, 2003). It is even considered that CLT is all that is required for foreign language classes and that no other method can be good enough.

Although this approach has brought many benefits in the process of creating textbooks and teaching such as bringing authentic texts in the learning process, presenting real-life situations encountered outside the classroom, active communication, inclusion of culture in the process of learning a foreign language, this approach contains also some negative aspects, such as ignoring student's personal opinions and views, almost completely neglecting the context in which a communicative act takes place.

A group of authors<sup>80</sup> state the following goals of communicative approach:

- *To become communicatively competent;*
- *To use the language appropriately for a given social context;*
- *To manage the process of relating meaning with interlocutors.*

The first point makes complete sense, as we find it in almost every single definition explaining what a CLT is. When it comes to the second point, I would have to disagree with the authors. On one hand, it is completely unclear how would one accomplish such a goal - what are the mechanisms of appropriate use of a language for a given social context? Whose job is to define for what kind of a social context we are talking about? We hesitate one can count the number of social contexts and act upon them. Contrary to the opinion from the authors, I find the opposite to be true - the absence of several social contexts within the curriculum (not the teacher) is the main disadvantage of the CLT. When it comes to the third point, I fail to see the difference from the second point. Meaning itself represents different social contexts. Managing the process of relating meaning with interlocutors is the same as figuring out the appropriate social context and acting upon it.

Although we mostly encounter CLT as an approach, we cannot deny that CLT applies also to the teaching methods in textbooks, as well as in the process of teaching.

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<sup>80</sup> Villamin, A.M., Salazar, E.L., Bala, E.C., and N.R. Sunga (1994). Innovative strategies in communication arts. Quezon City, QC: Phoenix Publishing House, Inc.

As mentioned previously, communicative learning method and inclusion of culture in the process of learning foreign language brought numeral benefits in "synchronizing" the teaching process with the advances in applied linguistics.

Even though the language teaching collective did see numerous positive aspects, progress in linguoculturology challenges the communicative language approach, declaring it to be more and more ineffective because of the exclusion of one exceptionally important component - (cultural) context.

Professor Stephen Bax in one of his articles (Bax, 2003) presents the differences between communicative learning approach and the newly presented and recommended contextual approach. The following table shows that methodology is not always the solution for better learning a foreign language.

<i><b>CLT approach</b></i>	<i><b>Context approach</b></i>
<i><b>CLT is the complete answer.</b></i>	<i>We must consider the whole context.</i>
<i><b>If we don't have CLT, then we can't learn a language.</b></i>	<i>Methodology (including CLT) is just one factor in learning a language.</i>
<i><b>No other factors count in learning a language - only teaching methodology.</b></i>	<i>Other factors may be more important.</i>
<i><b>If you don't have CLT, then you are backward.</b></i>	<i>Other methods and approaches may be equally valid.</i>

**Table: The differences between CLT approach and Context approach**

### ***3.3 Language Education and Linguoculturology***

What is the best way to teach a language?

Even though this question sounds cliché to everyone who works with language in schools or academia, it has always been baffling to anyone who teaches language(s). We all know and have already seen mountains of literature that has dealt with and tried to answer this question. And yet thousands of different opinions and numerous methods proved "to be insufficient". In addition, the author of this thesis is not trying to be arrogant making this statement, nor wishes to devalue all previous attempts in finding the best method for teaching a foreign language. Quite the opposite – all previous work in the field of language-teaching can be seen as a process of continuous improvement and upgrade. Thanks to the trials and errors, we can continue searching for better ways to make language teaching more practical, fun and useful.

Language-teaching practices show that teaching morphology, syntax, grammar and vocabulary in the best possible way - prove to be insufficient. Teaching a student to make a grammatically perfect sentence in a foreign language is just one side of the whole deal. Even if the language student can create grammatically flawless sentence, one often feels insecure in each communicative situation (hence my personal experience in Russia after learning Russian). This makes us think that there is a force that reaches far beyond the schemes, rules and explanations which we come across when we learn a language. Grammar rules are often resilient to a direct human influence, but vocabulary is not. This influence urges us to look on the other side of the language coin – the anthropocentric properties of a language.

The notion that language is a component of every national culture has been developing in the humanities ever since von Humboldt stated that languages are the bearers of culture and peoples' identity. Edward Sapir also introduced a major methodological position on the unity of language and culture: culture epitomizes the community's thought and actions (Baydak 2015). The significance of language-culture interactions produced the impulse for a number of humanitarian disciplines to develop. Linguoculturology was born out of the anthropocentric revolution in humanities and is one of the leading disciplines in linguistics today which tries to find its place in not just linguistics, but also foreign language learning and foreign language

education. If we look at the contemporary research in the relationship between language and culture, we can see that linguoculturology delivers full package of theoretical concepts ready to be implemented in foreign language learning and foreign language education.

Without a doubt, culture in language education should have a stronger role in universities' curriculum; however, many questions remain about how this should be implemented in practice. Even today most university students around the world do not acquire high levels of linguacultural proficiency and competence after they complete the required foreign language courses, and in many cases, it remains completely unclear what notions on culture they take with them from their foreign language learning experiences (Kearney 2008, 7). Moreover, because in a situation where the implementation of culture in the study of foreign languages is not satisfactory, teachers are forced to follow the curriculum and textbooks as an "ideal" example, or those who have higher motivation are forced to introduce their own materials in the classroom. When it comes to "ideal examples" in language-teaching textbooks, it is worth mentioning that most foreign language learning materials strive towards objectivity and neutrality, rather than on the authentic system of cultural values and meanings that exist in every contemporary language (which can hardly be 'neutral'; I believe that "objectivity" and "neutrality" are a myth).

Kearney (2008) agrees that both students and teachers acknowledge that language and culture are interrelated, but the biggest problem in this is the deceptive transparency of this relationship, leading to the belief that learning culture comes naturally, as students study any foreign language. One of the approaches in language-teaching that helped to promote the basics of culture is the Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT). I would not like to be perceived as a critic of the communicative approach (because of my interest in linguoculturology and the aspects that can be implemented in practice) - I believe this approach is one of the most important tools in foreign language-teaching. The Communicative Language Teaching approach is one of the few tools that deal with culture (more or less) in the curriculum. As a matter a fact, approximately seventy years ago culture was not even considered in the curriculum. Up until recently, the main role was played by language structure and grammar (Genc, Bada, 2005).

Learning a language is something advanced than just a plain acquisition of grammar rules and word order. Those learning a foreign language and thus were at least once exposed to the cultural elements and a real everyday communication in society - shall immediately notice that the problems they face go beyond morphology and syntax. The subject immediately

becomes aware of the collision with culture, semantics and context. Although the practical relationship between culture and language was established approximately thirty years ago in the theoretic works of linguists<sup>81</sup>, its realization in practice began ten to twenty years later and is still an ongoing process. Otherwise, this thesis would not have existed at all. Numerous studies, from the time when the bond between language and culture was established until now, show that the interest in learning a language increases with the inclusion of culture in teaching. Culture gives students a reason to take interest in the selected language and gives meaning to its study<sup>82</sup>. Students, who utilize a particular culture, gain knowledge and understanding of the cultures, by studying other languages. Students cannot truly master a language until they are aware of and learn the cultural contexts that language uses<sup>83</sup>.

Languages today are taught implicitly on any educational level. Culture is included [more or less] in the linguistic form taught to students, but contemporary accomplishments in the field of linguoculturology require a different approach. This would enable students to be aware of the cultural characteristics which are reflected in the language. In order to implement the new approach, teachers should make a sharp turn in reflecting cultural forms in the language. Instead of being implicit, they should be explicit. The most common example is teaching how to address formally and informally. Some languages do contain specific forms, whilst others lack them<sup>84</sup>. This way, students will truly master a language if they learn not only the linguistic norms, but also cultural ones. This is reason why the current system of didactical coordinates in the system of language-teaching requires modification. A system where language and culture are given the same values needs to be established as a norm; instead of the standardized learning process of any language accompanied by a secondary learning or familiarizing with culture (or not learning of culture at all) and instead of giving culture a secondary value in the process of learning a language. As you may already know from the axiom '*language is culture and culture is language*', a didactical system where culture and language are given the same amounts of attention can deliver results which will greatly increase or even perfect the communicative

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<sup>81</sup> The idea that language is the main exponent of national culture has been developing far earlier in the humanities. The first real boost was given in the time of von Humboldt, who believed that every language is the carrier of culture and identity of the people who speak any language. Edward Sapir (1949) has a position which discloses the unity of language and culture: culture can be defined as what community does and thinks. Language is how people think.

<sup>82</sup> Stainer, F. 1971, "Culture: A motivating factor in the French classroom". In C. Jay & P. Castle (Eds.), French language education: The teaching of culture in the classroom.

<sup>83</sup> National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1996, p.27

<sup>84</sup> Peterson, E. and Coltrane, B.. 2003, Culture in Second Language Teaching. Centre for Applied Linguistics

competence. In relation to this didactic approach, according to Yuri Prokhorov, the culture of any particular country will be considered a part of the communication needs of students, thus will provide extra linguistic foundation of speech situations (Prokhorov 2009, 96). Linguoculturology is the best choice when it comes to changing the current didactical system in foreign language teaching. One of the main postulates of linguoculturology is the thesis that learning any language from the standpoint of culture represents a form of comparative study between the foreign and the native language. Although the projected language textbook in this thesis does not consider any other language (except for the target language), it should be taken into consideration that teachers should establish the structural and functional features of both native and target language, since this is precisely the kind of comparison which allows to determine the interrelation between language and culture.

Language is essential to every citizen of every country in the world. It resides in the everyday obligations people have; it resides in the laws, attitudes, practices and tradition. It is also the tool needed to execute intercultural communication. Every time a communication act between two cultures takes place, one needs to know much more than just plain words which describe the basic concepts in both linguacultures. Language education should introduce culture, customs, speech behavior, the language picture of the world contained in the native speaker's language. Therefore, language education should implement the linguacultural approach in language-teaching. Sayahova (2015) sets several points on what the 'linguacultural approach' is based on:

1. 'Linguistic personality' is the central concept of the linguacultural approach; the creation of the linguistic personality is the main goal of teaching any foreign language; authentic communication, cognitive and cultural needs form the basis of the foreign language-learning system.

2. Learning a second language involves the assimilation of a new language world picture. This concept is the key in linguoculturology and reflects the cognitive function of language (and its first starting point – the nomination of objects in the surrounding reality).

3. Awareness of the language as a cultural phenomenon which embodies the history, the culture, the customs, the traditions of the people; the realisation that language is the vault of people's culture leads to the need to describe the national/cultural component in linguistic units on all levels (starting from vocabulary, phraseology, aphoristics and text). This leads to the

creation of linguacultural competence in students, which will be described in the next subchapter.

4. Creating a rich language world picture, delivering students a rich network of interconnected concepts and symbols.

5. Mastering the norms of intercultural communication and thus creating intercultural competence is one of the goals of linguoculturology in language education. In order to achieve this it is necessary to use the polycontextual model when describing the national and the cultural characteristics of speech, behavior, attitudes etc.

6. The native language and its role in the linguacultural approach are liberal. Teachers and the students are free to make comparisons of linguistic world pictures, concepts, communicative behavior, values etc.

The theoretical substantiation of linguoculturology started in the 1990's with the publication of scientific articles, monographs, PhD dissertations devoted to the problems of the interrelation between language and culture, the development of linguacultural competence, the acknowledgment of communicative and cultural minimum, linguacultural dictionaries etc. Most of this work was performed in Russia, because this is the place where studies on this subject are still ahead of European or American linguistics.

The study of any language is aimed at the developing certain competences that enable one to be proficient in the target language. These competences can be active or passive and are frequently separated into four inter-related skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. One of the most recognized language competences is Communicative competence<sup>85</sup>. I would also like to introduce 'Linguacultural competence' as a key component in advanced level language-

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<sup>85</sup> Communicative competence is a theory which seeks to understand an individual's ability to effectively convey meaning within given contexts. According to the widely-cited framework produced by Canale & Swain (1980) there are four components of communicative competence. These are grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. Grammatical competence includes the knowledge of vocabulary, pronunciation, sound-letter relationships, and the rules of word and sentence formation. Sociolinguistic competence describes an individual's ability to produce and understand appropriate utterances within a given context. Included in this domain is the use of speech acts, which are formulaic utterances, used in specific situations to achieve actions like thanking, greeting, requesting, responding, etc. Discourse competence refers to an individual's ability to combine grammatical forms and meanings to create a unified text in different genres. Genres may be written (i.e. a narrative, or argument) or spoken (i.e. the distinctive speech styles found in regional, age, gender, and class groups) (Sato, 1990). Investigations within this domain have found that miscommunication can occur when individuals have differing discourse styles (Sato, 1990). Strategic competence refers to an individual's ability to compensate for a lack of linguistic knowledge. For example, a speaker who does not know the word "triangle" may describe the shape by saying "it's a shape with three straight sides" so that the listener can understand the speaker's intended meaning and supply the correct word (Vance 2013).

education. 'Linguacultural competence' refers to the *adequate perception of any cultural context*. As linguists would say, it is the correlation of semantic content of the language sign with the associations which can be found in a word through the prism of a particular ethnic culture.

From a didactic point of view, linguoculturology contains a theoretical basis for the development of the secondary linguistic persona and the creation of communicative skills needed for preparing students from different backgrounds for the intercultural communication. Learning a foreign language vocabulary from a linguacultural aspect facilitates the transition to a different system of linguistic symbols, necessary to create the secondary linguistic persona (Алефиренко 2010, 24).



### ***3.4 Linguacultural Competence (Advanced Level Language-learning)***

Constant changes in the realm of linguistic realities throughout the world give massive headaches to the language community, language teachers and basically everybody who works with contemporary languages. What is relatively current today may appear to be archaic tomorrow. This is particularly true when discussing the competences that every foreign language teacher should have. There are numerous articles, monographies and books written on different kinds of competencies teachers must develop in order to transfer effectively knowledge to their students.

Mastering basic competences and the ability to understand other native speakers, i.e. the command of linguacultural competence – remains a priority in today's anthropocentric linguistics. The issue of competence has been a point of interest in many soft sciences: pedagogy, psychology, cultural studies, culturology, sociology, linguistics etc. If we consult the dictionaries on what *competence* is, we generally receive definitions like<sup>86</sup>:

- *the quality of being competent; adequacy; possession of required skill, knowledge, qualification, or capacity;*
- *legal capacity or qualification based on the meeting of certain minimum requirements of age, mental health, citizenship, or the like;*
- *the implicit, internalized knowledge of a language that a speaker possesses and that enables the speaker to produce and understand the language;*
- *the knowledge that enables a person to speak and understand a language;*
- *the ability to do something well.*

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<sup>86</sup> Dictionary.com, Merriam-Webster Online, Cambridge Dictionary Online

Linguistics is the home to other synonymic expressions: *cultural competence*, *language competence*, *linguacultural competence* etc. Every single expression has its own content and it is a product of different branch in linguistics. After reading the chapter about linguoculturology, the reader has the impression that *linguacultural competence* is the focal point we are dealing with here. This competence is one of the main parts of this thesis, but this thesis shall present the foundations of a future multimedia textbook which uses the theoretical grounds of linguoculturology, it is aimed at creating linguacultural competence and can be a valuable addition to learning materials.

I consider ‘linguacultural competence’ to be a domain which includes [advanced] **knowledge of mental characteristics and culture**, along with the excellent command of the language. Also, being ‘linguaculturally competent’ means to understand the basic linguacultural facts in the context spectrum that are current and play an active role in the way a society lives, its rules, norms. In other words, **it’s the knowledge to use linguacultural units effectively which reflect the culture of the target language society.**

Many authors<sup>87</sup> have published works aimed to improve the cultural literacy of students who learn foreign languages. Their motivation is quite understandable, but not so helpful. The American educator Eric Donald Hirsch published his *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* in 1987. His intention was to create a dictionary of cultural literacy, comprised of linguistic realities - 5.000 words, phrases, facts, historical figures,

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<sup>87</sup> Like the American educator and academic Eric Donald Hirsch and his work *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (1987)

## Proficient user

(according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)

### C1

#### Effective operational proficiency

- Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer clauses, and recognize implicit meaning.
- Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.
- Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.
- Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

### C2

#### Mastery or proficiency

- Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read.
- Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation.
- Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.

science terminology and cultural artefacts which every single American should be aware of (and students learning English as a foreign language). Hirsch considered that his dictionary should not include terminology or figures that are not known to the general public. The same goes for common things like the names of animals, colors, cities etc. He used key words from the following areas: The Bible, Mythology and Folklore, Proverbs, Idioms, World literature, Philosophy, Religion, Literature in English, Conventions of Written English, Fine Arts, World History to 1550, World History since 1550, American History to 1865, American History since 1865, World Politics, American Politics, World Geography, American Geography, Anthropology, Business and Economics, Physical Sciences and Mathematics, Earth Sciences, Life Sciences, Medicine and Health, Technology.

Even though selecting cultural key words and introducing them to language learners can be seen as a productive way to promote language and cultural realities, there is a rather big flaw in this reasoning. This practice proved to be only of encyclopedic nature, not beneficial as a linguacultural one. Socio-political circumstances, geopolitical and cultural transformations continuously change the paradigm of what has a linguacultural value and what does not. We have all been in situations when we talked to someone who is fifty years older than us. Society's values that have been enshrined and transferred to the generation that was starting to attend schools fifty years ago now appears to be completely archaic and even more often – disconnected from today's values. Their cultural and linguistic code is full of key words which may be the same, but semantically very different, or even words that are non-existent in youth's system of values. On one hand, the older generation has far superior linguacultural competence, while the younger generation has a lower linguacultural competence which will improve in time with new concepts and key words as they live through the human experience. Hirsch published his work in 1987. We would need additional research to determine how many of those 5.000 key words changed or disappeared during the last 30 years from the publication.

Lately, we can notice a new wave of dictionaries which have been published. These are linguacultural dictionaries. They can offer the language learner something more than encyclopedic facts. The domain of linguacultural competence should be filled with basic components of the language system – key words, phrases, semantic units, precedent text etc. They reflect on the cultural specifics of a society, determine its value system and help the individual to create world view and to improve on it (and it).

Also, these basic linguacultural components can be similar to the units of other nations and cultures in their form, but can be radically different in content as every culture has a

different mentality, different world view, different value systems, attitudes etc. As it was mentioned previously in the text, they are the result of every nation's unique historical development, the unique political, societal, and social factors. Basic linguacultural components should reflect the synchronic cultural, political, social, economic, educational, historical, and other sides of national consciousness.

Different historical epochs bring words and concepts that are culturally significant, while other words and concepts disappear or move to other levels in the language system. The ability to be up-to-date with the linguacultural units means to be capable to understand better the current state of a society. This is the key to linguacultural competence. Cultural and linguacultural dictionaries are doing a great job, but that still is not enough. Once printed, even a day out in the world - they become old. Language students need something better.

Variability, changeability of language and its units are entirely normal condition. It is also a proof of a developing system. One of the most important developments in a language system is the process of creation of new words, while others become archaic. Archaization is a gradual process during which lexical units "grow and die", or in other words – become active in the vocabulary first, and then take their place in the passive domain.

Updating the list of lexical units, and thus increasing the importance of dictionaries and language textbooks has been neglected due to many reasons, mainly because of the medium through which this process should take place. I shall elaborate more on that in other parts of this thesis.

Some authors<sup>88</sup> consider that selecting key words, phrases and expressions which are current and most widely used in a society, is not enough. Khalupo (Халупо, 2012) presents another point: *...базовые лингвокультурные единицы способствуют развитию личности в целом, но и отражают национальную специфику общества, духовность, ее развитие на определенных этапах. Базовые лингвокультурные единицы рассматриваются в данном случае не только как проводники в языково-культурное пространство менталитета, но также как и отображение мировоззрения и культуры многих поколений.*

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<sup>88</sup> Like Khalupo (Халупо, 2012)

He uses the phrase *'basic linguacultural units'* to pinpoint elementary components in the system of language (*key words, phraseological units, collocations and precedent texts*) which reflect the national and cultural specifics of a nation.

By mastering linguacultural units, we master the ability to reflect the values engraved in language and culture. Put differently, we acquire linguacultural competence. What are the main indicators of linguacultural competence? Firstly, it is a completely new view on culture; a combination of language knowledge along with the understanding of cultural processes, background knowledge and moral values and attitudes in society. This combination enables the language learner to better understand or socialize in the destination society (the society where the target language is used). Secondly, integration of this knowledge, deciphering the main values of the society and the main components of its language world image. Thirdly, the creation/adaptation of target language world image, after the successful integration of linguacultural knowledge and societal values, which would eventually lead to adapting 'cultural speech', modified behavior, language etiquette etc. Needless to mention, culture has an influence on language and tends to accumulate in language. On the other hand, language affects the subject, as it accepts and adapts to the target language's culture which is enclosed in language units. Thanks to this process, the subject slowly begins to **adopt and adapt to the target language's collective consciousness**.

The individual is not born as a complete product with a ready-to-go system of language and culture. It takes many years for one to learn a language, the culture within it and its values. Even though this sounds quite banal, there is one thing you can read between lines – **linguaculture can be learned and linguacultural competence achieved**. One can feel the influence of linguacultural competence when there are self-observable changes in the way one behaves when speaking the target language; when using 'cultural speech' and when internalized speech is partially in the target language. Other signals also include a deeper understanding of humor, the ability to participate actively in humorous/intellectual/everyday situations, recreate or construct such situations. In order to achieve this, one needs to have a broad knowledge of the collocations, semantics, precedent texts and other key words that largely influence the consciousness and the mentality of the native speaker. Needless to say, **linguacultural knowledge does not represent a quantitative collection of key words**, but it is an accumulation of knowledge which reflects the culture of the language being referred to.

Linguacultural competence can also be described as an indicator of how developed sociocultural and psycholinguistic qualities a person has and how often one implements them

with other members of society. These also include the system of linguacultural data that helps create and develop a new worldview (with the help of key words, collocations, precedent texts etc.); the linguacultural belief system that also transforms the interests, life preferences and core values one has; the system of individual norms of human behavior, formed by certain cultural and linguistic patterns (Халупо, 2012).

As language and cultural realities cannot be learned entirely, but rather, they are part of a learning process, it is necessary to establish at least three levels of linguacultural competence: **low, medium and high level of linguacultural competence.**

When one starts to learn a language, basic cultural representations about the country where the target language is spoken are starting to take shape. At this point, this information is nothing more than generalized thoughts and opinions, i.e. stereotypes<sup>89</sup>. Using stereotypes as main source of information about countries and societies can be considered as a ***low level of linguacultural competence.***

Students and learners who have had some experience with linguacultural material, directly or indirectly, have ***medium level of linguacultural competence.*** This level of competence should include experience with music, movies, books, newspapers, and understanding of generally accepted concepts, some humor and direct or indirect communication with native speakers.

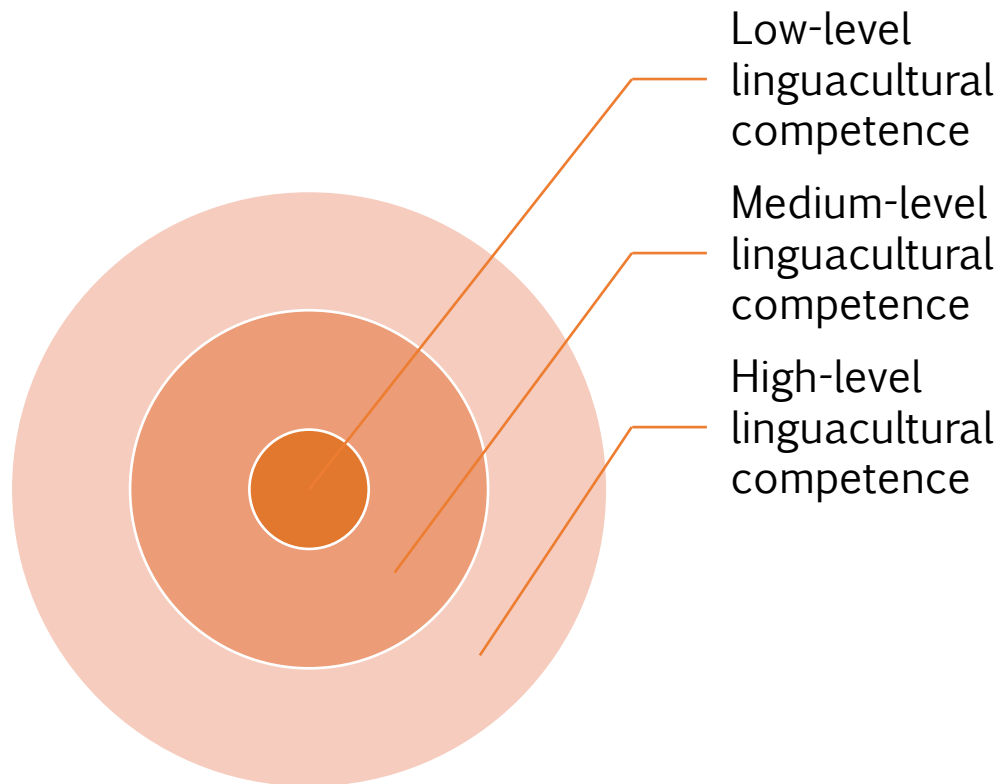
People who have excellent command of a foreign language, as well as broad knowledge of linguacultural units and concepts - can be considered to have ***high level of linguacultural competence.***

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<sup>89</sup> There is a functional aspect to stereotypes, also known as categorizations. Cognitively, people draw upon ways in which they can cluster related matter together in order to provide themselves with cerebral shortcuts. For example, a person can spend a tremendous amount of time and effort memorizing all of the shades of red that exist within the color wheel. They might meticulously pore over the differences between brick, coral, crimson, rose, puce, sangria, rust, terra cotta, maroon, and scarlet. Or, they can cluster them together under the generalized umbrella of "red," and act accordingly, which enables them to come to conclusions and proceed with life in an efficient and organized manner. If, say, a real estate agent hosts an open house and provides online directions that include "turn onto Main Street and park your car in front of the first red house on the right," a person who utilizes a categorical strategy would rely on their mental index of "red" colors that encompasses a wide spectrum of shades, and would therefore not need painstaking elaboration. In other words, categorization can be quite expedient, particularly when channeled toward inanimate objects.

When pertaining to people, the process of social categorization, or stereotyping, becomes much more convoluted. Its functionality remains, in that people stereotype others because they deem it a resourceful and informative methodology (Vejar 2013).

Having a high level of linguacultural competence also means a **proactive approach in content use**. This also means that students should continue to rely on themselves for further linguacultural information, rather than absorbing it through pre-prepared materials.



**Graph:** A representation of what linguacultural competence can look like on all levels. Having a low-level linguacultural competence can represent the core (the basic set of information about target language's linguaculture), while high-level linguacultural competence is already reaching far beyond the invariant base of every language.

What are the goals of linguacultural competence? To answer this question, I would like to rephrase a paragraph written by Lothar Bredella (Literary texts and intercultural understanding, 1997): ...as we must learn the vocabulary and the syntactic rules of the foreign language, we also learn the social rules of the foreign language. Yet, such concept of linguacultural understanding does not or rarely takes into account that we already have certain stereotypical views about the foreign culture and that we often regard others as inferior, full of inconsistencies and generally flawed. Linguacultural competence also includes intercultural understanding at its core, which means that when we learn something about foreign cultures we also have to change our image of them and since hetero- and autostereotypes are closely connected, that means we must change ourselves.

In order for one to at least try to understand the ‘other’, there are certain tools that can do the task at hand, as you would see later in the text where I will continue with the introduction of points-of-view approach in language-education.

### ***What next?***

Context approach in language-learning is not something completely unknown in the realm of linguistics and language-teaching. It is just a logical continuation in the development of anthropological linguistics and linguoculturology. Good teachers, even when using other methods in the teaching process, still use context. However, it should be mentioned that not every teacher is sufficiently motivated or does possess the knowledge for the existence and function of every single context that can exist during single communicative act. In addition, contemporary textbooks used in the world today present the Communicative Learning approach as a multifunctional approach - it can be used anywhere, and it is valid in every situation. This is definitely false and misleading. The downside of classic textbooks sold around the world today is their "changelessness". Of course, once printed on a solid medium, the content cannot be changed.

Classic textbooks for advanced level language-learning that exist today become obsolete really fast - they are not able to cope up with the development of semantic (and other) realities in language. With the adoption of the new linguacultural approach and the new multimodal method (to be discussed later in this chapter) in creating textbooks for learning language, along with using electronic mediums, instead of ordinary paper – language textbooks can be ‘reborn’ and used for as long as a better idea and approach come by. These new textbooks can also come in a digital format. Hundreds of different multimedia and interactive programs for language-learning exist around the world today. As a language teacher, I am testing and using as many programs as possible. Although they represent a step forward when compared with conventional textbooks, existing multimedia and interactive language programs are still created by using old methods and approaches (which does not make them too much different from ordinary, hard-copy textbooks). There are numerous different multimedia/interactive programs for language learning today, but I will focus my attention only on Rosetta Stone as one of the most popular language software on the planet. Rosetta Stone nowadays works as a



platform for learning foreign languages on a personal computer, as well as on all mobile devices that run Android or iOS operative system. Everyone who has used this application and PC software version has a different opinion because of their personal experience.



Screenshot taken from Rosetta Stone (Italian)

Whilst reading a blog about the use of Rosetta Stone in schools across the United States, I stumbled upon information that over 20.000 schools already implemented this software<sup>90</sup>.

A teacher of English as a foreign language in Harrisonburg, Virginia, has the following comment on Rosetta Stone:

*At the beginning of May, not entirely satisfied with our progress after eight months of instruction, I gave each of my students a laptop with Rosetta Stone English software installed. We started from the beginning, and while the students had seen most of the words and grammar before, they had mastered very little of it.*<sup>91</sup>

Another user<sup>92</sup> of this software has the following comments about the down side of Rosetta Stone:

*Rosetta Stone software falls prey to the same problem every language learning software program suffers from: You can't ask questions to clarify because you're not dealing with a real*

<sup>90</sup> „Incorporate Rosetta Stone Advantage K-12 Into Your Language Learning“ (2015). Available at: <http://www.weareteachers.com/blogs/post/2015/10/01/incorporate-rosetta-stone-advantage-k-12-into-your-language-learning>

<sup>91</sup> <http://www.rosettastone.com/blog/using-rosetta-stone-as-an-esl-tool/>

<sup>92</sup> <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/language-learning-tips/26427-pros-and-cons-of-rosetta-stone-software/>

*person. So when something isn't quite clear (does that word mean "cup" or the liquid in the cup? Or does it mean "to drink" from the cup?) you can't stop and clarify. You have to make your best guess and hope you're getting it right. While this does encourage the type of deductive thought process you need to learn a new language by immersion, it can also be very frustrating.*

*Since there's no way to click and see the words translated into your own language, there's no way to see if you've correctly divined their meaning. All you can do is go on and hope it becomes clear through context.*

I also feel tempted to give my own opinion in the terms of the linguacultural approach in creating new multimedia/interactive software for learning languages: Rosetta Stone, along with a lot of other multimedia/interactive software packages on the market does not include linguacultural or contextual approach. Monologues and dialogues contained in the language-learning interface are universally made to be used in all languages which come with the software. Perhaps the approach Rosetta Stone employs can be useful for beginners, but more advanced levels demonstrate the shortcomings of this universal approach in this software.

Rosetta Stone language-learning software clearly cannot be used as a replacement for trained teachers in classes. Its theoretical grounds are suspicious, and, the most important part - there is no cultural authenticity. In conclusion I would like to post the opinion of Laura Bridges-Pereira<sup>93</sup>, expert in Technology in Education:

*Center for Applied Linguistics expressed its concern at the low number of programs that are "designed to educate students linguistically and culturally to communicate" and stated that programs which aim for students to achieve "proficiency" were the exception rather than the rule.*

Thus, is there a need for another approach to the study of foreign languages? The answer is definitively yes, because without explicit attention to the background knowledge and (poly)context(uality), they will always take the second place in advanced level language-teaching. Foreign language education would greatly benefit from taking greater consideration of the context in which communicative acts take place, and on the other side teachers will devote more attention to realities, which will come as a boost to their motivation (Bax, 2003). Professor

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<sup>93</sup> <http://www.langology.org/?p=1370>

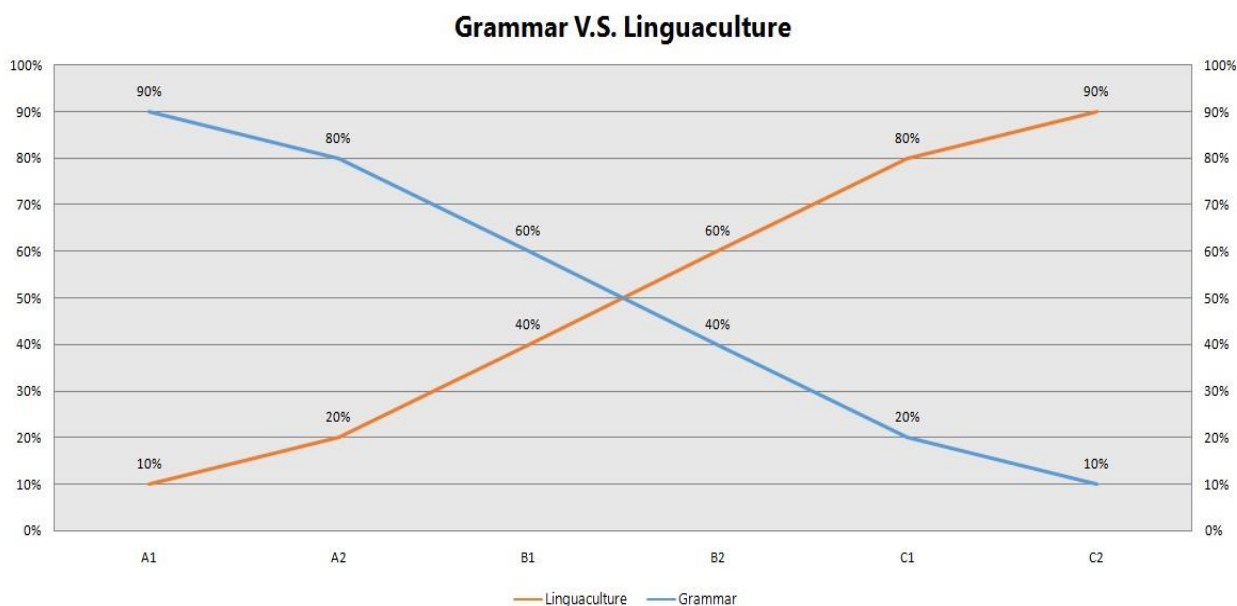
Stephen Bax talks about the same in his paper from a viewpoint of using contextual approach by teachers. On the other hand, I propose a different approach.

As mentioned previously, not every language teacher has sufficient knowledge of most of the context in which a communicative act takes place. Therefore, I suggest using contextual approach through the prism of the multimodal method. Culture is fundamentally linked to language (and vice versa), and we take that claim as an axiom in the process of applying the multimodal method and the contextual approach in foreign language education. Language is the carrier of linguaculture wherever it may be used (Risager, 2010), respectively, language is (almost) never culturally neutral, since it always carries linguaculture.

Because not every teacher is completely competent to present all (or most) possible contexts (nor has the full specter of cultural background knowledge) in every communicative act, my attention in this PhD thesis is concentrated on applying contextual approach (including polycontextuality) and the use of the multimodal method in multimedia/interactive textbook for foreign language learning. This should ensure a **contextual minimum** which will provide better contextual-communicative competence (otherwise also known as ‘background knowledge’) of students who study any given language.

Since the proposed approach of creating multimedia textbooks comes with increased use of linguacultural realities, I do suggest this multimedia/interactive textbook to be used by students who have achieved at least B2 level according to the European Framework of Reference for Languages. This can be explained with the necessity of a more independent use of language during class, without the need of constant teacher help coming from the teacher. Also, this means that the students should have a good, if not excellent command of grammatical rules, meaning that before developing linguacultural competence, students ought to have excellent grammar proficiency. In fact, advanced language level in the potential software considers a reduced use of grammar and increased use of linguacultural realities.

In order to give you a better idea of what we are considering by this, I would like to present a table that shows how grammar / linguaculture should relate on different levels:



**Graph: Grammar v.s. Linguaculture in language education**

As it can be seen from the statistical table, the use of the linguacultural approach should start at a minimal level during the initial stages of language learning (10%), while the grammatical forms, understandably, should be at the 90%.

When the level of proficiency increases to A2<sup>94</sup>, linguacultural realities should take hold at 20% of the language classes, while the grammar exercises should decrease to 80%.

At B1 and B2 level, linguacultural realities and polycontextual approach should exceed the grammar classes and exercises (60% - 40%).

As I have mentioned previously, the projected multimedia/interactive textbook for foreign language-learning should be used by students who already have upper-intermediate proficiency in the language they are studying, which means that the textbook is intended for students who have a minimum CEFR level of B2 and would like to achieve C1 and C2 level. At this point, linguacultural realities are represented at 80% and 90%, while the grammar components should be at 20% and 10% accordingly.

One of the greatest benefits of this potential multimedia textbook is the possibility to add, amend and update its contents over time. The author's idea is that companies which would create, service and maintain such textbooks could update the textbook's content (language realia and contexts, which is changing along with the tiniest changes occurring in the fabric of society,

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<sup>94</sup> According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment

which are, of course, reflected in language). Let us not forget - this would be a multimedia textbook which can be updated via the Internet. Anyone who has this multimedia textbook could receive notifications about new versions or completely new texts, pictures, movies, clips etc. This feature is what makes this potential multimedia textbook stand up from all textbooks (multimedia or hard copy) that exist on the markets and do not offer this option. Not only the contents can be updated by the company that services it, but also teachers or native speakers that "carry the core of a specific linguaculture" can propose new content, which according to them, can enrich the learning experience and the linguacultural competency. As it was mentioned in the introductory part of this thesis, I am specifically pointing to the fact that **native speakers should be the ones that create and/or modify the contents of such textbooks due to the fact that they are the most competent in recognizing contextual and linguacultural realities of their culture better than anyone else**. Only native speakers (with the corresponding linguaculture) can recognize all minor changes in the context.

Responding to Bax's article about context in teaching, Liao Xiaoqing writes: *...because the context approach is new, teachers need to be re-trained to develop contextual awareness and context analysis skills... Nobody knows how many years it would take to re-train teachers. Context approach is an eclectic approach. It is only an 'approach' rather than a 'method'. (Richards and Rogers 2001<sup>95</sup>). Because it has no 'design' or 'procedure', it is very hard for teachers to follow<sup>96</sup>.*

This is exactly the reason why this kind of textbook shall solve the problem Liao writes about. Of course, it is completely logical to assume that it will be paramount to re-train enormous number of teachers to use context approach in class. Instead of doing that, transforming the way language is taught through a new approach and textbook seems to be the best "shortcut". Following the rules of a new textbook is far easier than retraining an army of teachers. "Contextual awareness" and "context analysis skills", as Liao writes, would come automatically with the material in the textbook.

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<sup>95</sup> Richards, J. and Rodgers. 2001. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (2nd edn.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>96</sup> Liao, X. The need for Communicative Language Teaching in China. Available from: <http://eltj.oupjournals.org/cgi/doi/10.1093/elt/58.3.270>

### ***3.5 Noticeable Works and the Introduction of Polycontextuality***

*To be truly literate, citizens must be able to grasp  
the meaning of any piece of writing  
addressed to the general reader.*

(Hirsch et al. 1987, p.12)

The emergence of computer technology and other electronic devices are transforming the look of classical classrooms. This is the reason why linguadidactics continues to be in a state of constant change, adapting to every new gadget which emerges and could be used for its own benefit. New technology and changes which can be applied to application programming interfaces<sup>97</sup> also opened new space for creativity and expanding the potentials of textbooks.

As I have stated in the previous chapters, **the ever-changing language realities require a different medium that can help students become better equipped for the world around them** or for their future teaching (translating, interpreting etc.) careers. The previous part in this chapter shows that linguacultural competence can be achieved by lots of work with real-life content. As any language student knows, the realm of bi-directional dictionaries cannot help them cope with the realities they experience once they go “out in the open” and start communicating. Their existence has a completely different purpose, which is the reason why cultural dictionaries slowly took the attention of language learners and got their way on the shelves. But once you leave them on the shelves, they slowly become outdated. Their purpose begins to change slowly, and they become archive of archaisms for future linguists to research. The next subchapter presents two of the best dictionaries that deal with linguaculture, context and communication, which in the short run can be extraordinarily helpful for language learners.

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<sup>97</sup> Also known as API, it represents an application programming interface (API). It is a set of protocols, routines, functions and/or commands that programmers use to develop software or facilitate interaction between distinct systems. APIs are available for both desktop and mobile use and are typically useful for programming GUI (graphic user interface) components, as well as allowing a software program to request and accommodate services from another program. (definition from [Techopedia](#))

### ***3.5.1. Russian Cultural Space: Linguacultural Dictionary vs. Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know***

During my stay in Russia, prior to the meeting with Professor Dmitry Gudkov from the Moscow State University, I became aware of the existence of a linguacultural dictionary that was published in Russia in 2004. Its name is “*Russian Cultural Space: Linguacultural Dictionary, Volume 1*” («Русское культурное пространство: Лингвокультурологический словарь, Выпуск 1»), authored by Irina Vladimirovna Zakharenko<sup>98</sup>, Victoria Vladimirovna Krasnykh<sup>99</sup>, Dmitry Borisovich Gudkov<sup>100</sup>, Irina Sergeevna Brileva<sup>101</sup> and Natalia Pavlova Volskaya<sup>102</sup>. This is one in the series of dictionaries aimed at presenting context and background knowledge to students; an improvement over Eric Donald Hirsch’s *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*, which was published 1987. Eric Hirsch aimed at creating a dictionary of cultural literacy, comprised of linguistic realities that every American should be aware of.

The authors of “Russian Cultural Space: Linguacultural Dictionary” have fundamentally different, and in my own view, improved approach towards presenting linguacultural literacy to the end-users. Both dictionaries aim at enriching the language personality, but the Russian linguacultural goes further. The contents page of this dictionary is modest, but still encompassing some of the most important parts of contemporary linguistic culture. The first part begins with "Theoretical Principles: Principles of Description", where the authors begin describing the history of the relationship between culture and language, then continue with the object they are describing, the Russian cultural space, the subject of description, mental facts (ментефакты), system of units described in the dictionary, principles of lexicographical description, manual on how to use the dictionary and the sources authors used. The next chapter of the books continues as follows: zoomorphic images, precedent names,

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precedent texts, precedent discourse. The short description of this dictionary gives an idea of its target audience: *“The dictionary contains units that are widely represented in folklore and education literature (precedent texts, names and discourse, mythological characters, animal images associated with Russian folk culture, etc.), and which predetermines the specifics of the Russian world picture and its reflection in the language [which is] mastered by Russians at the first period of socialization. The first issue of this dictionary contains about 200 entries, each of which contains brief information pertaining encyclopedic [common] knowledge; stereotype representation of the phenomena existing in the Russian linguistic consciousness; the functioning of the unit of speech, the contexts of use. A rich illustrative material from contemporary Russian discourse is presented”*.

In the first chapter, the authors coincidentally mention the work of E. D. Hirsch and his “Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know”; they continue praising his thoughts that in order for one to successfully master a language, it is necessary to get acquainted with certain mental-cultural schemes and knowledge of their symbols, labels, dates, gestures, abbreviations etc. This set, according to them, is distinct (even though two or more cultures can share different sets) for every national culture; these sets determine the linguistic meaning, the features of communication, the meaning of texts and the specificity of the discourse of a certain national linguistic and cultural community.

The major difference between the two dictionaries is the use of a different approach. In the Russian dictionary, namely, the linguacultural approach, the conceptual comprehension of cultural categories finds its embodiment in the system of world images, which in essence cumulates the worldview of every nation. This accumulation is connected with the material, social or spiritual culture of a given linguistic community, and therefore it can serve as a testimony of the national experience and traditions. The authors chose the linguacultural approach because of its interest in the authentic and living communicative processes<sup>103</sup> and the expressions that reflect the mentality of people.

It would be quite beneficial for the reader to compare the motives to publish the two, in my opinion, best dictionaries when it comes to educating linguacultural literacy. E.D. Hirsch’s book does have an introduction, summarizing the goals of the book, while the Russian

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<sup>103</sup> One of the basic concepts of linguoculturology is “cultural connotation”, which directly or indirectly relates to the idiom with basic metaphor; the latter is interpreted by the “collective unconsciousness” in the cultural space (in Телия, В.Н. (1996). Русская фразеология. Семантический, прагматический и культурологический аспекты. Москва



dictionary lacks one. Nevertheless, it contains writing on the goal of the dictionary, and for my personal satisfaction, a reference to E.D. Hirsch's dictionary and the differences between both.

Excerpt from the *Introduction to the First Edition* from Hirsch's "Cultural Literacy":

*Although it is true that no two humans know exactly the same things, they often have a great deal of knowledge in common. Largely this common knowledge or collective memory allows people to communicate, to work together, and to live together. It forms the basis for communities, and if it is shared by enough people, it is a distinguishing characteristic of a national culture. The form and content of this common knowledge constitute one of the elements that makes each national culture unique.*

*It is our contention that such a body of information is shared by literate Americans of the late twentieth century, and that this body of knowledge can be identified and defined. This dictionary is a first attempt at that task. It identifies and defines the names, phrases, events, and other items that are familiar to most literate Americans: the information that we call cultural literacy. Although few of us will know every entry, most of us will be familiar with the majority, even if we are unable to define each one exactly.*

*Cultural literacy, unlike expert knowledge, is meant to be shared by everyone. It is that shifting body of information that our culture has found useful, and therefore worth preserving. Only a small fraction of what we read and hear gains a secure place on the memory shelves of the culturally literate, but the importance of this information is beyond question. This shared information is the foundation of our public discourse. It allows us to comprehend our daily newspapers and news reports, to understand our peers and leaders, and even to share our jokes. Cultural literacy is the context of what we say and read; it is part of what makes Americans American.*

*Because this is the first time anyone has tried to identify and define the knowledge assumed in public discourse, we had to establish a number of rules for deciding what to include. First, we proposed that many things are either above or below the level of cultural literacy. Some information is so specialized that it is known only by experts and is therefore above the level of common knowledge. At the same time, some information, such as the names of colors and animals, is too basic and generally known to be included in this kind of dictionary. By definition, cultural literacy falls between the specialized and the generalized.*

*Our second test was to determine how widely known an item is in our culture. Only those items that are likely to be known by a broad majority of literate Americans ought to appear in this dictionary. Therefore, in selecting entries, we drew upon a wide range of national periodicals. We reasoned that if a major daily newspaper refers to an event, person, or thing without defining it, we can assume that the majority of the readers of that periodical will know what that item is. If this is true, that event, person, or thing is probably part of our common knowledge, and therefore part of cultural literacy. Third, we proposed that cultural literacy is not knowledge of current events, although it can help us understand those events as they occur. To become part of cultural literacy, an item must have lasting significance. Either it has found a place in our collective memory or it has the promise of finding such a place. This is one of the things that contributes to the stability of cultural literacy in America. Some of the material in this dictionary has remained unchanged in our national consciousness since our nation's beginnings.*

While "Russian Cultural Space: Linguacultural Dictionary" does not have a preface nor an introduction that will reveal the motives and the goal of this dictionary, it does contain some information on the structure and the main reasons why this reason came to be. The first part of this dictionary contains exposé on the history of linguaculture, and from there I deliberately chose this excerpt, which describes the main difference between Hirsch's dictionary and theirs:

*Мы рассматриваем наш словарь как словарь фиксирующего типа и пытаемся описать не то, что «следует знать», а то, что реально «знает» практически любой социализованный представитель русского (в нашем случае) национально-лингвокультурного сообщества, и при этом не ставим перед собой никаких воспитательных задач. Таким образом, наш словарь призван выполнять фиксирующую и ориентирующую функцию, что отличает его от лингвострановедческих словарей и «Словаря культурной грамотности», которые могут быть названы словарями нормативного типа, выполняя при этом социально-регулятивную функцию. С одной стороны, предлагаемый культурный минимум отражает те представления, модели восприятия, способы действия и символы, за которыми в данном обществе закреплён статус «правильных» и «необходимых для запоминания», а с другой – предлагая данные феномены в качестве образцовых, эталонных, задаёт ориентиры для «правильного» поведения в этом социуме.*

*В отличие от авторов указанных словарей, мы стремились максимально снизить уровень субъективности при отборе материала и опирались не только на*

*интроспекцию, но и на данные проведенных нами экспериментов в форме анкетирования, а также на исследования текстов СМИ и массовой литературы. Эти тексты, по нашему мнению, отражают реальное состояние дискурса русского национально-лингво-культурного сообщества и представляют собой экстерииоризированное воплощение русского языкового и культурного сознания, которые и являются основными объектами нашего изучения и описания.*

*Указанные словари представляют почти исключительно энциклопедическую информацию об описываемом феномене, например о лице, на которое указывает имя собственное. Нас же интересует не только эта информация, сколько особенности функционирования данного имени в дискурсе русского национально-лингво-культурного сообщества, определяемые особенностями «семантики» этого имени. «Семантика» же эта, хотя и коррелирует с энциклопедическими сведениями о носителе имени, ни в коем случае не исчерпывается ими, более того, не всегда и детерминируется ими. Повторим, что мы стремились не столько к «идеальному» и всеохватному описанию реалии, сколько к выявлению и презентации инвариантного образа последней в массовом сознании и к представлению того, как этот инвариант воплощен в языке и речи. Мы стремились также не к изолированной презентации и описанию единиц вошедших в словарь, но к экспликации их взаимосвязи, взаимозависимости и взаимовлияния.<sup>104</sup>*

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<sup>104</sup> We regard our dictionary as a fixing type dictionary, trying to describe not what "one ought to know", but what any representative of the Russian (in our case) national-linguistic-cultural community actually "knows" and do not enforce any educational tasks as part of it. Thus, our dictionary is made to perform its fixing and orienting function, which distinguishes it from linguistic-cultural dictionaries and the " Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know", which can be called normative-type dictionary, while performing a socially-regulative function. On the one hand, the proposed cultural minimum reflects those perceptions, perceptual models, modes of action and symbols, which in this [Russian] society have been assigned the status of "acknowledged" and "necessary for memorization", and on the other hand, by proposing the given phenomena as exemplary and a model, sets guidelines for "adequate" behavior in this society.

Unlike the authors of Hirsch's dictionary, we tried to minimize the level of subjectivity in the selection of material and relied not only on introspection, but also on the data of our experiments in the form of questionnaires, as well as on the research of mass media texts and mass literature. These texts, in our opinion, reflect the real state of the discourse of the Russian national linguistic and cultural community and represent an exteriorized embodiment of Russian linguistic and cultural consciousness, which are the main objects of our study and description.

These dictionaries [Hirsch's type] are almost exclusively encyclopedic in nature on the phenomena they describe; for example, about the person to whom the proper name indicates. We are interested not only in this information, but also in the specific features of the functioning of this name in the discourse of the Russian national linguistic and cultural community, which are determined by the peculiarities of the "semantics" of this name. This "semantics", although correlated with encyclopedic information about the bearer of a name, is by no means depleted by it; moreover, it is not always determined by it. We did not try to describe the "ideal" and all-embracing depiction of reality, but to identify and present the invariant image of the latter in the mass consciousness and how the representation of this invariant image is embodied in language and speech. We also did not seek to isolate descriptions of the units included in the dictionary, but to explicate of their interconnection, interdependence and mutual influence.

Given this information, we can conclude that the basic difference between these two dictionaries (that represent one of the backbone of linguacultural research and its practical application) is:

### *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*

- Hirsch argues that order for one to have a successful control of language, one has to have a knowledge of mental and cultural schemata and the knowledge of their symbols;
- This dictionary represents a dictionary of a normative type that fulfills a socially-regulating and educational task.

### *Russian Cultural Space: Linguacultural Dictionary*

- The authors use the linguacultural approach, considering that the conceptual interpretation of the categories of culture finds its embodiment in a system of images that represent a niche for cumulating the worldview of people;
- This dictionary does not have a regulatin or social role, but instead it describes what ought to be known by virtually every representative of national-language-cultural community.

Even though the described dictionaries employ techniques that help the language student cope with the linguacultural environment, there are factors that limit their future use - hard copy linguacultural dictionaries cannot keep up with the ever-changing nature of language realities, except by constantly updating them every year (or couple of months). Hence, other options become necessary. Even Edward Hirsch is aware of this deficiency, which is why he even noted in the “Introduction” that *in our age of communication, the lifespan of many things in our collective memory is very short. What seems to be monumental today often becomes trivial tomorrow*, thus choosing a memory span of fifteen years for his dictionary.

Contrary from the ‘hard-copy domain’, the digital domain proved to be one of the best and most versatile options for creating [not just] linguacultural dictionaries because of the possibility to make constant updates and changes as necessary.

Imagine writing a letter on a typewriter. Every single hit on the typewriter produces a letter that cannot be deleted, and every single mistake would ruin the aesthetics of the document after trying to correct the text. Now imagine typing an e-mail on a computer. We lost all fear of making a mistake while typing e-mails or any other documents, as only a hit on a single button could repair/delete the typographical error. If it is a document, it can be changed as many times as we want, since we are not limited by almost anything but our need to update the document. The same logic applies to digital dictionaries and textbooks. Online dictionaries can be updated whenever a need may rise, which makes them perfect for the task at hand. Instead of one-time

task of writing a dictionary and then publishing it, now authors can function in “live mode”, doing constant changes to the dictionary, updating it to the “newest language version”.

Without an “updated language version” in dictionaries or textbooks, language students shall not be able to create or participate in authentic speech activities because of the lack of current sociocultural context. The same goes also for older linguacultural key words, but as most of communication is performed in real time and requires the knowledge of current state of affairs, constant updating of language material is crucial for any level of linguacultural competence.

The complexity and diversity of communication is reflected in the existence of multiple communication concepts and their ambiguity. Without reaching a good language competence, the construction of a cross-cultural, intercultural and linguacultural competence is not possible.

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Transformation of learner’s consciousness and the world picture appears along with the increased linguacultural level . Students begin to penetrate the target language semiotic domain; worldviews change, tolerance level increases, which results in more effective communication with native speakers.

While contemporary textbooks deal successfully with intercultural communication, the domain of high-level linguacultural competence is yet to be fully discovered and its potential used. Moreover, a high-level linguacultural competence comes along with the advanced language command, which means that a completely new kind of textbooks should be created in order to apply the linguacultural components we have discussed about.

Mastering the linguacultural code is a task which demands a new cognitive and person-oriented approach for studying foreign languages. If such approach is to be implemented, several factors should be considered:

- 1) learner’s personal characteristics
- 2) methodical support of the educational process
- 3) technical support for the teacher
- 4) course content
- 5) continuous updating of course content

Crucial component in the realization of this approach is the linguistic personality, which acts as the bearer of the native and the target language; it carries its own language concepts, background knowledge, cultural memory and cultural experience. This should be taken into account by the teacher when preparing the contents of the language course, as there are always points that can be highlighted when teaching linguacultural content. Some cultures are very close to each other, some are vastly different, but there always will be key words and topics in the native and target language, world pictures that can be used to get the student's attention.

### ***3.5.2 From Linguacultural Dictionaries to Polycontextual Textbooks***

In the previous subchapters we looked at two of perhaps the best attempts to transfer linguaculture from the authentic space into the linguistic space of the foreign language student.

Let us take a look at the term *polycontextual* – it is comprised of the Greek “*poli-*“, which means “many” and “much”, and “context”, which is defined as “*the situation within which something exists or happens, and that can help explain it*” by Cambridge Dictionary Online, or “*the parts of a discourse that surround a word or passage and can throw light on its meaning*” by Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online. Polycontextuality represents the backbone of the proposed foreign language textbook in this thesis, despite the fact that such textbooks do not exist prior to the writing of these lines (August 2018). There are, however, resources that deal with polycontextual materials (none of these are intended for foreign language classes or language classes of any sort). One of those resources is named “Point of View Reference Center”<sup>105</sup> and is provided by EBSCO. According to the description of their product, it is a *resource which presents multiple sides of an issue, this database provides rich content that can help students assess and develop persuasive arguments and essays, better understand controversial issues and develop analytical thinking skills*. This electronic resource contains over 400 topics, each of which has an encyclopedic description/overview, point (argument) and counterpoint (opposing argument). In other words, it contains multiple contexts for every single topic. “Point of View Reference Center” (POV) is marketed as a tool that helps the reader appraise the controversy behind every topic, to develop the ability to read critically, develop own perspectives and create competent arguments. This resource, along with the abovementioned linguacultural dictionaries, also served as an inspiration in the process of creation of the proposed multimedia language learning textbook. As in POV, the textbook will also include at least three parts – overview of an issue/topic, point/context 1 and counterpoint/context 2. I had the opportunity to work with POV in great detail, concluding that this resource provides a balance from all viewpoints with essays from various sources, all of which are transparent and available on EBSCO’s website. POV is also intended to be used as a part of the curriculum, but not as a language tool. As it is described on EBSCO’s website, *Points*

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<sup>105</sup> <https://www.ebsco.com/products/research-databases/points-view-reference-center>

of View Reference Center supports curriculum standards that ask students to analyze informational texts and hone their critical thinking skills. Its contents include more than 1900 essays from political magazines, newspapers, radio and television news transcripts, reference books, guided analysis research guides etc. POV's subjects include: citizen's rights, Earth and environment, global issues, health and medicine, media and communications, national debate topics, people and society, sports, women's issues etc.

The screenshot shows the Points of View Reference Center interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'New Search', 'Publications', 'Subjects', 'Dictionary', and 'More'. On the right side of the navigation bar are links for 'Sign In', 'Folder', 'Preferences', 'Help', and 'Exit'. Below the navigation bar is a search bar with the text 'Searching: Points of View Reference Center | Search Other Databases' and a search button. The search bar contains the text 'Enter any words to find books, journals and more'. Below the search bar are links for 'Basic Search', 'Advanced Search', and 'Search History'. The main content area shows a search result for 'Arctic Drilling: An Overview' by Driscoll, Sally, Griswold, Marcus, Points of View: Arctic Drilling, 2017. The result includes a title, database information, and a detailed record. The detailed record includes an introduction, related items, and a 'Tools' section with options like 'Add to folder', 'Print', 'E-mail', 'Save', 'Cite', 'Export', 'Create Note', 'Permalink', and 'Share'. The introduction text discusses the dispute over Arctic drilling and the environmental impacts of the process. The related items section includes 'Point: Arctic Drilling is a Necessary Solution' and 'Counterpoint: Finding an Alternative to Drilling in Alaska'.

### Sample Topic Overview of POV Reference Center

Point of View Reference Center clearly represents a powerful tool for developing not only critical thinking, but also helps to take into account different views and contexts that may exist outside of one's own "safe place". It contains mostly political subjects, which is why it is intended to be used mostly during mother tongue classes, studies in political science, journalism etc. Even though it clearly includes the realm of linguaculture, it is limited only to a limited number of topics. This is quite unfortunate, as its use can extend far beyond the current use. This is why I am eclectically using this concept in my own proposed language textbook. As POV was never conceptualized to serve as a language textbook, its qualities will surely provide a strong backbone for my own project.

When talking about textbooks for learning foreign languages, and especially about textbooks for advanced foreign language learning, there is one question which, judging by its



representation in research, has not been sufficiently explored in the language community. Nevertheless, some of the professors I interviewed for the purpose of this thesis already gave their opinions on the lack of language textbooks for advanced language learning.

In my opinion, the insufficient linguacultural instruments in creating language textbooks, , are the main problem in today's language education. The lack of textbooks for advanced language learning only makes things worse, which is the reason why a new approach in creating language textbooks is desperately needed. Even those textbooks for advanced language learning that are currently in existence - are not considered for linguacultural specifics. My own personal experiences speak for themselves – instead of preparing me for real life communication, translation or interpreting, the textbooks I used focused on ballet, art, and theatre in Russia. As a result, I was completely unprepared for real communication once I stepped foot in Russia, which resulted in many additional years in self-learning and improving the linguacultural knowledge of the target language.

One way to improve the situation with the lack of textbooks for advanced learning of foreign languages is to create a multimedia textbook that would be based on the principles of linguoculturology. The abovementioned polycontextual model which is closely based on the approach that Point of View Reference Center employs can be used as a core conception for the future linguacultural language textbook.

Creating language textbooks within the linguacultural approach requires the following:

- 1) Encouraging initiative and independence during learning and cognition,
- 2) Textbooks should be developed **not by one author, but by a group of authors** that are also native speakers (for Germans as a foreign language, a group of authors with German as a native language should work on the textbook),
- 3) Textbooks must have **social relevance**,
- 4) Textbooks must be relevant for the target audience,
- 5) Contents in the language textbook must be defined by its **authenticity**,
- 6) Linguacultural keywords and authentic materials used in the textbook must be “up-to-date”,
- 7) The textbook must take into account the most recent advances in linguoculturology,

- 8) Textbooks must offer specific tasks, aimed at self-education and self-improvement,
- 9) Authors of the textbook must have a clear image about the projected profile of the students,

But most importantly:

- 10) Textbooks should have **polycontextual content**, which is crucial for a complete linguacultural immersion.

Almost fifty years ago, Patrick Finn, the author of “Helping Children Learn to Read”, wrote the following passage: *Experience teaches more than simple isolated facts. The human mind perceives relationships between facts and imposes order on information. Soon one uses structures based on previously determined relationships in perceiving and making sense of new experiences. These structures are called schemata. Comprehension depends on the schemata the reader possesses* (Finn c1990).

I should point that ‘schemata’ in Patrick’s can be replaced with ‘background knowledge’ (or even ‘conceptual framework’). This background knowledge, as stated in the third point in the previous page requires social relevance, meaning that linguacultural facts should not be outdated. Background knowledge should be, as stated in the fifth point, enhanced by several authentic materials with different viewpoints (e.g. polycontextual information). As Richard and Jo Ann Vacca state in their “Content area reading” (c1986), *students must develop contextual and knowledge of words in order to comprehend freely what they read.*

### ***3.6 National Cultural Units. Language Realia***

Looking from the standpoint of area and cultural studies, nominative language units often possess content that directly or indirectly can reflect national culture. That content often has meaning that goes back to history, geographic conditions, religion, weather, traditions etc. and can often be found as *national cultural content*, which represents a valuable material for language and cultural studies. These language units contain a conceptual core and non-conceptual meanings reflecting expressiveness, emotionality, appreciation, various associations that are characteristic for the speakers of a particular language. The totality of these conceptual and non-conceptual meanings is part of the background language knowledge.

It is very difficult to detect when we are dealing with national cultural units that do not have equivalent words in both languages, and which have difference in background meaning. That is why a comparative study should always be applied, not everything this study will produce should be taken categorically, because background meaning and knowledge are always relative. Thus, the focus of area and cultural studies are the units that bear no equivalents in two languages and the background units that show divergence of conceptual or background semantic meaning when they are compared with another language. In order to identify such words, a simple comparative method should be applied, as the practice of comparing ‘culture number one’ and ‘culture number two’ allows us to identify specific cultural features that are most distinctive for the language the individual is learning.

From the abovementioned text one can make a conclusion that the national cultural units are closely related to the language realia. According to Berwald (1987)<sup>106</sup>, *realia* is referring to: *...real objects, specimens or artifacts - not copies; models or representations from a particular culture. Indeed, authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines, catalogs, timetables, films, etc. are designed for use in real life situations not for use as instructional tools. Although not designed for instructional use, realia and other authentic materials, including non-print mass media, provide a wide range of printed and spoken messages which can be used as primary or secondary material in a foreign language classroom. Other examples*

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<sup>106</sup> Berwald, J., 1987. Teaching foreign languages with realia and other authentic materials. *Q & As. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages*, pp.1-6.

*include telephone books, menus, tickets, and radio and television broadcasts... He goes on with the question “Why use realia?”, where he provides truly encompassing answer: The major advantage of using authentic materials and mass media in the foreign language classroom is that they contain current language on all topics imaginable and provide constant reinforcement of grammatical forms learned in the classroom. In addition to containing traditional vocabulary learned in the early stages of language instruction, they may contain neologisms as well as extensive vocabulary for sports, politics, cooking, music, and other topical areas. Perhaps most importantly, mass media provides students the opportunity to read or hear items of personal interest. Furthermore, there is nothing artificial or contrived about foreign media; they have been created for residents and consumers of authentic settings, not for foreign language teachers or students.*

So far, we have not found a precise definition of what *realia* represents, even though it seems the term itself is self-explanatory.

### ***3.7 Authentic materials***

Intense changes in the system of relations in a globalized world sharply increased the need for new concepts in foreign language education. Language education used to have an obligation to teach students to speak a language, but not to prepare them for intercultural communication. During the learning process, our national culture inevitably starts a dialogue with the target culture, during which differences appear and new concepts arise. Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin describes that process *...мы ставим чужой культуре новые вопросы, каких она сама себе не ставила, мы ищем в ней ответы на эти наши вопросы, и чужая культура отвечает нам, открывая перед нами свои стороны, новые смысловые глубины*<sup>107</sup>... (Бахтин 1986, 335). Authentic materials not only contribute to the creation of communicative competence, but also activate students' cognitive motivation, which means that students not only learn units and texts, but also acquire facts of the target culture, previously unknown and alien to them, which undoubtedly provokes their interest. As Bakhtin says, we ask questions about L2 culture, which come from the unique point of view other cultures have. This also produces a "cultural conflict", which in effect stimulates the process of comparing cultures. This contributes to the development of linguacultural competence and tolerance.

Language classes represent an environment where active modelling of intercultural communication takes place, creating situations that can be conditionally related to "real life" by using realia and authentic materials. Native speakers are the best source for teaching language and foreign culture, but in absence of a native speaker, the language teacher has to assume the role of mediator between cultures and help create competence in intercultural communication, as well as analytical capability for managing real-life situations in the target language. One of the requirements for achieving this is the use of authentic content. This requirement presupposes presenting of authentic materials and realia to the language students. There are no specific guidelines concerning the selection of these materials, and there should not be strict rules on what to choose, except the need for a linguacultural value, popularity, well-knownness, thematicity and functionality. If the language instruction is in non-philological

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<sup>107</sup> ...we ask new questions to the new culture, questions which she could not ask herself; we are looking for answers in the new culture, and the new culture answers us, opening new sides, semantic, depths to us... (translation by author).

environment, the selection of authentic materials should be performed according to the future vocation of the students. According to Yakovleva<sup>108</sup> (Яковлева 2015), authentic materials have three main functions in the learning process:

- 1) *Educational* – when they are used to expand the general worldview of students, to acquire new regional and linguistic knowledge;
- 2) *Communicative* – if authentic materials are used for organizing communication in different life situations;
- 3) *Developing* – when the cultural information is used to develop student’s intellectual and analytical skills and improve the motivation to learn the target language.

Authentic materials can include newspapers or any kind of articles, anecdotes, advertisement, culinary recipes, fairy tales, interviews, popular science, regional texts and even Tweets and Facebook posts, along with comments and replies. Even though many language teachers would oppose including Twitter and Facebook posts, they prove to be the flagship of “real life” language. Facebook is the place where one can immediately find relevant realia with current language, which is one of the best testimonials of the culture, mentality and current state of being of a nation and language.

Other authentic materials can also be audio-visual materials, such as radio and TV programs, TV news, weather forecasts, information announcements on the radio, TV, airports, railway stations etc. The use of such materials is extremely important, as they are examples of the current state of a language and they create the illusion of participation in the daily life of the target language.

Linguadidactics acknowledges “authenticity” as the quality of language and speech material, which delivers communication in its natural conditions in modern life. Krichevskaya<sup>109</sup> distinguishes authentic materials used in everyday life and separates them in an independent group – *pragmatic materials*, which include announcements, street signs or signs on markets and billboards, brochures, menus, bills, maps etc. The specificity of pragmatic materials is that they provide a contact with real objects and stimulate almost genuine communication. Under *genuine communication* under this concept we imagine the roles and problem solving with

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<sup>108</sup> Яковлева, В.Н., 2015. К проблеме использования аутентичных материалов в процессе обучения иноязычному межкультурному общению. *Инновационная наука*, (6-1).

<sup>109</sup> Кричевская, К.С., 1996. Прагматические материалы, знакомящие учеников с культурой и средой обитания жителей страны изучаемого языка. *Иностранные языки в школе*, (1), pp.13-17.

actual authentic materials – filling paperwork, shopping for clothes or groceries, choosing something from a restaurant menu, ordering online, calling a plumber to fix a problem etc. The possibilities are limitless for the teacher and the choice of his activities. These pragmatic materials can be grouped on the basis of their content and function in real life and correlation with topics and areas of communication. The curriculum (and the target educational and professional area) determines which groups can be used in certain language classes. If the language courses are aimed at fresh expatriates, then materials which include job advertisements, calendars, customs, most common paperwork, post office materials, electricity bills, buying or renting a flat should be included in the language class. It is self-explanatory that these materials are to be used for beginner and intermediate language courses.

Krichevskaya proposes the following classification of authentic materials depending on the area of use:

- 1) Educational and professional domain of communication;
- 2) Socio-cultural domain of communication;
- 3) Everyday communication;
- 4) Commercial domain of communication;
- 5) Family and household communication;
- 6) Sports and recreation domain of communication.

I find this classification to be little too broad, which is why I would like to propose a simpler classification; functional and informative texts, which coincides with Voronina's<sup>110</sup> classification. Functional texts represent materials which come from everyday life. Their role is explanatory and instructive. Road signs, marketing signs, theater or concert programs, leaflets, brochures etc. can be considered as functional texts. Informative texts, as the name suggests, carry out informative functions in the form of newspaper articles, interviews, opinion polls, “yellow” information, announcements, statistics, advertising, commentary, reportage, Twitter and Facebook posts, comments and replies, etc.

When it comes to advanced language learning, there is an acute necessity for better analytical competence. If A1 – B1 levels students (would) use realia and authentic material more as a

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<sup>110</sup> Воронина, Г.И. Организация работы с аутентичными текстами молодежной прессы в старших классах школ с углубленным изучением немецкого языка [Текст] / Г.И. Воронина // Иностр. языки в школе. – М.: 1995. – № 5. – С. 56–60.

helping tool to learn and understand the culture and realities, B2-C1 level language students combine realia and authentic materials in order to understand and resolve practical communicative and cognitive situations by using the background knowledge they have previously acquired. This means that authentic materials and realia in combination with methods of working with them produce a positive analytical atmosphere that encourages further improvement of linguacultural competence.

Russian linguist V. Koneckaya (Конецкая 1980)<sup>111</sup> considers [language] realia as special objects of objective reality, but they prove to be cognitive references, i.e. objects of thought with which language units are correlated. Starting from this position, she distinguishes three main groups of language realia that can be compared to other languages:

1. *universal reference units* – with identical primary and secondary meanings;
2. *quasi-reference units* – a case when language units do not differ by their primary meanings, but have substantial differences on secondary meanings;
3. *reference realia* – language units that are unique in their primary and secondary attributes and are inherent only in one of the compared cultures.

Culturally marked lexical units can also be divided as “nonequivalent” and “background meaning” terms (E. M. Vereščagin & V. G. Kostomarov, 1990), although, even Vereščagin and Kostomarov note that there are numerous difficulties determining which words fall into what category. According to me, dividing lexical units into two categories like “non-equivalent” and “background meaning” is an oversimplification. This division is often restrictive and cannot be used as a primary model in language teaching, as language in the digital era is unbelievably fluid and often units from one group often move to the other overnight.

One of the solutions language and culture studies offered regarding non-equivalent or background meaning units is to give *linguistic and cultural commentary*, which can be of two kinds: a language and cultural commentary from a semantic point of view, or language and cultural commentary and interpretation of a given text (Shaklein 2012). Vereščagin and Kostomarov even suggest compiling a comprehensive commentary on literary works, which should represent a clarifying coherent story on the subject in the text, as well as on regional specificities contained in the work. The highest effect from this cultural background

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<sup>111</sup> Конецкая, В.П., 1980. Лексико-семантическая характеристика языковых реалий. *Великобритания: лингвострановедческий словарь.*



commentary would be achieved before students embark reading the main text, not during or after. According to these Russian linguists, the goal of this kind of commentary is the development of background knowledge in language students, which is necessary for a better reception of the text and further discussion.

When it comes to compiling commentary on texts that have abundance of national-cultural specifics, I recommended something similar in my Master thesis on precedent phenomena (Jovanov 2012). Vereščagin and Kostomarov proposed compiling commentary on literary works, which can contain broad semantical and cultural meanings. On the other hand, I was proposing using linguacultural commentary, at least, not just in literary texts, but also in textbooks, movies, music, but specifically on language realia.

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*Providing adequate linguacultural commentary on precedent phenomena and their use in the target language (not only in textbooks, but in all other kinds of media material) – stimulates not only the communicative skills of L2 students, but also increases the level of adequate perceiving and understanding the nature and circumstances with representatives of the L2 community.*  
[Jovanov 2012]

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It is obvious that using current language realia in language class has huge advantage over fixed, hard-copy materials which may be old up to fifty years or even more. Language realia contains current language on all topics the language teacher chooses to use in class. Language used in these materials is always “fresh”, contemporary (irregular) grammar forms are learned, neologisms introduced. Teachers and students can always prepare a mini-vocabulary of neologisms and contemporary use of words with a specific background meaning. Furthermore, language students will learn to understand authentic communication from the L2 media, as well as to participate in live conversations. Language students can determine their

own level of competence only by actively participating in conversations or reading/watching/hearing media

Other benefit in introducing realia in language classes is the opportunity to dispel stereotypes, which can be found in all students prior to choosing the language of study. Sometimes media can even strengthen the stereotypes of a country, which is why a direct contact with the local community or native speakers in the country where the language is taught can improve the fallacy of stereotyping. Speaking from personal experience, I experienced two completely different situations concerning stereotyping while learning language. As I have been learning English mostly through the media (TV, music, news, journals, movies etc.), I developed certain negative stereotypes about the United States of America which were finally dismissed during my first visit there. On the other hand, while I was learning Russian I also learned most about Russian realia via news, movies, newspapers etc., but unlike the negative stereotypes of the US, I had mostly positive stereotypes about Russia. These positive stereotypes were immediately dismissed after my first visit in Russia. Additionally, this is another reason why simply introducing realia in classroom is not always a good method to reduce the possibility of cultural misunderstandings, which is why this subject is included in the thesis as well.

Using realia in the classroom can be compared to using “live culture”. Using realia instead of pre-prepared neutral texts allows noticeable differences in between two cultures to be detected. There are not two cultures in the world so similar that they have completely related background meaning and realia. Even native speakers of American English and British English have sometimes difficulties understanding realia from the opposite language.

Simple examples how authentic materials/realia can be used in the classroom are commercials. Getting commercials from almost any corner of the world is couple of clicks away with the Internet. Commercials are reflecting the mentality of the people that create them. If we browse through commercial from our own countries in different chronological periods, we can see major difference in the style and language used in them. There is not any mentality which stays unchanged. Even for one single day. Every day is a constant transformation of society and language as a part of society. That is why contemporary commercials can be used in the classroom as realia because the language in them is “updated”, and students can detect differences in the culture.

The functional purpose of authentic materials can vary. On one hand, they can be used to acquire regional knowledge, to organize and develop verbal communication, to ‘semanticize’ linguistic units and communication, as well as to develop analytical competence, comparative skills, ability to give judgments, develop interests in the target culture and social orientation. Authentic materials have a number of advantages in language classes, although, it should be clear to the teacher that these materials are not a source of entertainment or recreation but should always be utilized for a certain pragmatic goal. This goal determines the algorithm for working with such materials in language classes and includes several steps (according to Panina<sup>112</sup>):

- 1) Sensitization – attracting attention based on sensory attraction. The goal at this stage is to interest the student, to arouse their curiosity by various different ways. As an example, students can guess the topic of the lesson relying on a proposed image or subject;
- 2) Anticipation – waiting for the contents of the documents. During this time students are invited to answer questions related to the communicative context of the situation, which determines the goal – to make assumptions about the contents of the material;
- 3) Global understanding – the first reading and listening and immediate verifying of the correctness or the fallacies of the hypotheses, which students used in the previous step. This step includes tasks that help to understand the overall content of the document;
- 4) Detailed understanding – secondary presentation of the document with a goal to understand it thoroughly and elaborate individual elements. Students are encouraged to answer questions, fill in gaps, solve various tasks like crosswords or other games, ask questions about the objects in the material etc.;
- 5) Conceptualization – analyzing grammatical and lexical components of the material. Students gather into small groups and analyze grammar structures found in the document and try to formulate them;
- 6) Production – execution of creative assignments on the basis of the material used. Various exercises can be used: role-playing games, writing an essay, writing a letter, replying on the comments made in the material etc.

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<sup>112</sup> Панина, Е.В., Использование аутентичных материалов как средство формирования универсальных учебных действий на уроке иностранного языка.

The use of authentic materials can be repeated on different levels of language learning, but this would require adaptation of the information used in them to the level students need to obtain. In this manner students get to penetrate into the national culture and pragmatic life of L2 society, master the everyday vocabulary of the native speaker, as well as to create a virtual environment and situations, which serve as additional incentive for students' motivation.

By using authentic materials/realia, the danger of distorting L2 reality is significantly reduced. As such materials represent current evidence of the country and the language being learned, they reflect the ideas and judgments that are prevalent at the moment in that society.

Due to the lack of didactic directions of how authentic materials can be used, the information which is going to be presented has high level of importance and relevancy over non-authentic materials. In effect this causes greater cognitive activity, while most teaching materials in today's textbooks perform purely educational function and reflect fictitious situations that do not really exist outside of the classroom, which is the reason why students' motivation drops. As in my case when I was learning advanced Russian, instead of learning language realia through authentic materials, we were given a textbook which contained mostly information about art, ballet and opera in Russia. The contents of this information subsequently made the transition to understanding real-life situations and language much more difficult, resulting in additional years of out-of-the-university learning about contemporary Russian. This is the reason why this thesis proposes **only** authentic materials/realia to be used in future (e) textbooks intended to be used for advanced level language learning.

Despite the controversies this opinion will create, there is still no consensus on primary use of authentic materials/realia. Even though their use through levels A1-B2 can be quite controversial, there is no denying that C1-C2 level requires abundance of real-life authentic materials/realia for the creation of a complete linguacultural personality. During the study and research on authentic materials, various authors presented their fear on using authentic materials because of their different visual, verbal and audio information, their thematic diversity, complexity and the fact that very few textbooks actually include authentic material, which in effect creates two sets of materials introduced in the language class. Others allow the use of "semi-authentic" texts and "edited authentic" texts, or even "near-authentic" texts.

In conclusion, my opinion on using authentic text/realia is:

- Difficult and non-adjusted language is a problem, but only for beginner and intermediate level language learning. Advanced level language command requires from the student to fully understand authentic materials;
- Audio, visual and verbal information should be introduced during the advanced language level courses as a companion to authentic texts (if such material exists);
- There can be no “semi-authentic”, “edited-authentic” or “near-authentic” texts. The only way to secure a full linguacultural competence is to take the student “on a collision course” with real-life materials. Authentic materials should completely replace all non-authentic texts. The only problem, which shall arise, is the methodology of selection of such authentic materials. This topic will be opened once again further in the thesis;
- Thematic diversity can be easily addressed by introducing authentic texts/realia in a modular set of texts, thus creating modular textbooks.

The use of authentic material in educational purposes introduces natural speech and situation created for methodical purposes. It also improves the teaching process by simulating natural situations that can exist in the L2 environment, thus increasing the motivation to learn the foreign language.

### ***3.8 Emotions in Advanced Level Language-learning***

#### ***What is “emotion”?***

Before I begin to explain the connection between emotions, learning and the new language learning concept, it is every researcher’s duty to try to describe what ‘emotion’ means. Sometimes the attempts to describe a concept like emotion can be futile, and sometimes can be frustrating. Instead of trying to produce a new definition on emotions, I have decided not to go into detailed explanations, but to provide the short definitions of previous research, which, supposedly, should provide sufficient explanation to the reader.

Although thousands of psychologists have been writing about emotions, there is no singular or even preferred definition of emotion (Cabanac 2002). In 1981 Kleinginna and Kleinginna listed 92 different definitions of emotion, plus their own, and nine skeptical statements compiled from the literature on emotion (Kleinginna & Kleinginna 1981), adding that *almost everyone except the psychologists knows what an emotion is*. I will try to propose some of the best (according to author) definitions, which closely reflect the ideas in this dissertation:

Robert Plutchik, 1980.

*"The characteristics of emotion may be summarized in the following way:*

- 1. Emotions are generally aroused by external stimuli.*
- 2. Emotional expression is typically directed toward the particular stimulus in the environment by which it has been aroused.*
- 3. Emotions may be, but are not necessarily or usually, activated by a physiological state.*
- 4. There are no 'natural' objects in the environment (like food or water) toward which emotional expression is directed.*
- 5. An emotional state is induced after an object is seen or evaluated, and not before."*

Donald O. Hebb, 1966.

*"Special state of arousal accompanied by mediating processes which tend to excite behavior maintaining or modifying the present state of affairs."*

Paul Edwards, 1967.

*"Definition of an emotional state as a more or less disturbed state of the organism, together with the bodily sensations produced by this state, arising from a perceptual evaluation of something."*

Charles Brenner, 1974

*"An affect is a sensation of pleasure, unpleasure, or both, plus the ideas, both conscious and unconscious, associated with that sensation."*

Lyle E. Bourne, Jr., and Bruce R. Ekstrand, 1979.

*"There are two primary dimensions of emotion: (1) the qualitative dimension of pleasant-unpleasant and (2) the quantitative dimension of intensity .... [U]npleasant emotional states., will act as negative incentives .... [P]leasant states., will be positive incentives .... The stronger or more intense the emotion, the greater the motivation to approach or avoid."*

J. P. Houston, H. Bee, E. Hatfield, and D. C. Rimm, 1979.

*"Emotions are characterized as intense, relatively uncontrollable feelings that affect our behavior .... [I]n other words, emotions can act as motives."*

Frank J. Bruno, 1980.

*"On a formal level, we shall define an emotion as follows: A state of arousal tending to disrupt homeostatic baselines .... On a personal and private level, an emotion is experienced as a strong feeling to which we attach a conscious label such as fear, anger, or joy."*

A. R. Vonderahe, 1944.

*"Emotion is a way of feeling and a way of acting. It may be defined as a tendency of an organism toward or away from an object, accompanied by notable body alterations. There is an element of motivation--an impulsion to action and an element of alertness, a hyperawareness or vividness of mental processes. There is of course the opposite, a depression of movement."*

Joel R. Davitz, 1970.

*"All four dimensions-- ACTIVATION, RELATEDNESS, HEDONIC TONE, and COMPETENCE--are involved in emotional experience and must be considered in any general theory of emotion."*

Aubrey Haber and Richard P. Runyon, 1978.

*"While no definition of emotion is completely satisfactory, we may regard emotions as complex states involving cognitions, overt responses, internal changes, and motivational aspects. "*

As you can see from the abovementioned definitions on what 'emotion' is, there is not a single generally accepted definition that can satisfy the individual psychologists. Nevertheless, we have to invent an acceptable and satisfactory working definition, so we could support the thesis and the applied notes of the proposed multimedia textbook for advanced language-learning.

As Robert Plutchik writes, *emotions may be stimulated by external stimuli*. When applied to this thesis, polycontextual texts that are composed of at least two "anti" and "pro" texts should act as a sufficient stimulus for the individual. Almost every human being operates in a dualist manner, judging the world around him by "big" or "small", "long" or "short", "good" or "bad" etc. Paul Edwards also writes about the *emotional state as a more or less*



*disturbed state of the organism, together with the bodily sensations produced by this state, arising from a perceptual evaluation of something.* It is needless to mention that this dualist vision of the world can vary from one man to another.

If we take dualism to be the basic model by which people see the world, in that case one of the “point” and “counterpoint” texts will trigger imbalance in the emotional state of the individual when exposed to an opposing view. I argue that this emotional state is crucial in the process of advanced language-learning, as it is one of the few tools that can actually provoke the student to continue with his language classes.

### ***3.8.1 Emotions and Language Acquisition***

Even though one could naturally find immediate logical connections between emotions and language acquisition, there seems to be almost no efforts to address this issue.

It is the author's opinions that linguadidactics and researchers that work in the field of language acquisition have been significantly underestimating one important factor that can significantly influence language acquisition. Instead of including emotions as a part of language acquisition, most researchers have been introducing considerable emphasis on cognitive abilities, as well as the ability factors such as memory, strategies, intelligence, aptitude factors and others (Pintrich et al. 1993). Other authors consider the circumvention of emotions as a factor in language acquisition to be something of a historical accident, a holdover from a time when serious treatment of emotions was considered irrelevant by behaviorists (Fredrickson 2013).

When speaking of emotions in language acquisition, it is my intention to clarify that under *emotions in language acquisition* I perceive the use of basic emotions in language-learning and language acquisition. As it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, the dualist worldview is the most widely spread approach toward the reality in the world around us. When speaking about *basic emotions*, we do think of *anger* and *pleasure, good and bad*, etc. When one is exposed to an opinion that is on par with his own worldview, the person experiences agreement and sympathy with the interlocutor. However, if the opposite situation came to be true (when one is confronted with an opinion that differs from their own), then people disagree and even reject this opposing opinion.

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*At the most basic level, Solomon (1980) recognizes only two types of emotions, positive (pleasant) and negative (aversive), each of which triggers the other.*

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Speaking on this matter, what would be the basic difference when one meets a person with whom they agree with, and one with whom they do not share the same opinion?

For argument's sake, I would like to add a banal example; two liberals (or communists, Greeks, conservatives, Muslims) meet each other; the most probable outcome from this meeting will be a general agreement with other one's worldview and no particular reason for a heightened emotional state due to the introduction of a new, confronting idea. Two liberals or Greeks will most probably open a conversation about subjects they, mostly likely, agree on, share the same stereotypes, worldview etc. Furthermore, if a liberal and a conservative happen to meet, or a Christian and a Muslim, Macedonian and Greek – the most probable outcome of this meeting will be strong disagreement and conflict, along with a heightened emotional state, as there will be a presence of antagonism and significant difference between both interlocutors' worldview.

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*Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory proposes that negative emotions tend to be focused and associated with specific thought-action trajectories (anger → destroy obstacle) and positive emotions tend to lead to expansive thinking that broadens a person's awareness. For example, people in a positive emotional state will notice more items in their visual field, engage more social connections, and will tend to have urges to act in a greater variety of ways, relative to those with negative emotions. There is some empirical evidence that, over time, positive emotional experiences produce greater resiliency, resourcefulness, social connections, and optimal functioning through broadminded coping efforts*  
*[MacIntyre & Vincze 2017]*

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When it comes to the abovementioned excerpt, even though the role of positive emotions in language-learning and language acquisition is set aside by linguadidactics and researchers, there is obvious positive feedback influence from them in language learning. Two people with likeminded views can often be motivated to “upgrade” their worldviews with new information, triggering heightened emotional states that provoke active language use.

MacIntyre & Gregersen (2016) accept Frederickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive and emotions and suggest that positive emotions function in at least five important ways:

1. Positive emotions tend to broaden people's attention and thinking, leading to exploration and play, new experiences and new learning;
2. Positive emotion helps to undo the lingering effects of negative emotional arousal;
3. They promote resilience by triggering productive reactions to stressful events, such as improving cardiovascular recovery and making salient feelings of happiness and interest while under stress;
4. Positive emotion promotes building personal resources, such as social bonds built by smiles, intellectual resources honed during creative play, and even when young animals practice self-preservation maneuvers during rough-and-tumble play;
5. Positive emotions can be part of an upward spiral toward greater wellbeing in the future, essentially the vicious cycle in reverse. A positive spiral is possible because the acquisition of resources facilitated by positive emotions endure long after the emotional reaction has ended.

Everyday life throws us vast diversity of situations that incite positive and negative emotions in us. Both kinds of emotions can be broadening and narrowing, depending on one's reactions and attitudes towards them, thereby they both give boost to motivation. Given that there is an obvious link between emotion and motivation, it is important to acknowledge that both spectrums of emotions (positive-negative) play a role in language teaching and language acquisition.

We cannot completely agree with the aforementioned view on negative emotions and language learning. There is an obvious need to clarify what we mean when we say “negative emotions” and how we intend to use them further in the text, as well as in the proposed language learning material.

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*Among studies in language acquisition that focus attention directly on emotion, language anxiety has most frequently been studied. Language anxiety has long been conceptualized as a drain on motivation for language learning and a source of disruption in the learning process. Consistent with the idea of an emotion schema, research has defined language anxiety as a situation-specific anxiety that develops out of negative experiences with language that lead to the anticipation of further difficulties. The consequences of anxiety arousal include difficulties in processing linguistic material, lower academic success, and disruption of social-communicative processes that lead to language development, including lower willingness to communicate in the target language [MacIntyre & Vincze 2017]; (excluded citations found in the original).*

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Language anxiety and the emotional processes that occur can have a negative impact in language acquisition. They can appear in language learners due to multiple factors: difficulty in learning the foreign language, professor’s inability to connect with students, learning pace etc. Language anxiety, as it is mostly recognized as, is the feeling of tension and apprehension associated with foreign language contexts, including speaking, listening and learning. Research has shown that this kind of anxiety is most closely associated with language performance (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991). However, Gardner (1985) argues that not all forms of anxiety influence foreign language learning the same way. When talking about anxiety, it is our intent to make a clarification. Language anxiety is most commonly mentioned in a context of language performance, especially when taking tests. There is a consistent negative correlation between language anxiety and performance in the context of language achievement (Clement, Gardner & Smythe, 1977, 1980).

The feelings associated with language anxiety include tension, nervousness, worry, dread, upset, and similar terms. The physical dimension and reactions are also present, the heart races, the body sweats, the hands tremble, and there is a sinking feeling in the stomach (Reeve, 2014). A climate of “negative” anxiety is counterproductive, as anxious students are less

interpretive, learn new vocabulary at a slower rate than less anxious students and have more difficulty recalling previously learned words (MacIntyre and Gardner 1994). Moreover, anxiety is associated with distraction, excessive self-evaluation because of the expectations and requirements from standardized tests, concern over potential failure, the opinions of others etc. It is one of the most studied emotions in foreign language acquisition and it can be understood as an emergent, coordinated emotion with feeling, arousal, purposive and expressive phenomena (MacIntyre & Gregersen 2016, 195). When one experiences anxiety, it is quite common for one to try to avoid the situation or escape, which is completely normal; human beings have a natural self-protection mechanism when it comes to negative feelings. When it comes to language anxiety, the standard reactions are annulled. Students often cannot understand what is being said, cannot communicate, thus, cannot feel like a part of a group. Furthermore, this kind of anxiety provokes students either to adapt and learn, or to develop resistance and a negative attitude towards the learning process. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) claim that anxious students have a smaller base of [not just] second language knowledge and have more difficulty demonstrating the knowledge that they do possess.

One of the ideas of this dissertation is to take negative emotions and give them an alternative spin. Negative emotions are also known to produce heightened emotional states that greatly improve our concentration and memory, meaning that the individual who is emotionally provoked “arms” its brain with higher concentration and preparedness to deal with this emotional imbalance.

Knörzer (et al. 2016) mentions two contrasting hypotheses pointing, of which only the first one, namely the *emotions-as-facilitator-of-learning* hypothesis (Um et al. 2012) is rather relevant for us and to the results of this thesis. This hypothesis assumes that positive emotions foster motivations, and, therefore, lead to better learning results, while negative emotions

initiate effortful learning that diverts from the emotions state and thus results in better learning outcomes.

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*Results indicate that emotions induced by emotional design of the learning materials have a more direct impact on learning. In contrast, the influence of externally induced positive emotions is at least in part via motivation and mental effort. Our data show that design features inducing positive emotions have a more immediate and broader impact on learning, both in terms of comprehension of content and transfer of knowledge, relative to externally induced positive emotions.*

[Um et al. 2012]

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Another approach (Um et al. 2012) is to induce emotions through multimedia learning environments. Many studies (Harp & Mayer, 1997; Mayer & Moreno, 1998; North & Hargreaves, 1999; Tractinsky, Katz, & Ikar, 2000; Wolfson & Case, 2000) address this approach only through different aesthetic designs that can induce emotions. We cannot deny the importance of the design of various multimedia elements, as they have a positive effect on learning, we would like to add that this approach could have beneficial effect for beginners or even intermediate language students. Eunjoon Un (Um et al. 2012) proposes using different color combination and visual shapes, as *various studies showed that people's feelings are affected by colors, and colors can generate positive feelings and arousals of emotions, such as pleasure and excitement... Results from research on advertising indicated that higher levels of chroma (saturation) and value (degree of darkness or lightness of the color) influence feelings of excitement and relaxation, and these feelings, in turn, create positive attitude toward the materials.* Authors of this article also propose the *anthropomorphism*, i.e. adding human characteristic qualities to nonhuman beings, inanimate objects, or natural or supernatural phenomena in a multimedia environment. In their study, authors ask the question whether positive emotions in multimedia learning environments facilitate or suppress learning; whether *internal* induction of positive emotions affects learning outcomes, cognitive loads and motivation, compared with *external* induction of positive emotions (*before* a learning task is introduced). The results after this study with several controlled groups have shown that students who used materials designed to induce positive emotions were performing better than learners who received neutral design materials.

Authors of this study confirmed that positive emotions can be induced and they can help students through the quality of the design of the learning material. They have also concluded, that students who started with externally induced positive emotion before the learning tasks were introduced – maintained the positive emotional state via internally induced emotions up until the end of the class. Their results support their *facilitator hypothesis* that a positive emotional state improves learning results.



### 3.8.2 Emotional Design Induction (EDI)

It is highly improbable that a conversation with individual(s) who share our worldview would be transferred to the long-term memory. On the other hand, almost everyone remembers situations which have produced heightened emotional states – quarrel, embarrassing situations, disagreement etc.

It is only appropriate to introduce one of the main pillars of this thesis, taking the realm of negative emotions in a controlled environment (classroom) and use them as tools that would boost language learning and language acquisition. This would mean that negative emotions would be used “on purpose” to provoke an emotional state which would improve student’s attention, interest, memory, readiness and willingness to participate actively during language courses.

A note before continuing – this does not mean *only* negative emotions would be used to provoke such a state. Using polycontextual approach in the design of the textbook would *also* include a worldview that goes par on par with the student’s worldview (if a dualistic system of ‘pro’ et ‘contra’ is to be employed). Needless to say both viewpoints would be integrated in one category, along with a neutral overview of the issue.

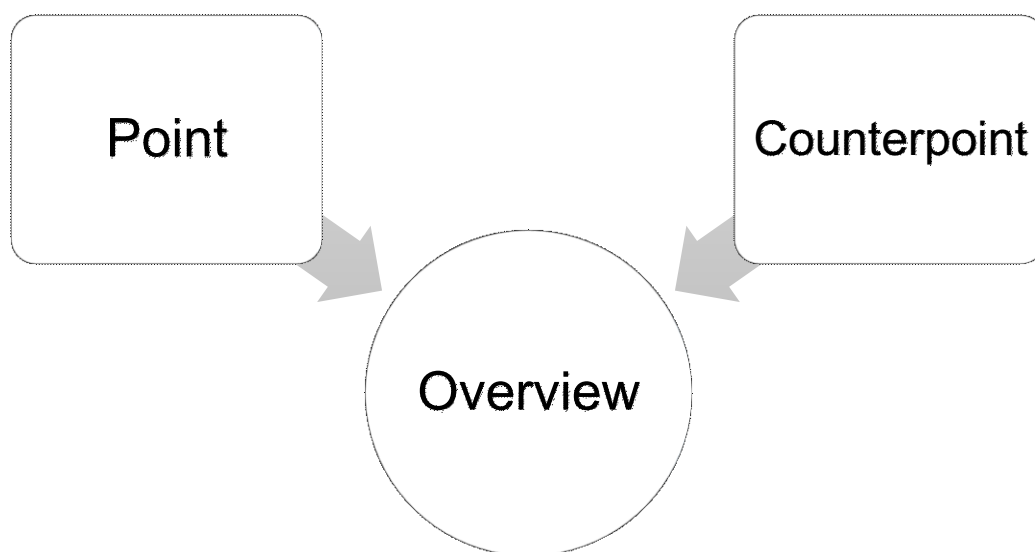


Figure XX: Basic structure of the polycontextual model

There are good reasons for us to be concerned with emotions as a core process that impacts almost everything we do. In the book *Descartes' Error*, neuroscientist Antonio Damasio built the case that human beings are not thinking machines that feel; rather, we are feeling machines that think (MacIntyre & Vincze 2017). We cannot explain how the primacy of emotion has been left aside as a factor in learning in general. It is evident that **most of our memories are formed in life during moments of increased emotional reactions**. MacIntyre & Vincze also consider all experiences, including language development, to be based on emotional foundation and are fully integrated with it. Even the decision process when we are selecting a language to learn is based mostly on emotions – whether it is the culture of a certain language, or maybe food from a certain country, or even friends we have made from other parts of the world. Instead of “stop and think”, teachers should be asking “think and feel something”.

### ***3.9 The Multimodal Method***

Having explained the meaning and the current state of linguoculturology in previous parts of this thesis, I would like to direct your attention to one of the core elements in this PhD thesis – the introduction of a new method in linguoculturology and its application in a new kind of "textbook" for language learning. As the name of this subchapter suggests, I would like to make use of the multimodal method in linguoculturology.

What is ‘multimodality’ and the ‘multimodal method’ in particular?

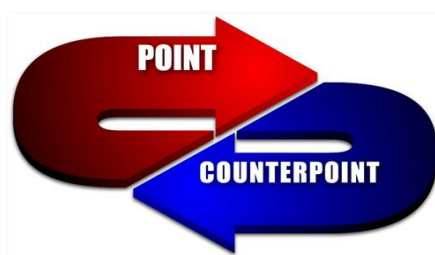
‘Multimodality’ refers to the field of application rather than the theory. A variety of disciplines and theoretical approaches can be used to explore different aspects of the multimodal landscape. Psychological theories can be applied to look at how people perceive different modes or to understand the impact of one mode over another on memory (Bezemer, J. & C. Jewitt, 2010, p. 180). Multimodality has been central to much theorizing in social-linguistic traditions. Erving Goffman’s notion of ‘frame’ (Goffman, 1974), for instance, suggests how people co-construct a ‘definition of what goes on’ in interactions using a range of different modes. "Modes" of communication other than language are increasingly seen as relevant in social-linguistic research, given its concern with examining situated language and language use in interaction (Bezemer, J. & C. Jewitt, 2010, p.182).

As we can see from this excerpt, multimodality operates with the term "mode", which represents different communicational acts. Organized sets of semiotic resources for making meaning are referred to as modes. We must mention that it is commonly acknowledged that every communicational act (mode) is influenced by cultural, historical and social circumstances. Different modes shape the meanings to be realized in mode-specific ways, so that meanings are in turn differently realized in different modes. This means that every single difference in every culture creates a different meaning when a certain mode is applied. The meanings realized by any mode are always interwoven with the meanings made with those other modes co-present and co-operating in the communicative event. This interaction produces meaning (Bezemer, J. & C. Jewitt, 2010, p.183). Multimodality focuses on people’s process of meaning making, a process in which people make choices from a network of alternatives: selecting one modal resource (meaning potential) over another (Halliday, 1978).

The application of this method in creating textbooks intended for foreign language education is something completely new in language learning, as well as in linguistics. We acknowledge that every mode is influenced by a ‘culture's lifestyle’. Since there is an abundance of different modes that embody a different meaning, we should be aware that standard hard copy language-learning textbooks are slowly becoming obsolete. I can see no possibility in applying different communication modes in a traditional hard copy textbook, whereas the multimedia environment is a great tool that helps broaden the possibilities for the application of this and other methods in linguaculture. Considering I do not have a working example of such multimedia textbook, I can not really draw a conclusion about the results. But common sense already tells us that linguaculture demands something more than the fixed reality in hard copy text books. Otherwise, the semiotic representation of the data is not possible in the fullest, and without a broad representation of culture and language in language learning, every attempt to create better linguacultural competence is futile.

Within this doctoral thesis, it is of particular importance to emphasize that the polycontextual approach in creating foreign language learning materials goes side by side with the proposed multimodal method. This means that besides the proposed three texts (point, counterpoint and neutral), which is basically the essence of the polycontextual approach, multimodal method shall be also introduced, which in practice fosters the creation of several different levels of texts with different points of view (subculture, feminists’ point of view, children's view, minorities’ view, etc.).

*The default look of the polycontextual model:*



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<b>Point – Overview - Counterpoint</b>
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*Polycontextual approach and the multimodal method:*

<b><i>Point</i></b>	<b><i>Overview</i></b>	<b><i>Counterpoint</i></b>
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## ***Methodology***

When it comes to methodology in linguoculturology, it must be said that the methods are still being defined by linguists. One of the main tasks in my PhD project is to formulate the best linguacultural method(s) which can be applied in language teaching.

Being one of the newest branches in linguistics, linguaculture is still "coming into the sunlight". I must add that nowadays linguaculture is most widely examined in Russian linguistics. According to the Russian linguist V. N. Teliya, the methodological basis of linguaculture should be set by the "semiotic presentation of data that comes from the interaction between language and culture, including the cognitive content of mental procedures that produce cultural mental structures embroiled with language" (Телия, 1996: 17). Other linguists ask the following question: What should be the object of linguaculture: language as a means of representation of cultural elements, or culture as seen through the prism of language? (Алефиренко 2010: 28). Even though linguaculture does not have its own methodological base, it should not be observed through the prism of other disciplines, such as cognitive linguistics. Cognitive linguistics is based on objective analytical input, whilst the basis of linguaculture is open to reformulation, depending on the changing paradigms in a particular society. In contrast to the scientific approach of cognitive linguistics, **linguaculture cannot develop under the pressure of objectivity and formalized knowledge**. I am sure by now everyone would think that in the absence of scientific criteria, linguaculture cannot be considered a scientific discipline. We have to assume that there are other, not formalized "bastions" of science, where "a certain proportion of methodologism can be successfully combined with narrativity, "storytelling" that is free of thinking, and all that occurs at the intersection of different horizons of culture, science and art (Микешина 2002: 500).

We have to accept the fact that humanities cannot operate under strict methodology, which is why we should use elements from hermeneutics and general philology. Following this methodological vector, we should attempt to integrate culturological methods in

linguoculturology: philosophical, description, intuitionist, phenomenological, hermeneutical and functional analysis.

In this regard, there are several methods that linguoculturology can use:

- 1) **diachronic method** (based on comparative analysis of different linguacultural units in time);
- 2) **synchronic method** (comparing simultaneously existing linguacultural units);
- 3) **structural-functional approach** (splitting the cultural object into several parts and identifying the relationship between those parts);
- 4) **historical-genetic method** (studying linguacultural fact in terms of its origin and development);
- 5) **typological method** (to detect the typological proximity of various linguacultural units during the historico-cultural process);
- 6) **historical-comparative method** (comparing linguacultural units in time and getting an insight into their essence) (Алефиренко 2010, 29).

#### ***4. Information Society – Creating the New E-Textbook***

When I started writing and preparing myself for this chapter, I absorbed and summed up hundreds of articles and books about the contemporary state of society and education. Like a church choir on a Sunday morning, where every single text does not start with songs about Christ, but with “songs” about globalization. Almost every single article, as if the authors deliberately wanted to fill some void, addressed globalization and its effects on society and education. It cannot be denied that globalization is being a major force in the last several decades. This is a fact I shall not deny, nor praise or attack. I shall just presume that we all know more or less about what “globalization” is and how it affects us today. Instead of filling some “void” with empty and predictable text lines about globalization in contemporary society and education, I prefer to continue elaborating what can be done so education and language-teaching adapt and become better in the contemporary information society.

Numerous times readers of this dissertation had the opportunity to read about how language shapes nations, people, cultures and even globalization as such. Many authors argue that globalization diminishes the value and former glory of nations, while others even go as far as to say that nations as such have lost all meaning, as they have lost the ability to control key aspects as economy or trade. Daniel Bell writes that *the nation state has become too small for big problems in life, and too big for the small problems*” [from *Daniel Bell: Key Sociologists*, Malcolm Waters], meaning that nations during globalization become irrelevant. Seeing that this citation is full of mercantile meaning, thus, it does not come close enough to the core of this dissertation; it is my choice to skip deconstructing this view on globalism, as it is not my interest to analyze the financial consequences on nations.

Instead of writing about the economic consequences for nations, I would highlight the cultural blossoming that globalization triggered (even though we can find numerous writings condemning cultural globalization and the “Americanization” of national cultures). The introduction and mixing new cultures is a fact dependent on the current dominant culture in the world. It is difficult to quantify this fact, which is why I would not go further into it. Instead, I would like to add that there is not a culture which can be “lost” due to the influence of dominant super-cultures. Even though we can continue writing and illuminating the negative effects

globalization has on the world society, there is one obvious advantage and that is informatization.

When speaking of “informatization”, I will use this term interchangeably with “communication”. Also, when speaking about “communication” and “informatization”, one could only add “Internet” as a logical deduction. Even though my generation is alternatively called the “Millennials” (according to Merriam-Webster ‘*a person born in the 1980’s or 1990’s*’, as we are known in contemporary discourses around the world), I find it sometimes hard to grasp all the changes the world has seen in the last twenty years or so. Without this rapid development, most probably this PhD text would not have been in your hands or on your computer.

The last decade of the twentieth century crowned a new ‘king’ in the world - the ‘Information’. This word has become ever more influential and powerful in the first two decades of the twenty-first century. The revolutionary effect of information is only beginning to be felt, and yet, even in its infancy it carries potential to change entire societies.

The period we live in is characterized by an astounding accumulation of information. Today we found *information* to be a key concept in almost all spheres of human activity, thus creating a new ‘information society’. This growth of information flow marked the end of an era (postindustrial) and the beginning of a new one (information era), which is already creating a completely new world picture.

It should be noted that there are two approaches to the questions of information society. The first approach, reflected in the works of Jürgen Habermas and Anthony Giddens, argues that information society is nothing more than a continuation of industrial society. The second approach argues that information society represents a complete new stage that came to be after the industrial society. This approach is mostly reflected in the works of Alvin Toffler<sup>113</sup> and Daniel Bell<sup>114</sup>. I tend to concur with the latter approach, because the expansion of the information sphere of activity did change the professional requirements and qualifications, which are needed by the market. Even the educational structure of society is changing along, as the role of the common worker also changes – the intellectual and creative individual now seems to supersede the work of the individuals involved in the classical industrial production process.

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<sup>113</sup> American writer, futurist and businessman, author of “The Third Wave” and the term “information overload

<sup>114</sup> former professor at Harvard University, contributor to the study of post-industrialism



The information landscape is also changing rapidly. We are more aware of what is happening deep in the jungles of Brazil or the mountains in Afghanistan, than in our own neighborhoods. In 1950, only 9% of US households had TV sets<sup>115</sup>, while almost 98% of households had TV sets in the year 2000<sup>116</sup>. It took more than fifty years for TVs to penetrate almost every American household. On the other hand, only 0.78% of the US population used the Internet in 1990<sup>117</sup>, while in 2015 almost 89% of the population in the United States had Internet access. The first TV sets were sold in the 1920's, and it took almost 80 years for television to become part of almost every household. Internet needed less than a third of that time.

Internet is a direct proof how fast our societies become *societies of information*. Information society values and cherishes information, and thus a new phase of the development of this civilization was imminent to begin. The Western world today acknowledges information and knowledge to be the main objects of interest.

So, what is *Information Society (IS)*?

- It is a concept that responds to the expansion and ubiquity of information. The term has been in use since the 1970s but it has gained popularity and it is now widely used in social and political policy. Sustained and accelerated growth of media, of education provision and participation, as well as computer communications technologies has led many to posit that the attendant information explosion distinguishes a new epoch. The information society is one in which information is the defining feature, unlike the industrial society where steam power and fossil fuels were distinguishing elements. (Oxford Reference Online);
- A society in which every aspect of cultural, political and social life is based on information technology. (Macmillan Dictionary Online);
- Information Society is characterized with an increased role of information and raw knowledge in the daily life;

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[http://www.buffalohistory.org/Explore/Exhibits/virtual\\_exhibits/wheels\\_of\\_power/educ\\_materials/television\\_handout.pdf](http://www.buffalohistory.org/Explore/Exhibits/virtual_exhibits/wheels_of_power/educ_materials/television_handout.pdf)

<sup>116</sup> NationMaster.com

<sup>117</sup> World Bank Statistics

- It represents the increasing role of information and communication in the national economy;
- IS aims to create a global information space which will ensure an effective interaction of people, their access to world information resources and will satisfy their need in information products and services.

One can present countless definitions on what *Information Society* is, in fact it signifies a global society where information has six definitional criteria: technological, economic, occupational, spatial, cultural and theory. Information and communications technologies induce the development of information society. Economies are relying far more on information for business and trade, than in manufactured good. Job market tends to produce more jobs that are informational in nature. Information overcomes national, state and continental borders. TV, radio and the Internet produce explosion of information that is transferred around the globe in seconds.

This explosion of information transfer created a situation where millions of people from different cultures around the world began contacting each other, unfamiliar with the characteristics of their communication partners and for intercultural dialogue. This is especially important for language students, which is why a new approach in education is needed. Information society needs education which emphasizes humanitarian education, with particular attention dedicated to language education.

## ***4.1 Education and Information Society***

Although readers of this PhD thesis have different backgrounds and most probably come from different countries, there is a general opinion about the importance of education in contemporary democratic societies and in which direction education in information society is heading. Hopefully, most readers would agree that education is the most important social institution in the world today. After a claim like this one, it comes as a disappointment to see that many countries around the world pay higher salaries to their policemen, rather than to their teachers. Essentially, teachers and the educational system are crucial parts and the core that defines the state of modern society. In addition, the state of education, its quality and the intellectual power that the students acquire and take with them out of the classroom define the quality of life we enjoy.

Ancient Greek philosopher Socrates had big doubts of the efficiency of democracy in societies. The founding father of philosophy in Ancient Greece was highly pessimistic about democracy. In his 6<sup>th</sup> book of *The Republic*, Plato argues that voting and electing in an election is a skill, not an intuition. Like any other skill, it needs to be taught systematically to people. Furthermore, what modern institute we have more equipped for the job, than our own education systems? Our own democracy and way of life can be sustained as long as we have good and effective education system. The basic argument on this matter goes that separation of power, regular elections, competitive parties, bill of rights, checks and balances allow people to control the elected officials. However, Piergiuseppe Fortunato and Ugo Panizza (Fortunato & Panizza 2015) challenge this notion, arguing that the performance of democratic institutions depends on the level of education of the electorate. Quality educational systems enhance political engagement and the citizens' ability to make good electoral choices and evaluate the work of the elected officials. Education is vital for social capital because it promotes social interaction and reduces uncertainty about the behavior of others; it toughens trust and civic norms. It also trains people to behave supportively to each other and highlights the benefits of social and political participation. Education's essence is comprised in the transfer of common values and knowledge to younger generations. Education is also the main cause of changes in society, though at the same time serves as a tool which protects and transfers the values of our society.

It is an essential element in creating cognitive abilities and increasing information flows that produce a better liberal democracy, which is the backbone of the contemporary world.

Every other area of human activity today, even education, is caught in the whirlwind of globalization thus must respond to the changes that come. As we have said before, society's informatization comes as a side effect of globalization, which means that modern educational systems must look beyond the traditional ways of "doing business" and adapt to the needs of society and market. Educational systems must be knowledgeable about the needs these global transformations produce and respond quickly to the rapid changes. This is especially important in relation to the emerging dominance of information society – a society based on knowledge. Education plays an important role in the transfer and use of the massive amounts of information needed by information society. Our leaders often forget that the prosperity of the state is to be found in the knowledge the citizens receive through the unimpeded access to information and the ability to work with it. This unimpeded access to information is only possible through the development of information technologies and their mastering by users.

The development of information technologies is so fast, that it literally leaves the general population separated into two groups – first ones are those who have knowledge and can work with information technologies, and the second are those who cannot adopt the work with this technology. The more people are able to work with this kind of technology, the more prosperous a nation can be, as the economic progress is directly dependent on the number of people who are able to work with information technologies. Of course, the ability to work with information is not just limited only to technical skills. Whereas more and more people have those skills, another problem emerges, the ability to use the information people find. The Internet is boundless space full of diverse information, which is why there is a need for additional skills to navigate through this vast space of information and develop skills for critical thinking so one can find and use the information at hand.

It appears that technical skills are essential to enter the world of information society. After acquiring them, one should be able to learn how to work with all the information which is available. Except these two steps, there is another particular aspect of the problem related to informatization, and this is the flow of communication extends far beyond national borders. When information comes and goes beyond the borders of the nation and its language, the ability and communicate is next to be dealt with. In a globalizing world with opportunities for unhindered contact with other people from anywhere, the problem of developing optimal communication skills arises that shall help one to have success in communicating, thus,

developing communicative competence. Public institutions and especially the educational system should pay special attention to this aspect of the new information society. Conditions of modern society require a person to be competent not only in their area of interest, but also to have a developed communicative and analytical competence. While information society requires us to communicate with different people around the world, we also need an intercultural competence as a necessary skill for a successful communication act.

These new conditions and processes also demand a change in the requirements of educational systems around the world. Thus, the significance of some of the disciplines in the educational system changed. For example, foreign language classes became one of the most important parts in the curriculum, since foreign languages determine the acquisition of new knowledge in many areas of scientific progress and represent the basis for self-realization in various spheres of human activity. Changes in the educational paradigm require implementation of language policies aimed at creating competences that will satisfy both public and personal need related to foreign languages.

In the year 2006, the Council of Europe published the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of Key Competences for lifelong learning* (2006/962/EC<sup>118</sup>), declaring that *Competences are defined here as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. The Key Competences are those which all individuals need for personal fulfillment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment.*

*The Reference Framework sets out eight key competences:*

- 1) Communication in the mother tongue;*
- 2) Communication in foreign languages;*
- 3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;*
- 4) Digital competence;*
- 5) Learning to learn;*
- 6) Social and civic competences;*
- 7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and*

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<sup>118</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32006H0962>

### 8) *Cultural awareness and expression.*

As we can see, the first two places in the *Recommendation for lifelong learning* are given to communication competencies in mother tongue and foreign language. No matter how and what drives the world today, globalization and electronic communication emphasize the necessity to be competent in one's native, but in a foreign language as well. Even in remote places in the world, everyday life starts to look more and more like the busy everyday routine of metropolises. In order to prepare every individual for life in a world that looks more and more like life in multicultural cities, it is necessary to strengthen the humanitarian aspects in the education system. Humanities not only have to give one basic knowledge about the world and society, but also to equip one with an **analytical worldview and competence**, ability to critically perceive society as a complex system that should develop according to the best humane options that are suitable for every single society.

Even though this text is an integral part of a thesis about a new approach in creating language textbooks, thus helping primarily language students become linguaculturally competent and develop better analytical skills, its approach can be also applied to other areas in education. For example, law students should not simply learn and acquire individual law systems and take them for granted, but they should combine and learn law practices from different corners in the world; compare their contemporary state and past development; understand the essence of these processes in their own country, but also abroad. If we want to light the potential of our students, we should not create educational materials and declare them unalterable. Not only we should not dogmatize the study material, but we have to diversify it and create professionals with broad culture and analytical thinking.

Exposing students to polycontextual information will enable a completely new type of analytical and humanitarian knowledge to emerge. In the new information society and environment, this kind of knowledge will appear as a dynamic system in which knowledge can be transformed according to the "zeitgeist". Besides the adapting analytical knowledge, the ability to work with information is also becoming one of the priorities for students, meaning that the education system must be able to form analytical and critical thinking not just in schools and universities, but even beyond them. Society changes continuously, along with its values. Being educated, flexible and able to navigate in the huge flow of information is becoming more and more relevant in one's life. This is not just important for the individual, but also carries significant benefits to the society and the state, as rapidly changing values and circumstances are always easier to cope with if the populace is capable to change along with them.

This can be especially the case with rapidly developing technologies in all fields of science, meaning that the economy of a country also needs to adapt its production or services to this fact. Hence, as the development of the economy depends largely on highly educated people, this means that people themselves need to change in order to accommodate to the transformations in technology. Those who cannot adapt or find another place for their skills usually became a burden to the state and society, thus the problems of inflexible people turn into social and political problems. Solving these problems is crucial to the progress of nations, societies and the whole world.

If contemporary education still hesitates to transform and become more diversified and offer polycontextual information capable of producing analytical skills, it will go out of touch with the fact that the development of scientific knowledge is not only associated with the increase of its volume, but even more with the changes of its quality, depth and contents. The contradiction between what “is” and what “needs to be” leads to a rethinking of the very concept of education. As mentioned, it is not only about the skills and knowledge students should get in the school or university. They need to be prepared for a new, constantly emerging and changing knowledge; a need to continuously improve skills and re-qualify so one can meet the new needs of society and be able to respond to whatever technology and progress throw at them. If life itself is a field for continuous learning, although, mostly by the mistakes people make – education should be a field where students can adapt skills to anticipate and make decisions according to the many different viewpoints they are thought to during their studies.

## ***4.2 The Teacher in the New Educational Concept***

Teachers have been an object in all kinds of texts and research from the first-time people started transferring accumulated knowledge to the new generations. This is why I shall save you lot of time and I shall not indulge in recreating the history and the role of teachers during all epochs. Instead, I shall directly continue explaining the role teachers should have in the concept of education I am proposing. Even in today's world, teachers continue to be the “masters” in the class, something like Socratic schools in Ancient Greece, where students followed their teachers as the one and only source of wisdom and truth. With the emergence of printing and printed textbooks, teachers still had the role of interpreters in class, mostly presenting their own view of the world as the only correct one. However, if the student wanted to decode the information in the textbooks, without relying on teacher's help, he would still need to match the information provided by the author of the textbook.

Teachers of today still transfer knowledge mostly as a “finished product”, while the students just must activate their memory banks, memorize everything and use that “raw” knowledge when necessary (especially in tests). This way the control of how information is being memorized is prioritized, rather than the practical, conscious use of that information in real life.

Teachers of tomorrow must act as intermediaries between the new textbooks and the students, transferring and decoding the content in textbooks to students. Even though the proposed textbook includes polycontextual linguacultural information, the job of the teacher is to be a constructive mediator when needed. He is also needed in class, so he could create an atmosphere suitable for debates and expressing opinions (i.e. in a foreign language during language classes). Such an atmosphere can be defined as “knowledge-centric”, rather than “teacher-centric”.

The new concept that comes with this new language textbook requires huge diversification of knowledge, and, appropriately, a diversification of teacher's role. This kind of approach should focus on the learner and make them central figure. Students should be able to create their own individual learning paradigms in accordance with their needs. The goal of this new concept is not the raw transfer of certain amount of information from teachers to



students, but rather the creation of a holistic world picture to students; creating a field for understanding and mastering the object of study through analytical reasoning. I have often read that “the student must become the center of the knowledge Universe”.

Educational goals need to be changed. Knowledge is not to be seen through quantifying glasses and teaching has to create conditions for the self-realization of the individual. This statement is based on the changing attitudes toward man as a complex system and towards knowledge that needs to work for the future of individuals, rather than to be fixated in time. This means that the new education concept should go ahead of time and “take a peek into the future”. It also means that learners become a subject of cognitive activity, rather than the object of pedagogical influence. The result will be a student that can work with information and will have the necessary skills to filter information that is irrelevant or erroneous to him. Only then they can count to be a success story in the modern information society.

### ***4.3 The Student in the New Educational Concept***

The requirements of the new information society noticeably influence and accelerate the change of educational systems around the world. One of those changes is the convenience and facilitation of the information accessibility. You would all agree with me on the note that today we have abundance of free information at our fingertips, in the comfort of our homes, just couple of seconds away after clicking a link. Should we take a short look in the past, we can see that educational facilities were victims of information scarcity, containing limited amounts of books and materials people could benefit from. Poor schools or those who were placed far away from an information center were the victims that were hit harder by information scarcity. If this was the reality only two decades ago, today we live in a world of total information abundance. Driven by the Internet, mobile devices, tablets, computers and other gadgets, information has become the oldest child of the information age. Vast digital databases today offer analytical opportunities that were completely unthinkable in the past. Student's progress was previously marked by linear courses and progress within the limited information the facility had.

Students of today cannot be confined exclusively in the closed school environments in order for them to acquire new information. Seeing that information is open to everyone, learning has to be open, too. This implies that students can choose to learn wherever they wish, and do not have to rely on the classroom for clarifications. This would add additional pressure on teachers to become even more innovative and knowledgeable if they want to keep students in their class. This new concept would not be the result of official policies in education. Rather, it is the result of historical development of information society and an integral part of it. Representing the sum of organizational, pedagogical and information technologies, the new educational concept is a system of learning materials which shall be characterized by mobility, interoperability and independence of learning. Historically, university's reputation was measured on the quality of students that it admitted, along with the quality of information that was transferred to them. Since money plays a marginal role today when it comes to information (due to the fact that vast amounts of information today can be found for free), universities today employ concepts that increase students' success working with information.

The concept of creating analytically competent students who are highly competent when it comes to working with information can be also implemented in advanced language learning (as all other lower levels have their own needs and characteristics, they will not be taken into account and discussed in this thesis).

Alla Nazarenko (Назаренко 2013) adds that the principle of what she calls “open education” (which is in line with the new educational concept) includes the following (adjusted to suit the principles of the advanced language learning materials):

- Free planning – the freedom to create an individual training program by choosing what to study from modular learning materials;
- Freedom of choosing time and pace of learning;
- Exclusion of fixed terms of study;
- Freedom to choose the place of study – students can physically not be in the classrooms for the main part of the academic year and can choose independently where to study;
- Changing the vector of education – reversing the process of how knowledge is delivered to a person (from student → knowledge to knowledge → student);

Preparing language learners for a lifetime learning, thus meeting the demands for continuous self-improvement.

#### ***4.4 Computer Assisted Language Learning***

Since the late 80's and early 90's, a new term was born in the teaching realm – *Computer Assisted Language Learning* (CALL<sup>119</sup>), which took its place on almost all levels of education since. Except this term, there are two more terms which most teachers know of – *Information and Communication Technology* (ICT) and *Computer Mediated Communication* (CMC). We are only interested in the first one, as it represents the complex and dynamic field of computer assisted language learning which changed tremendously during the last 25 years. It may have been true that the early years of CALL was mostly executed by computers, but the last ten to fifteen years saw major shift as a wide range of gadgets is becoming a reality in the learning environment, pushing CALL to embrace a broader definition. Early definitions of CALL simply involved any process in which a learner uses a computer and as a result, improves his or her language (Beatty 2003: 7). Today the 'computer' in CALL includes not only desktop and laptop devices, but also devices such as eBook readers, MP3 players, smartphones, electronic whiteboards, tablets and other digital equipment. In addition to the technical hardware, CALL also includes the developments of interactive and creative Web 2.0 tools and platforms, social networks, different software and games for language learning. Gráinne Conole & Martin Oliver (in Rushby 2008) argue that there needs to be a differentiation between e-learning and Computer Assisted Language Learning, as e-learning represents the broader domain of development and research activities on technology application in education. For the purposes of this thesis it is quite irrelevant whether CALL or e-learning represent something different,

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<sup>119</sup> Definitions of CALL:

- Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) was the expression agreed upon at the 1983 TESOL convention in a meeting of all interested participants. This term is widely used to refer to the area of technology and second language teaching and learning despite the fact that revisions for the term are suggested regularly (Chapelle, 2001).

- Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) may be defined as the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning (Levy, 1997).

- Given the breadth of what may go on in computer-assisted language learning (CALL), a definition of CALL that accommodates its changing nature is any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language (Beatty, 2002).

- CALL has come to encompass issues of materials design, technologies, pedagogical theories and modes of instruction. Materials for CALL can include those which are purpose-made for language learning and those which adapt existing computer-based materials, video and other materials (Beatty, 2003).

but I would argue that CALL already expanded its meaning in the past, so I cannot see any argument why it cannot expand its meaning as to include the e-learning domain.

The development of CALL during the past couple of decades is also dependent not only on the technological progress, but also on how learning occurs. Early use of technology in language education tended to follow a behaviorist learning framework based on the ‘stimulus/response/feedback paradigm’ and the used computer tools tended to be simple game-like tasks where the learner was rewarded for correct answers (Davies et al, 2011). Today we have software that present cognitive learning, meaning that the computer works as a tutor and a tool. This is supported by the introduction of Web 2.0, meaning that multiple new capabilities emerged, allowing social contexts to be emphasized. The current paradigm of integrative CALL is based on a socio-cognitive view of language learning. From this perspective, learning a second or foreign language involves apprenticing into new discourse communities. The purpose of interaction is seen as helping students enter these new communities and familiarize themselves with new genres and discourses (Deutschmann & Vu 2015).

The socio-cultural view of language learning is also important in this chapter, considering it is the dominant learning paradigm when it comes to research and learning design within CALL. Warschauer (in Egdbert & Mikel 2005) and (Deutschmann & Vu 2015) outline three aspects of Vygotsky’s socio-cultural view on language learning in context of CALL:

1. *Mediation* denotes the idea that tools or signs mediate all human activity. They, however, are not merely seen as an intermediary bridge between the intended action and the actual outcome, facilitating action that could essentially have occurred without them. Instead, they are an integral part of a complex symbiosis where the intermediaries alter the mental processes, modify human actions and thus open up for new possibilities. In CALL, this is of particular importance. Not only is the focus on the learning activity, i.e. language, arguably the most important tool we have at our disposal in any learning process, but in addition, technological tools also have an impact on how we use this language.

2. *Social Learning* as a dialectical process that occurs when problem-solving exercises are shared with other people. After such process, the learner internalizes knowledge. In this mode of learning students interact with surrounding cultures and social agents (peers), which contribute to their intellectual development.

3. *Genetic or developmental analysis* refers to the need to analyze mental functioning to its origins - the immediate, historical, social and genetic contexts in which it unfolds. Levels

here incorporate the immediate context of the event (microgenesis), the developmental processes of the individual (ontogenesis), the cultural and historical context as well as the phylogenetic context.

The principles of socio-cultural learning can be realized in various CALL designs, but especially in the context of the new electronic learning material presented in this thesis.

Even though the obvious benefits of Web 2.0 environments in encouraging language learning are everywhere around us, many institutions have been reluctant to use their potential. Often that reluctance is driven not by the obstinacy to use technology, but rather due to the questions on how to employ technology in solving real questions in the classroom. CALL technology still is not convincingly authentic and fails to engage students. One of the basic qualities of communication technology is that learners can be in touch with native speaking peers, but it is quite unlikely that this way of learning will fulfill the goals set in the syllabus. This gap can and should be filled with the proposed language-learning material, based on the principles of linguaculture.

#### ***4.5 The E-textbooks in Education***

Every single one of us has a clear mental image of what a *textbook* is. Almost everybody<sup>120</sup> in the world had to deal with them a few years after birth. Textbooks are the most widely used instructional material for content dissemination. Just mention the word and different pictures come into our minds - printed on a paper of different sizes, only in black and white or by using from few colors to a whole specter. Many of us even have fond memories of some, and some really bad ones for others. Some of them managed their way into our heads, some only in our backpacks.

Hard-copy textbooks have been around for ages. The classical textbook that we all know has been around since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Their looks, content have changed thousands of times, but we are all used to them and remember not only the contents inside, but the sheer weight when we carried them to school and back. Textbooks are still a mainstay in schools around the world, accompanied by the new abundance of information that usually comes in a digital form.

History had a long practice of dealing with these textbooks until the beginning of the 1980's, when something remarkable happened. Generations born during and after this period were witnessing a changing world when it comes to textbooks and the approach to learning. For them a new *thing* came into the world – the *digital* or *electronic textbook*. I was born in a decade when computers started to make a slow, but noticeable entry into the world of textbooks. The 80's were a time of rapid technological development. The decade began with computers like Commodore VIC-20 (with only 3,5 KB of usable memory). IBM introduced its Personal Computer in 1981 (IBM Model 5150 with 4.77 MHz Intel microprocessor with MS-DOS operating system). In 1983 the CD-ROM appeared, a medium that walks the same path as the 5,25 inch and 3,5 inch floppy disks, but it also used to be a medium with a minimum of 650 MB of space, enough to carry thousands of pages of text for textbooks. 1983 also brought the first version of Microsoft's Word, the tool that would become Microsoft Word for Windows in 1989, a global standard used for writing any kind of documents, including textbooks.

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<sup>120</sup> According to the UNESCO's 2017-18 [Global Education Monitoring Report](#), more than 260 million kids don't attend school (out of 2,2 billion in the world).

It is not my intention to continue writing about the history of computers and their development, as it is evident what technological revolution brought in the world (most probably right now you're reading this thesis on a digital monitor on some device), but to deliver a note that the 1980's were a time when the beginning of the end for classic textbooks began. The decade began with monochrome monitors with lousy resolution and ended with color monitors that supported 16+ colors. Along came text software, scanners, digital cameras etc. The textbook's options suddenly expanded to the electronic world. The adjective *electronic* used with the noun *textbook* came to be with the emergence of the computer and its possibilities for use in education.

The first attempts to use information in education were via digitalized text from printed textbooks. From that point forward the computer captured the attention of teachers all around the world. As the technology evolved, so did the capabilities of computers to reproduce content not just as a plain digital text.

From today's standpoint, we can say without a doubt that electronic textbooks (also further e-textbooks or e-books for books) are destined to become prevalent in the classroom and anywhere where a digital device can be found. Proponents readily cite the advantages of e-textbooks: widespread accessibility, interactivity, increased visual appeal and dynamic linking to supplemental materials (Murray, M.C. and Pérez, J., 2011).

When we say *e-textbook* we do not only bear in mind a simple digital text on a computer monitor. We think of something more: 3D animations, self-test, high resolution pictures, videos, active equations and so much more. Moreover, we are not limited, we can use it on a tablet or a dedicated e-book reader, a personal computer or a lap-top, or even a smartphone. If we are to

## What is an e-textbook?

An educational or instructional book in digital form. As more students use their laptops and smartphones on a daily basis, e-textbooks are increasingly taking the place of printed books. (PCMag, online, 2017)

A book in digital form  
(Dictionary.com, online, 2017)

On the other hand, there are also e-textbook applications, which may include media-rich content like pictures, video, and animations. E-textbook applications can also provide additional ways how material can be learned via different interactive activities, recording and comparing sound, communicating with native speakers via forums or chats etc.

As of 2000, the number of e-textbook application has grown exponentially. The improved technology has enabled this, easing the evolution from a text-based e-textbook, which is almost non-distinguishable from a classic textbook, to a new kind of textbook that enables students to learn in various ways.



research the current state of the e-textbook market, we can see pure libertarian paradise – e-textbooks with hundreds of different interfaces, content and popularity exist. There is a general feeling that no laws or rules channel the development of this sector. That could be a good thing, though. A state when thousands of different e-textbooks compete for the best sales may be, in fact, what the world need in order for us to get the best product. However, this also may be the reason why after almost two decades the adoption of the e-textbooks is slower than anticipated.

### ***Myth Surrounding E-books***

Libraries have always served as repositories where written words were stored, regardless of the medium that they were on. This is the basic function libraries have had since the dawn of civilization, when the first words were put on different mediums. From the ancient scrolls of Qumran to the hand-illuminated manuscripts of medieval Europe to the familiar typeset codices of today, the library's role has been to collect, organize, and share ideas via the written word (Gall 2005). In today's world another medium has had a glorious debut.

The year 2000 was unofficially proclaimed “the year of the electronic book”, along with the publication of Stephen King's short story only in electronic format. Electronic books and electronic textbooks have the same “birth date”, but the development of the latter one does not seem to catch up with the electronic book. The second part of the second decade of the XXI century shows signs of reversal, since the electronic book does not need to utilize the developments of technology in recent years, while electronic textbooks seem to benefit from those advances.

Although, electronic books and textbooks are quickly spreading through all layers of society, not everybody can deal with this new medium because of the numerous myths and prejudices that still roam even between people who already use internet and telecommunication technology in their everyday lives. There are, of course, hardcore supporters of the printed books and textbooks, as well as enthusiastic supporters of the new technologies. One of the most profound myths that exist around electronic books and textbooks are:

#### ***1. The price of electronic books and textbooks should always be way lower than hard-copy versions;***

Not all e-books and e-textbooks can have a lower price than hard-copy versions. Developing e-textbooks requires much more resources and manpower to prepare all the additional tools that

can be used in an electronic environment. This means that e-textbooks require graphical designers, artists and programmers, and in other cases – all the material that cannot be obtained for free and is copyrighted such as picture, videos etc. must be paid for so it could be used. Furthermore, the proposed language e-textbook in this thesis requires constant updating of the contents, as well as constant adding of recent multimedia materials that support the text.

***2 Libraries could offer e-books and e-textbooks, applying the same rules as with hard-copy books and textbooks;***

- Thousands of libraries around the world already borrow e-books. Patrons can download an e-book for several weeks on tablets, computers or e-book readers and check the book out when finished or the library can do it remotely. When it comes to borrowing, Amazon already allows up to six users to access the same account, and a LendMe function allows the user to share a title for 14 days. This can be applied to e-textbooks as well, allowing students to share parts of the e-textbook or the whole textbook.

***3. All e-book readers can make use of all e-book formats on the market;***

- There are a lot of e-book formats, but unfortunately, not all e-book readers can support all of them. On the bright side, vast majority of e-book readers today support almost all e-book formats, including complex formats that are suitable for the modern e-textbooks (ex. EPUB3).

***4. Every publisher can convert their hard-copy production to electronic;***

- Not everything can be converted to electronic format, but this seems to be a fading myth, as the majority of textbooks today also have some form of electronic supplement or come also as an electronic version.

***5. PDF is a good format for e-books and e-textbooks;***

- Portable Document Format (PDF) was developed in the early 1990's and it quickly became one of the most popular formats for electronic materials. Even though books that come in this format seem to have fixed contents, nevertheless PDF allows for highlighting, leaving notes

etc. Also, it can be easily converted to various other formats online. However, it is a format which is suitable for documents that do not require changing, which is not what the XXI century requires. It also does not allow reformatting of text, changing font and the text does not adapt to the screen of the e-book reader or tablet when changing font size. It may be a suitable format for static documents, but it is not the format for e-textbooks, which was confirmed by the experience in United Arab Emirates universities.

#### ***6. Electronic books and textbooks strain your eyes;***

This myth has been following a long set of fears since the 80's and 90's, when technology used different kinds of screens than today. Today's LCD, LED and OLED technology inflicts minimal damage to eye, and what is even more – some e-book readers use e-ink technology, which is very different from backlit screens that computers and TVs use. E-ink technology literally provides a “paper experience”, meaning that you can read in direct sunlight from any angle.

#### ***7. You cannot back up the files you have downloaded;***

Today different services provide different solutions that back up or keep books and textbooks online for further use. With the development of ‘cloud’ services, this myth is gradually losing its appeal, as most publishers today have a back-up option by default. In addition, Amazon synchronize between different applications, meaning that when the user opens a book on another device, it will open the last page the user left off on. This can also be applied to the language e-textbook, meaning that the student shall not be forced to remember the last place in the e-textbook, but he shall automatically continue from that spot from whatever device he continues to work from (university  $\diamond$  home).

#### ***8. E-book readers and tablets are expensive;***

This myth is also losing its appeal during the past several years, because prices for e-book readers or tablets are coming down fast. The cheapest e-book readers and tablets today can be purchased for as low as \$50, in a time when many hardcover books are worth much more than \$50. Considering that electronic materials are usually much cheaper, it does not take long before

any tablet or e-book reader pays for itself. When it comes to the language e-textbook, it will not be dependent only on e-book readers. Every device that can utilize HTML or apps can make use of it, which means that this e-textbook can be used on computers which are already provided by the school, or on projectors which can project the contents from a computer with an internet connection.

#### ***4.6 The Advantages of E-textbooks***

Whether teachers like it or not, electronic media is rapidly expanding, and it changes the classroom layout and everyday work with equal speed. During the past several decades, many teachers have altered their pedagogy because of the new technology, using HTML, Web pages and PowerPoint presentations in their classes. Since textbooks in the computer age are primarily written on computers, their migration to the electronic domain has been swift, even though their penetration in schools has been met with resistance. That resistance has been quite low among students, because they have seen dropping prices between hard-copy and e-textbooks.

The average price of a textbook in the USA rose 186% between 1986 and 2005 (Young, 2010). In the United States the average public university student spends 1,122\$ a year on textbooks, which is de facto more than the cost of a tuition (Young, 2010). The price of an e-textbook today is around 50% lower than a new print textbook.

Electronic textbooks are much cheaper to produce than printed textbooks. In reference to the printed textbooks, print paper must be purchased, printing expenses paid, distribution costs settled, storage costs discussed etc. That created almost perfect circumstances for electronic textbooks to enter the market and resist conservatism with regards to their use in education. Already there is a decline in the sale of new textbooks, and an increase of old textbooks being sold, which proves to be a stimulus for publishers to promote e-textbooks.

When we think of acquiring e-textbooks, we usually think of buying them separately from different publishers on the Internet. Of course, buying books individually costs a lot more money, given that there may be different publishers, and none can offer discount just for buying one e-textbook. Even though this is an option, there are also other ways publishers and universities (schools, libraries etc.) can cooperate and bring the price of e-textbooks even lower. Several universities are experimenting with bulk-pricing for high quantities of e-textbook subscriptions, which is perceived as another way to cut down prices.

University of Texas in Austin in 2008 entered into a contract with a publisher to offer an e-textbook option for eight courses that together comprised an enrollment of approximately 1.000 students. The university bought the books under a subscription model, projecting that the

purchase would save 25\$ to 45\$ per book. While free access to the e-textbooks was provided to students during the pilot, the eventual plan would be to add the cost to tuition, which would mean that students would no longer buy textbooks, but they would be accessible automatically for the courses in which they enroll. The University of California System has also announced a pilot project in which it would purchase bulk quantities of e-textbooks for 32 course sections. The e-textbook shall be the only option provided to students enrolled in these sections. This is a model widely adopted by for-profit universities (Kolowich, 2010).

Moreover, there is a non-commercial movement in the world that is making textbooks available free of charge on the Internet. This means everyone can find, read, download, or print without any cost. Several projects such as the Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources, Google's Collaborative Books Project, Wikibooks, the Global Textbook Project are on this line of non-commercialism (Murray, M.C. and Pérez, J., 2011).

Easton Kit (2011) wrote that by 2021 textbooks should be a minority on the market. Back in 2011 his prospects regarding e-textbook penetration on the U.S. market looked like this:

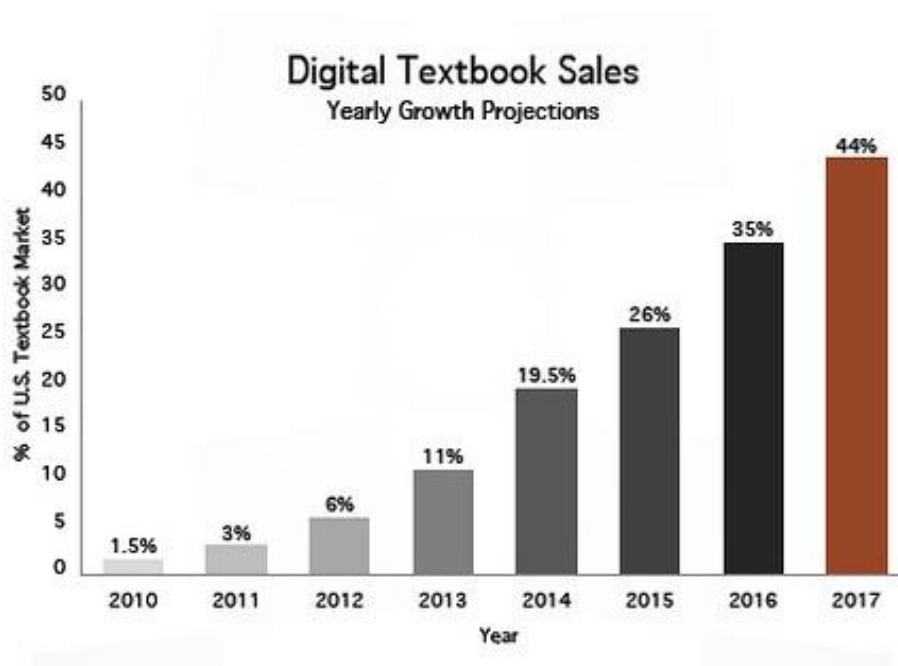


Figure: Digital Textbook Sales (Kit, 2011)

There is no doubt that electronic textbooks are the next step we must embrace and accept. It is also a fact, that electronic textbooks offer far much more operating space for

creativity. Nevertheless, the most important part is that they can be updated as soon as the necessity arises. A couple of points why e-textbooks are destined to be the next frontier:

1. During the first steps of their evolution, e-textbooks typically contained the same content and layout as classical textbooks. Basically, they were text that could be read on the monitor, instead on the printed version. One will agree that the advantages of such textbooks can hardly be appealing to the average student. Luckily, that has changed in many ways.

2. Another topic to consider when buying a textbook today is the physical size of textbooks. Classical textbooks are often heavy, take a lot of space, while e-textbooks allow students having hundreds, if not thousands of pages compressed in one file that can be opened on multiple devices, some of which weigh less than a single book.

3. E-textbooks provide the student the possibility to search functions, texts, grammar. Finding particular segment in a book has never been easier. We have all spent countless minutes trying to find one paragraph that interested us couple of days ago. Searching through e-textbook is just seconds away from the search bar.

4. Once we search and find a segment in the book which we would like to use for future reference or just for future reading, all we need to do is to highlight the text we want to use, or just copy and paste it in a separate document. Compare this to the old way of referencing parts of the books by hand in notebooks. Previous research indicates that some students want to interact with the e-textbooks to mark their place and add notes. Simon's (2001) survey results indicate that approximately half of the students used bookmarking and highlighting functions available on an e-reader (Emilie O. Falc 2013).

5. We often find books in libraries full of notes into the margins of a page. Taking notes in e-textbooks is a perfectly neat process, as opposed to scratching notes with a pen in a hard copy book.

6. Another great feature of e-textbooks is the ability to convert the text of an e-textbook into audio, which means that language students have a possibility to immediately listen to a how a native speaker would pronounce the word/text.

#### 4.7 Practical Experiences with E-Textbooks

Implementing e-textbooks on a wider scale is not really considered “news” in the time these paragraphs are written (2018). Many schools and universities already implemented e-textbooks as part of their curriculums, however, until now I have never seen a sponsored state federal program of promoting e-textbooks on universities. Searching for novelties in this sphere, I came across an article about a federally managed program in the United Arab Emirates, where more than 41.000 students in three federal universities were given iPads with access to engaging and interactive learning materials (Rogers-Estable 2018). According to the program, e-textbooks were initially implemented in basic math, literacy programs and English classes. During this program, paper textbooks were not distributed in the classes that used e-textbooks. Roger-Estable did a research on 17 campuses in these universities, which was aimed only at faculty members. Out of 733 faculty members who were invited to participate in the survey, only 235 finished the survey (from each of the 17 campuses). The results from this survey showed a tight race between the paper and e-textbook. However, the author warned that due to the fact that the survey was not obligatory, most faculty staff may have taken the survey due to the frustration by the challenges the e-textbook was providing (Rogers-Estable 2018). Surveyed faculty members reported the following pros and cons of e-textbooks:

Category	Pros	Cons
<b>Access</b>	Portable	Open-book exam difficult
	Quick access to exercise answers	Difficult to flip or browse
	Good for presenting content in class	Hard to reference vocabulary
	iPad can carry all textbooks at once	Hard to take notes
	Easily available	Lack of offline access
	Integrated case studies	eText access late in term
	Engages students more	Access to answers too easy
	In time can be a huge benefit	Hard to read (font, colors) Glorified PDFs Students study better from pTexte Text popup windows blocked Wifi access sporadic and unreliable Older devices lose access
<b>Support</b>	<i>No Pros given</i>	Technical errors prohibitive Lack of teaching resources Complicated to use
<b>Training</b>	<i>No Pros given</i>	Not enough training provided Training by non-teaching staff More time needed to adopt



Despite approximately half of the respondents reported positive or neutral experience working with the e-textbooks, only 30% reported that there is an improvement from printed textbooks. As one can deduct from the table, most cons came from technical difficulties and usability. Cons like “difficult to take and share notes” can be easily fixed in future e-textbooks by enabling group share notes function, something like file/photo sharing today in social networks. “Difficult to read (font colors)” is also easily fixable and depends on how graphic designers and monitor/screen technology will develop in the future. One of the cons I personally anticipated is “Glorified PDFs”, meaning that some of the e-textbooks the students in the United Arab Emirates used were just plain PDFs. If e-textbooks are to become better than paper textbooks, offering electronic versions of papers textbooks is to be avoided at any cost. Notebooks and tablets have operating power, which can support even high-demanding 3D games, let alone animations, interactivity, video and sound, which should be part of every e-textbooks of the future. Significant number of surveyed faculty members in the UAE also reported Wi-Fi access problems, because almost all of the e-textbooks were accessible only online. My idea of the proposed e-textbook in this thesis is that it has to be semi-autonomous when it comes to usability with or without Internet connection. This means that basic functionality necessary for minimum learning conditions must exist. When speaking of minimum learning conditions, I do have in mind that texts should be available offline, while multimedia content can be neglected when Internet connection is not available.

When it comes to students’ point of view, studies before 2010 (Noyes & Garland, 2006; Buzzetto-More, Sweat-guy & Elobaid, 2007; Woody, Daniel and Baker, 2010 and others) showed that students prior 2010 preferred using paper textbooks, rather than e-textbooks. Following that year studies started showing an opposite trend. Laura Porter in her PhD dissertation (Porter 2010) found that students started to prefer e-textbooks more than paper textbooks, but also found that students seemed to be more interested in group activities when working with e-textbooks. In another article (Daniel & Woody 2013) authors found that reading time actually increased with e-textbooks, even though achievement levels remained the same. Baek & Monaghan (2013) found that students were willing to continue using e-textbooks as long as those textbooks were high quality, easily accessible and easy to use. Overall, studies after 2010 showed continuous improvements in e-textbook quality, as well as their popularity among students. In comparison with adults, young students have broadly accepted e-TextBooks, finding them more engaging than their printed counterparts (Ghaem Sigarchian et al. 2018).

#### ***4.8 Optimizing the E-textbook***

The federally managed program of implementing iPads in the universities in the United Arab Emirates, and the consequent survey that was carried out by Michelle Dawn Rogers-Estable (2010) gave enormous insight on the teachers' perception after the experience with e-textbooks. This program started in 2012, and Rogers-Estable article came out in 2017, which means that sufficient time has passed for teachers and students to get acquainted with the new technology, making the conclusions even more relevant for future improvements. According to the faculty staff in UAE, these are the main reasons that created barriers between the users and the e-textbooks:

- 1) e-textbook access
- 2) updated content
- 3) interactivity
- 4) curriculum alignment of e-textbooks
- 5) user convenience
- 6) customization of content

Every single of these cons will be addressed in the new textbook material in the following manner:

Access to e-textbook material, as I have mentioned before, can be resolved with a semi-autonomous application that installs the minimum amount of material necessary for it to perform as a textbook. If the e-textbook is predicted to be used as a PC software, the basic material (texts) would be bundled in the installation file itself. Internet connection would only enable for the full potential of the e-textbook to be used, even of disconnection from the Internet, basic features would nonetheless be available.

Updated content is definitely one of the crucial elements when it comes to applying the theory of this thesis in the new multimedia language textbook. Most e-textbooks and platforms for language learning rely mostly on the offline content and do not include options for continuous updating of content, except when it comes to updating software version, but that does not classify as updated content. For instance, most e-textbooks that come in EPUB or PDF

versions do not have the option to update its content, except when the publisher delivers a new edition of the same e-textbook. Rosetta Stone as one of the most widely used platforms for language learning also does not have the option to update its contents, except for updating the software version, which mostly includes bug fixes, interface changes etc.

The true meaning of ‘updated content’ comes with the idea of improving the contents of e-textbooks, especially when it comes to language learning textbooks. My vision is to employ a team of language teachers or experts in the fields that the textbook shall address. They will have the job to constantly scan the changes in the target language and insert new and relevant texts in the e-textbook, meaning that they will provide constant updating and keep the textbook current at all times.

“Interactive textbook” can be defined as textbook that goes beyond static pages and passive involvement, utilizes modern capabilities (sound, microphone, touchscreens) and engages much more than just the eyes.

Interactivity can come in variety of forms: videos, maps, checklists, links, interactive infographic, maps, quizzes etc. Interactive e-textbooks are nothing new, yet, there is not a generic formula as to how interactive e-textbooks should be.

Rogers-Estable’s (2018) article on university staff perception on the e-textbooks that were in use in the United Arab Emirates, helped shed a light on the immediate problems contemporary e-textbooks have:

- Interactivity: according to the faculty staff, e-textbooks are nothing more than “glorified PDF books” and did not have any of the interactivity that students would expect. Students also commented that there was no reason to use them if they are not true e-textbooks with all the interactive graphic and video capabilities that e-textbooks can provide.
- Usability: complaints were recorded on the unavailability of classical highlight capability, meaning that students were not allowed to edit the e-textbooks or add their thoughts. Considerable 56% of the surveyed faculty members claimed that this was one of the main problems that limited the usability of e-textbooks.

It is truly sad to see that in the current year of 2018, when graphical capabilities of modern devices go beyond the plain text on digital white screen, some e-textbooks offered to students are just “glorified PDFs”. The interactivity and all of the features it offers also increase

the excitement about learning and improve the general participation, which can lead to better results in word recognition. Not only the students, the teachers also expect e-textbooks to have advance functionalities that can be exploited in the interactive learning environments in smart classrooms (Ghaem Sigarchian et al. 2018).

The idea of the proposed multimedia textbooks in this thesis is to adapt the learning materials not only to the interactive capabilities available now, but also to make it “interactive-learning-environment friendly”. The latter means that students ought to be able to interact, even partially, in the physical world. Changing the fonts, colors and text size and highlighting capability are only the basic things students should be able to do, so they could adapt the materials to their needs, and thus increase the attractiveness of this e-textbook.

#### ***4.9 The Grammar Model***

Contemporary advanced level foreign language textbooks are often unrealistic in reference to what the student should learn. From personal experience, I can say that some of them push the idea that multiple grammar concepts should be included in the target language, leaving immense burden for the language student, who needs to memorize various grammar rules. What strikes me the most is the idea that grammar should be conceptualized structurally in advanced language textbooks, meaning that the student is basically “fed with rules that just need to be automated and reproduced”.

Introducing large chunks of grammar theory and focusing on the advancement of grammar concepts in advanced language textbooks leaves the language students without the much-needed time to focus not just on linguacultural concepts, rather than on a more organic way of language and grammar acquisition. Having said this, I have deliberately left behind the grammar structure that could support the proposed multimedia language textbook as it would take a lot more time and space to finish this thesis. Instead, it is my intention to continue developing the grammatical structure of this electronic textbook in my future research or post-doctoral studies. Nonetheless, since I already proposed a system where C1 students would be exposed to grammar exercises that would take 20% of their time, and C2 students would spend only 10% of their time on grammar, I would also like to add that the ideal companion for this advanced level learning experience would be the *construction grammar*. Construction grammar is a theory of syntax, and as the name suggests, constructions are the central part of grammatical representations. LLAS (Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies)<sup>121</sup> describes the essential principles of construction grammar: constructions are symbolic units or signs, i.e. a pairing of form and meaning; the construction is the only unit of grammatical representation ... There is a continuum from schematic complex constructions (corresponding to syntactic rules in other theories) to substantive atomic constructions, i.e. words. Constructions are organized in a network, mainly by taxonomic relations and part-whole relations. The mental representation of a construction is determined not only by the (non)predictability of the constructional properties, but also by token and type frequency.

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<sup>121</sup> <https://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/141.html>

#### ***4.10 Creating the New Foreign Language E-Textbook***

Electronic textbooks have been around for some time, but their history stretches further. The beginning of the electronic book age started in 1971, along with the initiation of **Project Gutenberg**. It is the oldest digital library in the world, offering e-books that are mostly without freely accessible and digital rights management. E-textbooks first came in the format of e-books, which is why I will use those terms interchangeably.

The first e-book readers were produced in 1998 (Rocket ebook, SoftBook), but the real breakthrough in this industry happened in 2007, when Kindle was introduced, produced by Amazon. By 2011 Amazon already sold more e-books than paper books.

Electronic textbooks have made great leaps in educational institutions during the second decade of the XXI century. The major difference between traditional and electronic textbooks lies in the digitalization of the learning environment (Elesini & Tomažin 2018). Traditional textbooks offer text and graphics, but in addition to this, e-textbooks include interactive and multimedia elements for instance: games, quizzes, sounds, videos etc. One of the limitations that can occur, though, less likely with every passing year, is the internet accessibility, along with time and place. This is one of the reasons I have proposed the new foreign language e-textbook to be a hybrid, which means that the core of the textbook could always be accessible, even without Internet connection.

##### ***E-Textbook's Benefits***

Learning via e-textbooks is performed in a digital learning environment, where e-textbooks have all the properties as p-textbooks, but with all the benefits technology can offer. Additional benefits can be cooperative learning, as computers, e-book readers or tablets shall be part of a network. Other benefits e-textbooks have and offer:

- Full text searching within the contents of the e-textbook
- Highlight or add bookmarks (that can be shared between users)
- Internal and external links to other documents, videos, pictures etc.

- Can help people with visual impairment (increase text size)
- Can help hearing impaired persons (with ‘read-aloud’ functions)
- Do not need space for storing or carrying
- Can be easily backed-up and restored if necessary
- Can be easily updated and published
- Carry less burden to authors, publishers and distributors
- Are usually cheaper than printed versions
- Are always available (cannot be completely sold like p-textbooks)
- Protect the environment

These benefits seem to be obvious from a technical standpoint, when it comes to the learner’s perspective, things look like this:

<b>Learner in traditional education</b>	<b>Learner in e-learning</b>
Passive learning	Creator of own knowledge
Learning facts without deeper understanding	Solving of complex problems
Unilateral treatment of content	Content is considered from different aspects
Individual learning; solving own tasks	Learning in teams; cooperation
Subordinated to teacher’s assessment	Designing its own questions and the search for answers
Active in only one cultural context	Increased cultural awareness
No influence over rhythm and tempo of learning	Autonomous, Independent management of time and the learning process
Only feedback about work is from teacher	Discussion about work and progress with teacher and other learners

Emphasis on the reproduction of teacher's knowledge	Emphasis on the creation of knowledge and the application thereof
Only prescribed learning materials used	Access to multiple learning sources

**Table: Role of learner in traditional education and e-learning  
(Bregar et al. 2010)**

Electronical textbooks represent textbooks that have a digital format and can be found on different data mediums. Due to the fact that e-textbooks are electronic in nature, they require technical tools for their creation and use. According to Pesek and Mohorcic (2014), e-textbooks can be categorized on three levels:

1. Digitalized textbooks or d-textbooks (which are nothing more than electronic copies of printed textbooks in PDF or EPUB2 format);
2. Rich textbooks or r-textbooks, which are digitalized textbooks with added sounds and video;
3. Interactive or i-textbooks, whose content include interactive elements and interactive examinations. Their interactive elements include video, sound, computer animations, hyperlinks and most likely augmented reality in the future, which is also an option I would very much like to see in my future language e-textbook.

The future language e-textbook will be categorized as an i-textbook, since it shall consist of all interactive elements available to technology. The smallest unit from which the textbook will be created is the linguacultural short text, which will be a part of a group that will include at least two other linguacultural texts (overview, point and counterpoint contexts).



Социјалистичка Република Македонија (скрат. СР Македонија) било името на Македонија од 1963 до 1990 и била федеративна република во рамките на СФРЈ. До 1963 година го носеше името Народна Република Македонија. Во 1991 година по пат на референдумско изјаснување прогласена е независна Република Македонија.

Територијата која ја опфаќала СРМ, во најголем дел е територијата на Вардарска Македонија. Во текот на своето постоење СРМ, загубила свои делови од територијата кои административно влегле и денес се наоѓаат во територијата на Социјалистичка Република Србија.

Source: Wikipedia (Macedonian)

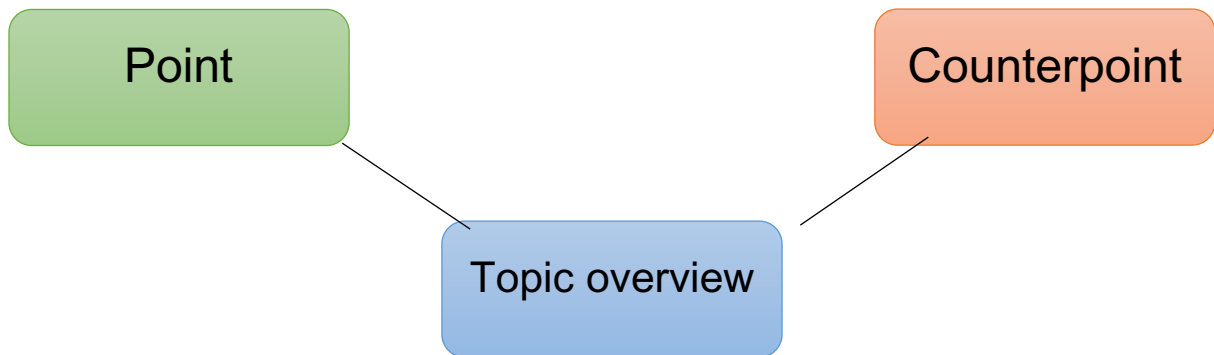
**Socialist Republic of Macedonia (as part of Yugoslavia)**  
**Sample overview text.**

The above text represents an overview sample that can be used as one of the linguacultural short texts used for a single topic. The overview text should contain all the background information needed on the issue (essential encyclopedic information). The other two texts will represent a point and counterpoint, both based on polarized contexts (polycontextual approach).

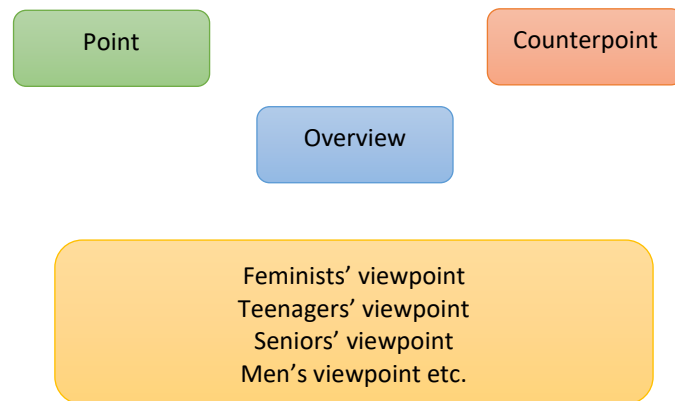
Both ‘point’ and ‘counterpoint’ linguacultural text will represent polarized context which will come from current views on the topic, along with the original language used (without modifications). This would mean that ‘point’ and ‘counterpoint’ texts will have to present the ‘spirit of the time’, the current view on this topic (Socialist Republic of Macedonia from 1944-1990). The overview text represents the neutral view on the topic, while the other two are part of the ‘emotional design’, considering they are aimed at provoking a reaction from the student/reader. This reaction, as explained in previous chapters, heightens the emotional state in students, which means that students will take greater participation in the learning process. The heightened emotional state will also enhance the memory, meaning that they will remember much more new information and vocabulary. Students generally will take the ‘point’ or the ‘counterpoint’ side, discussion is expected, which would lead to a greater cooperation and will join this process with own commentary in the target language.

Apart from this basic polycontextual approach – overview of a topic, point and counterpoint, additional levels of short linguacultural texts can be applied via the multimodal method.

The polycontextual approach produces the following model:

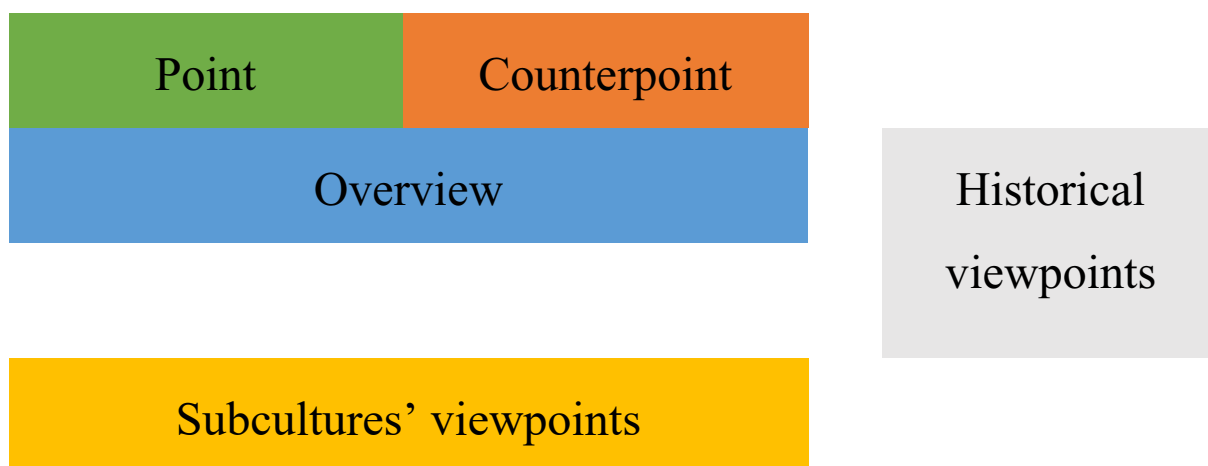


Using the multimodal method, the authors can apply additional linguacultural short texts that exist in the language of culture's subcultures (e.g. feminists' viewpoint, teenagers' viewpoint, business worlds' viewpoint, intellectuals' viewpoint, men's viewpoint etc.).



Apart from subcultures' viewpoints, which represent the synchronicity of contemporary language, there is also a possibility to add diachronic texts that can present a view on a certain topic from a historical perspective and context. This would be extremely beneficial to students, as they would be not only linguaculturally competent when it comes to contemporary concepts and context, but to historical context as well. This would be especially beneficial for future

translators and interpreters, as they are dealing with the concepts and context from different eras. Context is resultant, phenomenal and temporal, whilst concept is causal, universal and slowly changeable. Concept is supposed to be understood, while context is supposed to be remembered. Nevertheless, even though concepts change slowly, they still change, which is why concepts and context need to be introduced in the foreign language curriculum and in the future foreign language e-textbook.



### ***Linking and Referencing***

One of the benefits electronic textbooks have is the capability of referencing and receiving the authentic source in almost an instant. Printed textbooks lack this possibility, which means that students have to reproduce the knowledge that is presented in the textbook. If we create authentic knowledge with critical overview from all sides and sources, future electronic textbooks ought to incorporate links to the authentic content. Another way the electronic environment can be used is the embedding of sound and video in the e-textbook. Sound and video recordings of historical or contemporary events can be also used as multimedia texts, which means that digitalized text will not be the sole source of information in the e-textbook.

### ***Updateability***

Another unique feature in the new language e-textbook will be the up-to-date material. All p-textbooks and almost all e-textbooks (“almost” is used conditionally, as I have not found

any e-textbook with this feature) lack the option to receive updates of its materials on a day-to-day basis. As I mentioned in the previous chapters, concepts and context change all the time, and they bring changes to linguaculture and contemporary language. This language e-textbook requires a team of authors to search and provide the latest changes of context in language, which means that the contents of this e-textbook will never get old. New linguaculture materials will replace the old one, but the latter will not get lost or deleted. As new material is added, the older is directly transferred to “Historical viewpoints”, meaning that students will be able to search popular semantic paradigms, expressions or context from past years.

### ***Breadth of Topics***

Every single country has internal mechanism that pushes society in different directions, mostly differing from other peoples and societies. This creates different levels of importance for different topics, which means that what would appear to be interesting for US citizens now, will most probably be completely marginal for other nations around the world. Everyday life creates different loads on different topics, which will inevitably reflect on which ones receive more attention, and which ones less.

Since September 2018, the main object of attention is the referendum on the country’s name change, which if approved, will enable Macedonia to change its name to “Republic of North Macedonia” and thus Greece will unblock the country on its path towards NATO and EU membership. For the citizens of Macedonia this is the main topic that shadows all others, as it will determine the future path of the country. It would be natural to assume that one of the most important topics reflected in the language e-textbook for Macedonian as a foreign language would be ‘EU’, ‘NATO’, ‘Name change’, ‘Referendum’ etc. At the same time topics as ‘Feminism’, ‘Polygamy’ or ‘Arctic Drilling’ would be completely off-focus for Macedonian citizens, but in the focus of interest for other nations. This does not mean they will be excluded from the language e-textbook – the authors themselves will have the opportunity to evaluate how important a certain topic is and if that topic is relevant to this particular linguaculture.

Some of the topics and subtopics which can be presented:

**Abortion Issues**  
Abortion  
Abortion and Minors

**AIDS/HIV**  
AIDS Drugs  
Condom Distribution

Late-Term Abortion

**Animal Welfare**

Animal Experimentation  
Animal Rights  
Endangered Species  
Factory Farming  
Honey Bee Population  
Hunting  
Invasive Species  
Wolves in U.S. Parks  
Zoos & Circuses

**Censorship**

Banning Books  
Censoring Student Newspapers  
Censorship & Democracy  
Music Censorship  
Political Cartoons & Islam  
Teachers' Rights

**Crime & Punishment**

Corporal Punishment  
Death Penalty  
DNA Profiling  
Domestic Violence  
Drug Policy  
Excessive Use of Police Force  
Gangs  
Gun Control  
Honor Killing  
Mandatory Minimum Prison Sentences for Drug Offenders  
Parole System  
Pornography Laws  
Private Prison Industry  
Rights of Convicted Felons  
Sentencing for Juvenile Offenders  
Sex Offender Laws  
Stand Your Ground Laws  
Tasers  
Violence in Schools  
Wrongful Convictions & DNA

**Energy & Conservation**

Alternative Energy Exploration  
Arctic Drilling  
Coal-Burning Power Plants  
Fracking  
Fuel Efficiency  
Highway Carpools  
Nuclear Power  
Offshore Oil Drilling  
Oil Prices

HIV / AIDS Status and Privacy  
Needle Exchange Programs

**Citizens' Rights**

Airport Security & Body Scanners  
Facial Recognition Technology  
Flag Burning  
Government Access to Records  
Civil Liberties  
Mandatory Health Insurance  
Government Agencies Spying  
Patriot Act  
Police Brutality  
Privacy in the Information Age  
Religious Freedom Laws  
Transgender Restroom Use  
Wage Standards  
Welfare & Drug Testing

**Arts & Culture**

Arts & Music in Public Schools  
Arts Funding  
Decline of Reading

**Earth & Environment**

Amazon Deforestation  
Bottled Water  
Carbon Offsetting  
Cleanup of Toxic Dump Sites  
Climate Change  
Coastal Drilling  
Food Contamination  
Genetically Modified Foods  
Global Warming  
Green Consumerism  
Greenhouse Effect  
Housing Developments & Water Shortages  
Insecticide Spraying  
Light Pollution  
Ocean Policy  
Organic Food  
Overfishing  
Strip Mining  
Sustainable Development

**Family Issues**

Adoption from Foreign Countries  
Adult Children & Independence  
Balancing Work & Family  
Burden on Fathers in Divorce  
Caring for Aging Family Members  
Children & Extracurricular Activities  
Divorce Rate  
Foster Children Programs  
Gay & Lesbian Adoption

Public Transportation  
Wind Power  
Less

### **Foreign Policy**

Afghanistan  
Greece's blocking of Macedonia  
Iran Nuclear Agreement  
ISIS Jihadist Movement: U.S. Policy  
Israel & the Palestinians  
NATO  
North Korea  
U.S. & World Democracy

### **Global Issues**

Carbon Trading  
Chechnya  
Child Labor  
China as a Superpower  
Chinese Exports  
Crisis in Ukraine  
Developing Markets  
European Debt Crisis  
Global Economy  
Israel & Iran  
Nuclear Proliferation  
Population Growth  
Refugee Resettlement  
Third World Relief  
United Nations

### **Health & Medicine**

Alternative Medicine  
Autism  
Behavior Drugs & Children  
Cigarette Smoking  
Circumcision  
Cosmetic Surgery  
Dietary Supplement Safety  
Digital Pill  
Ebola  
Health Insurance  
Mental Illness Awareness & Research  
Obesity & Health Insurance  
Patient Access to Electronic Health Records  
Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act  
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder  
Supervised Injection Facilities  
Trans Fat Bans  
Vaccines & Health Hazards  
Vegetarianism

### **Immigration**

Border Walls  
Federal Identification Cards  
Foreign-Worker Visas - NEW  
Immigration Restrictions

Parental Leave Laws  
Parents on College Campus  
Polygamy  
Same-Sex Marriage  
Single-Parent vs. Nuclear Families  
Surrogate Mothers

### **Evolution**

Big Bang Theory  
Intelligent Design  
Teaching Evolution

### **Government Funding**

Airline Subsidies  
Debt Ceiling  
Defense Spending  
Deficit Spending  
Farm Subsidies  
Government Funding & Sports Facilities  
Infrastructure  
Social Security  
Subsidizing HIV/AIDS Drugs  
U.S. Credit Rating  
U.S. Space Program  
Universal Health Care  
Veterans  
Welfare

### **Internet**

Distance Learning  
Free Internet  
Hacktivism  
Identity Theft  
Intellectual Property Rights  
Internet Censorship  
Internet Neutrality  
Music Downloading  
Social Networking Sites  
Video Games  
Virtual Worlds & MMORPGs  
WikiLeaks  
Wikipedia  
YouTube

### **Human Rights**

Enemy Combatants  
Human Trafficking  
Terrorism Trials  
Torture

Sanctuary Cities  
U.S. Borders

### **Labor & Economics**

Bank Bailout  
Bitcoin & Currency Alternatives  
Capitalism vs. Socialism  
Credit Card Rates  
Economic Stimulus Package  
Emerging Economies  
Executive Pay  
Deficit  
Free Trade  
Globalization  
Green Jobs  
Imported Product Safety  
Inflation  
Jobs  
Legalized Gambling  
Multilevel Marketing  
No-Tip Restaurants  
Outsourcing  
Raising the Minimum Wage  
Uber & the Ride-Sharing Industry  
Unemployment Benefits  
Unions  
Wealth Gap

### **Medicine & Ethics**

Assisted Suicide  
Cloning  
CPR & Obligation in an Emergency  
Electronic Cigarette Use  
Euthanasia  
Experimental Vaccine for Ebola  
Genetic Screening  
Human Papillomavirus Vaccine  
Medical Malpractice Lawsuits  
Pharmaceuticals Advertising  
Pharmacies & Controversial Drugs  
Preventable Disease & Vaccine Supply  
Sex Selection & Cosmetic Genetics  
Smallpox Vaccination  
Stem Cell Research

### **Race & Culture**

Affirmative Action  
Black Lives Matter Movement  
English as an International Language  
Multiculturalism  
Native American Casinos  
Portrayal of Race & Ethnicity in Popular Media  
Racial Profiling  
Reparations for Slavery  
Restitution to Native Americans

### **Media & Communications**

Advertisements  
Broadcast Television Monopolies  
Decline of Newspapers  
The Effect of Mobile Devices on Personal Relationships  
Extremist Rhetoric  
Fake News  
Hidden Camera Activism  
Islam & Free Speech  
Media & Body Image  
Media Bias  
Media Consolidation  
Print vs. Digital Media  
Terrorism & the Media  
Twenty-Four-Hour Television News Cycle  
Violence in the Media

### **People & Society**

Alt-Right  
Baby Boomers  
Black Friday  
Celebrity Activism  
Cell Phones  
Conspiracy Theories  
Daylight Saving Time  
Driverless Vehicles  
Elderly Drivers  
Far-Left and Political Violence  
Homelessness  
Intelligent Machines vs. Human Intelligence  
Minimum Driving Age  
Obesity  
Participation Trophies  
Poverty  
Reality Television Programs  
Sexual Harassment  
Volunteering & Public Service

### **Religion**

Atheism  
Church & State Separation  
Faith-Based Initiatives  
Female Priests  
Free Speech & Islam  
Religious High Schools & the Status of Openly Homosexual Teachers  
School Prayer

**Schools & Education**

Bilingual Education  
Bullying in Schools  
Cell Phones in School  
College Education & Student Loan Debt  
Drug Testing in Schools  
Education Standards  
For-Profit Universities  
Foreign Language Graduation Requirements  
Home Schooling  
Homework Ban  
Junk Food in Schools  
Online Degree Programs  
Privatization of Education  
Reading Decline  
School Security  
School Uniforms  
School Violence  
Standardized Testing  
Student Loan Debt  
Tablets and Laptops in Schools  
Zero-Tolerance Policies

**Sex Education**

Abstinence Education  
Distribution of Condoms  
Emergency Contraception  
Sex Education in Schools

**Voting & Elections**

Campaign Finance  
Electoral College  
Electoral Reform  
Gerrymandering  
Negative Political Advertising  
Political Parties  
Regulating Political Blogs  
Tea Party Activism  
Term Limits  
Voter Identification Laws  
Voting Machines

**Women's Issues**

Body Image & the Media  
Breastfeeding in Public  
Feminism  
Gender Equality  
Miss America Organization  
Plastic Surgery  
Princesses as Role Models for Young Girls  
Prostitution  
Title IX  
Women as Priests  
Women's Rights

**War & Peace**

Armenian Genocide  
Blood Diamonds  
Chemical & Biological Weapons  
Civil Disobedience  
Cyberwarfare  
Draft vs. Volunteer Military Service  
Iraq War  
Mexican Border Security Policy  
Missile Defense  
Nuclear Weapons  
Pacifism  
Preemptive Strikes  
Uranium Enrichment  
U.S. Withdrawal From Post-WWII Bases  
Use of Drones  
Vietnam  
War in Afghanistan  
War on Terror  
War Profiteering  
War Protests & Free Speech

**Sports**

Athletes & Drugs  
Daily Fantasy Sports and Gambling  
Hosting the Olympic Games  
Outdoor Recreation  
Salary Caps  
Sports Discrimination & Women  
Sports Facilities & Government Funding  
Steroids

**Substance Abuse**

Alcohol Abuse & Youth  
Drug Testing for Sports  
Legalization of Marijuana  
Mandatory Drug Testing  
Performance Enhancing Drugs  
Less  
Taxes  
Capital Gains Tax  
Sales Tax vs. Income Tax  
Tax Cuts  
Tax Reform



#### ***4.11 Language E-textbook and the Learner***

Following the list of benefits from Bregar (2010), foreign language students:

- Will be the **creators of their own knowledge**, due to the fact that the language e-textbook is modular in nature, thus eliminating the need to progress in a linear line;
- Will be able to **solve complex problems** that complex reality throws at them. Applying the polycontextual approach and the multimodal method allow the students to see multiple contexts and broadly explore concepts. The richer the linguacultural knowledge is, the better the linguacultural competence will be;
- Will **consider content from different aspects**, because this is the core thought behind this language e-textbook;
- Will have the **possibility to learn in teams and cooperate**, since the sole nature of providing different aspects and viewpoints creates the need to prove one's viewpoint to be better than the other;
- Will **design own questions and search for answers** from the links that will be provided with every topic in the e-textbook;
- Will have **increased cultural awareness** as the e-textbook employs different aspects of the target language culture that can be opposed to one's own culture;
- Will be **autonomous, independent in the learning process**. The language e-textbook is accessible everywhere where there are computers, tablets or smartphones, so the student will not be bound to the classroom;
- Providing various topic aspects will ignite **discussion about the topic with other students or the teacher**;
- Will be able to access multiple learning sources from the convenience of the e-textbook's interface, where they will be provided.

#### ***4.12 Contextual Connecting and Learning***

E-textbooks are becoming increasingly more popular in schools and universities. As it was pointed in previous parts of this thesis, up until 2010 the general opinion leaned against electronic textbooks, which was completely understandable, as most electronic textbooks were nothing more than digitalized text and “glorified PDFs”. Furthermore, studies have shown that the learning outcomes from using electronic textbooks do not really differ much from using hard copy textbooks (as cited in Saarinen et al. 2015). Naturally, one of the problems is that these e-textbooks are used in the same way as p-textbooks.

One of the solutions to this problem proves to be quite simple and effective. Since the main method of teaching in schools and universities is by using information that is organized by topics that need to be read and understood in a linear fashion (Saarinen et al. 2015), one of the solutions is to provide students with comprehensively different approach that would introduce new interaction patterns and context to learning. Introducing contextual topics and contextual searching is also one of the proposed modules in my language e-textbook. In 2005 a patent under the number US20050187920A1 was registered in the United States on “Contextual searching”. The abstract of this patent is as follows: *A method of improving the relevance of search results includes the steps of selecting search terms from a document under review for performing a search, and incorporating text surrounding the search terms in the document and the search terms into a query string. A search is then imitated using the expanded query string. As a result, the information retrieved depends not only on the search terms but also on the context in which they were found in the original document* (Tenenbaum et al.).

This patent also comes with graphic explanation on the manner this method would work:

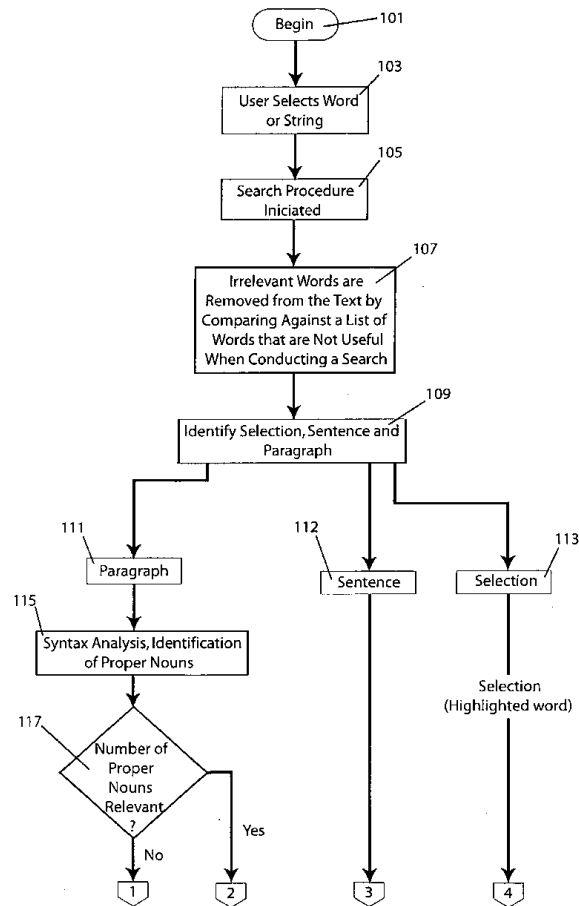


Figure 2A (as shown in [patent description](#))

Context plays immense role on how the human brain works. This being said, the human brain is the ultimate context machine and the most efficient indexing machine that exists. Life around us is ultimately being contextualized according to the surrounding and the experiences that it bring us. Contextualizing is a way of optimizing the attempts to increase precision of our place in a point of the world.

The goal of introducing context connecting in learning, not to be confused with polycontextuality as described in previous chapters, is to incorporate a richer model of learning. Thus producing more sophisticated learning behavior and information retrieval in the future. Online Dictionary for Library and Informational Science offers a definition of *context* that can be applied to language textbooks: “*the entire situation, background, or environment relevant to an event, action, statement, work etc.*” Luanne Freund and Elaine Toms go to the extent of saying that *everything has context, and everything is context*<sup>122</sup>. In languages context is of

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239551294>

essence, as the meaning of words varies significantly in every single one of them. That is why a contextual framework is essential for future language textbooks. My idea in this thesis is not only to present one context, but multitude of contexts that exist in language. *Relevance* is another term that is important to the understanding of (poly)contextuality. It is crucial to the evaluation of information retrieval, thus creates different contexts in which information (and worldview) preside. Some authors (as in Freund and Toms, 2005) refer to this phenomenon as *contextual spheres*, but I prefer to use the term “polycontextuality”. Actually, this means that individuals in any community do not possess only one contextual field of information, but multitude of different situational, cognitive and affective views on same topics.

### ***Yewno – A Basis for Advanced Learning***

One of the products and services that offer superb contextual (and concept) search on the market today is Yewno. The brain is the ultimate context machine in the world, and Yewno markets itself as an engine that mimics the workings of the human brain. Unlike modern search engines like Google, Bing and others alike, which look for results according to the keywords users enter, Yewno goes beyond that and extracts meaning from a number of publications in the form of concepts. In a way, it searches not for keywords, but for ideas. Respectively, as it is presented on their webpage: *Yewno’s platform harnesses hundreds of millions of semantic connections and conceptual links from millions of scholarly articles, books, and databases across virtually all academic fields. This empowers users to navigate intuitively across concepts, relationships, and fields, learning from resources that might have otherwise been overlooked. This not only enhances understanding and creates more impactful work, but also saves time while ensuring comprehensive and credible coverage. Tying together interdisciplinary fields of study, Yewno visually guides students and researchers and helps them uncover connections in research they may not know existed, thus bolstering their scope and understanding of a particular subject area.*

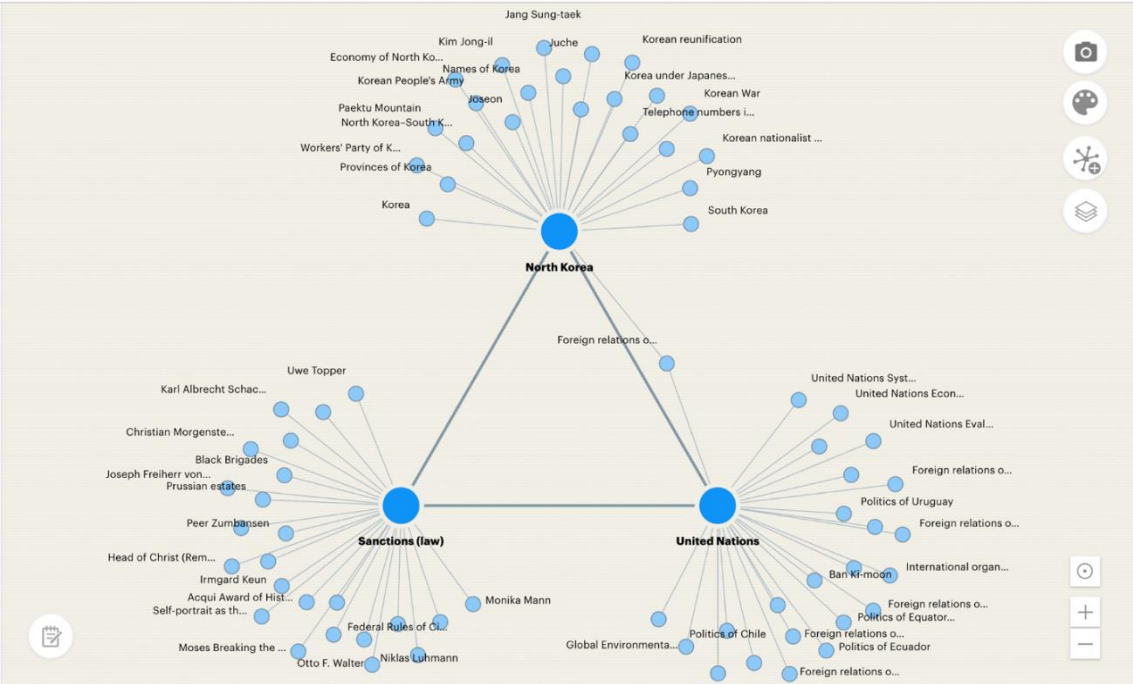
Yewno uses graphical presentation of information that is being searched for. Firstly, the user searches for a concept in a search bar. Then they receive a list of concepts, graphically presented around the main concept (these are secondary concepts). In order to determine which concepts, Yewno uses over 120 million documents, articles and books. After the secondary concept is clicked, the user gets access to even more concepts that are derived by the primary and secondary concept. The user can further explore the definitions and related documents to

each concept in order to understand the context of the concept one is searching for. All concepts are represented on a “knowledge map”, which can be additionally configured to adapt to the user’s best needs. One of the options Yewno provides is concept adding, meaning that the user can add concepts that, in their opinion, are missing on the knowledge map.

Each search produces new graph with orange and blue nodes. The orange nodes denote the main concepts which are placed centrally on the knowledge map, whereas the blue nodes show ideas that are close to the central concepts. Clicking on the blue nodes enables the user to add additional ideas to their map and to disclose connections which have not been there before the addition of this new piece of information.

Even though most readers would find Yewno to be something completely unknown, it is worth mentioning that institutions like Stanford University, University of Berkeley and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are all using Yewno as a context/concept search engine.

My idea is that Yewno’s concept/context search engine can be applied to the language e-textbook, and by doing this, language students can analyze the background, conceptual and contextual landscape surrounding any particular topic. This landscape differs in every language, meaning that it does not come as a finished product, but it has to be fed manually.

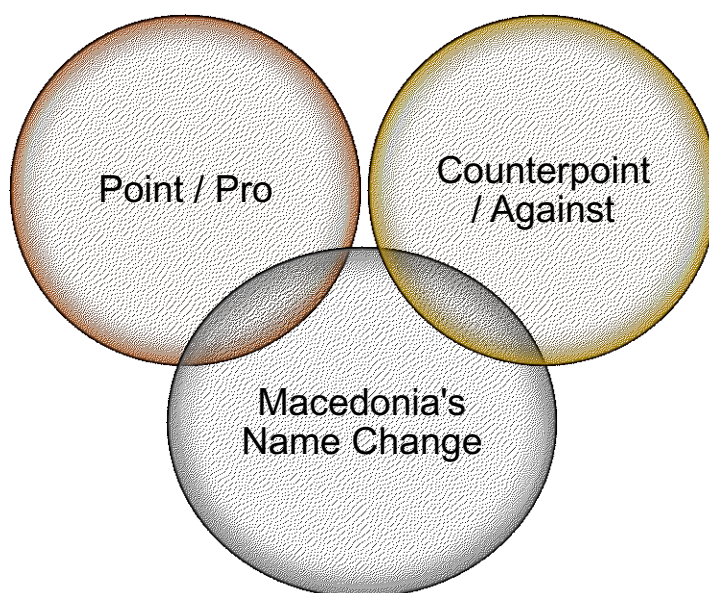


Screenshot from Yewno’s knowledge map  
(Source: Yewno’s Facebook page)

### ***Practical Application***

Contextual and conceptual search engines are employed in even more knowledge bases. The proposed language e-textbook would employ this mechanism by connecting concepts and context that exist in language (though, mostly manually). This would enable the student to go beyond the polycontextual model to other concepts that are connected to the primary one.

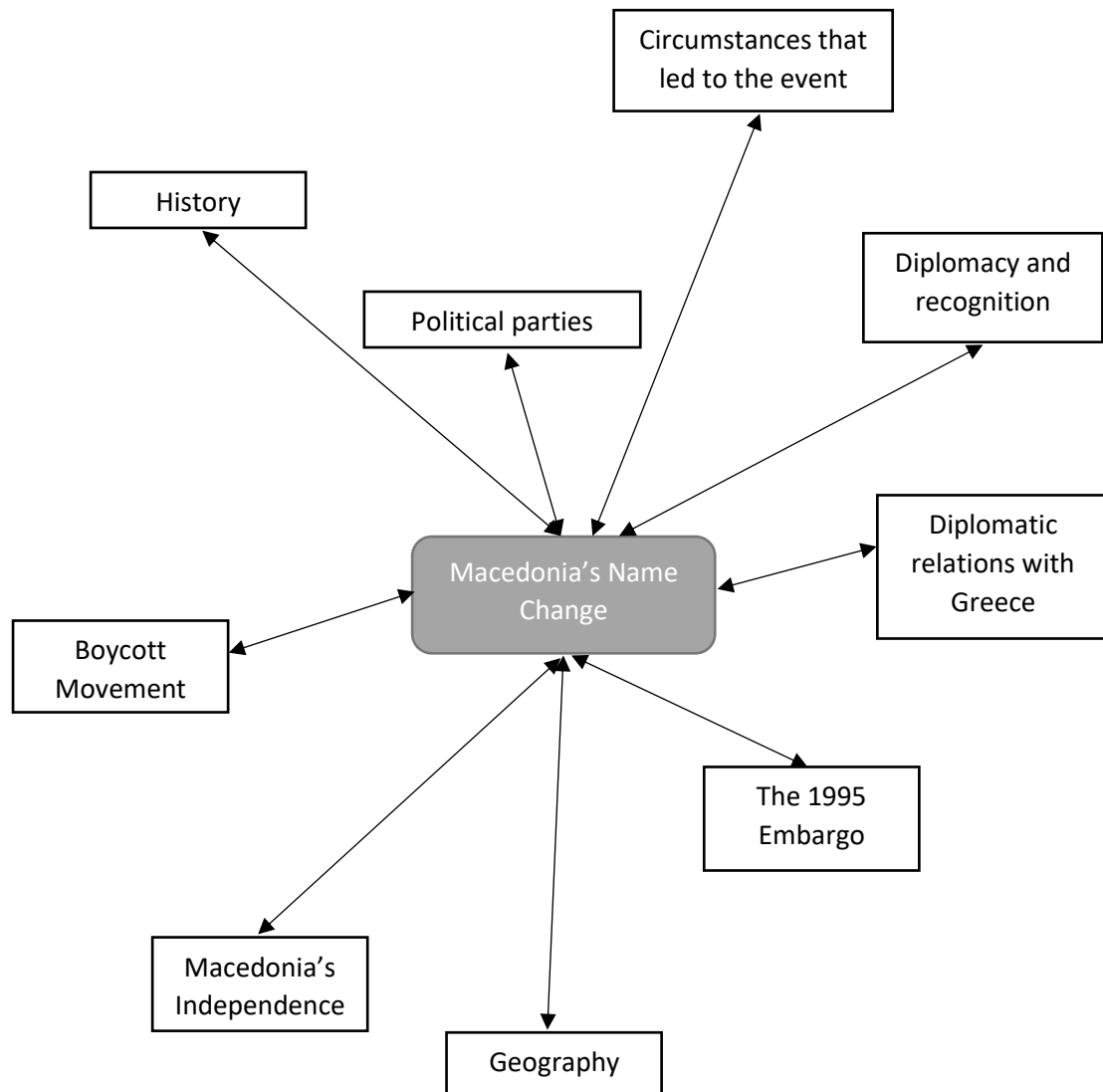
Just as an example in my native Macedonian language: when students read on, let us say the Name Dispute and Name Change, the polycontextual model presents the student with one encyclopedic description of this period and key figures, one point and one counterpoint (two context / context spheres).



**Fig. Polycontextual model for Macedonia's name change**

This polycontextual model would be interconnected to concepts that are connected to this event. These can be global events that are connected to the independence of Macedonia, the political parties which were part of the process, diplomatic activities, the country from which Macedonia gained independence from, circumstances that led to the independence etc.

These concepts can be presented in the same way Yewno presents its knowledge map:



Wilson (1997) considers that people's information needs are embedded in context. If one's culture embeds one context paradigm, that would mean that another language would code a completely another context paradigm. This would mean that people often make the mistake of expecting a solution to a problem in another language that is contextually embedded in the third one. This is also known as intercultural miscommunication.

Multiple studies of human reference interactions have shown that in order to meet peoples' actual information needs, it is necessary to elicit a description of the context surrounding the need, i.e. the search situation – the task, motivation, problem, and intended use of the information (as cited by Freund & Toms, 2005). Yewno was not built in order to be used as a linguistic contextual search engine, which is why another need emerges to create a new "Yewno" that would represent the contextual reality of multiple languages. This implies that

every language would receive its own “knowledge map” and connections between the concepts and contexts.



### ***4.13 Topic Example***

The last part of this thesis is saved for an example on the manner how one topic in the new language e-textbook would look like, a plain text example, given it is written on a word processor and is not transferred on an i-textbook interface.

It must be said that even creating a prototype interactive interface would require a good deal of programming, not to mention the need of designers that design the interface and the learning environment. That is an expensive process that I could not afford and I do not have the time to engage with it, thus why this thesis provides only the theoretical structure of the future language e-textbook.

For this e-textbook to be brought to life, it would need a team of people to work on it constantly. The textbook's interface would require initial work from programmers and designers, which would create the environment where teachers and students could add learning material. This stage can be completed rather quickly, if the interface has basic interactive functionality. or would require months if more advanced options were to be included such as augmented reality, advanced interactivity etc. After the interface is ready, a team of teachers should be selected, one or two for every category of topics in the e-textbook. According to my estimates, 25-50 teachers would be required to maintain, search and add texts to the e-textbook, one to two teachers per topic category. In spite of the fact that this is a rather high number of people working on a textbook, it should be mentioned that adding and updating materials in this e-textbook would not be a full-time job, and it would require, in my initial estimates, around 3-4 hours of work per week by every single member in the team. Another way this e-textbook would benefit is the option for students to add their own text suggestions, which would be further checked and approved by teachers for use in the e-textbook. This will enrich the experience for all students and will provide broader overview of concepts and contexts in different topics. All texts would be provided by teachers whose mother tongue or first language is the same as the e-textbook's target language. Students of the target language would be able to suggest texts, but the final word would come by native speakers who will control the adequacy of those texts.

Since my mother tongue is Macedonian, according to my own wording in this thesis, the topic example I am about to present will be in Macedonian language, as I am, in principle, the best detector of linguacultural variances in my native language. Furthermore, the most popular topic during the time I wrote this part was the name issue in Macedonia. I chose to present this topic via the polycontextual model. For readers' convenience, I have also translated the short linguacultural texts in this example, so every English speaker could understand the essence of the topic.

**Topic background:** The name of the country Republic of Macedonia is disputed by Greece ever since the country gained its independence in 1991. Because of this Greece is blocking Macedonia's path toward EU and NATO, demanding a name change. In the summer of 2018, an Agreement for a name change was signed between both countries and a referendum is to be held on September 30<sup>th</sup> (*the outcome is not known, as this part was written one month prior to the referendum*).

#### **Overview:**

Спорот околу името помеѓу Република Грција и Република Македонија опфаќа неколку прашања главно обединети околу името Македонија, етничкото потекло на населението што живее во оваа земја, како и ословувањето на јазикот кој тоа го користи. Ескалацијата на спорот се проширува до такви рамки што неговото решавање вклучува и учество на меѓународни медијатори од највисоко рамниште.

Спорот, во главно, е плод на несогласувањето на Република Грција да го прифати уставното име Македонија. Привременото решение „поранешна Југословенска Република Македонија“ (во англиската верзија " the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"), покрај Република Грција, го користат и неколку други земји кои не го признаваат уставното име на Македонија. Сепак сите членки на Обединетите Нации, и самиот ОН како целина, се согласни да го прифатат решението што ќе произлезе како резултат на меѓусебните разговори на двете земји.

Иако постојат напори да се разреши проблемот, сепак конечно решение не е постигнато. Со текот на времето предложени се неколку имиња, како што се Горна Македонија, Нова Македонија, Славо-Македонија, Македонија (Скопје) и слично. Секој од овие предлози е одбиен од едната или другата страна. Иако резолуцијата 817 е јасна, сепак грчката страна инсистира дека преговорите се водат за да се најде заедничко прифатливо име кое ќе биде и официјално име на Македонија. Додека Македонија ја застапува позицијата како што е вметнато во резолуцијата 817 дека се преговара за име кое е прифатливо за Грција во билатерална комуникација, додека единствената можна опција за меѓународна употреба е Република

Македонија. Овој принцип е окатегоризиран како принцип на двојна формула. Во меѓувреме голем број на земји во светот ја признаа Македонија под уставното име. До декември 2011 133 земји во светот ја признаа Македонија како Република Македонија што претставува над 66% од вкупниот број на земји членки на ОН, со што Република Македонија има двотретинско мнозинство во Обединети Нации.

На 12 јуни 2018 година премиерите на Македонија и Грција, Зоран Заев и Алексис Ципрас по втор службен телефонски разговор дошле до заедничко решение името на Република Македонија да биде Република Северна Македонија за севкупна употреба. Останатите прашања кои беа отворени, како на пример националноста и јазикот остануваат исти односно „македонска/граѓанин на Република Северна Македонија“ и македонски јазик, што предвидува и потврда на јазикот во ОН. Ваквиот договор и официјално бил потпишан на 17 јуни 2018 година во селото Нивици, Грција кое се наоѓа на брегот на Преспанско Езеро, од страна на шефовите на дипломатијата на Македонија, Никола Димитров и Грција, Никос Косијас, како и од посредникот за спорот на ОН, Метју Нимиц<sup>123</sup>.

*Point* (excerpt from a TV debate transcription between Antonio Miloshoski, former minister of foreign affairs and Frosina Remenski, representative of the ruling political party SDSM):

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<sup>123</sup> The name dispute between the Republic of Greece and the Republic of Macedonia covers several issues largely associated with the name ‘Macedonia’, the ethnic origin of the population living in this country, and the use of its language. The escalation of the dispute extends to such proportions, that its resolution involves the participation of international mediators on the highest level.

The dispute, in general, is the result of the disagreement of the Republic of Greece to accept the constitutional name of Macedonia. The provisional solution "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (in the English version "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"), besides Greece, is used by several other countries that do not recognize the constitutional name of Macedonia. However, all United Nations members, and the UN itself as a whole, agree to accept the solution that will arise as a result of the mutual talks between the two countries.

Although there are efforts to resolve the problem, a final solution has not yet been reached. Over time, several names have been proposed, such as Upper Macedonia, New Macedonia, Slavo-Macedonia, Macedonia (Skopje) etc. Each of these proposals was rejected by one or the other party. Although Resolution 817 is clear, the Greek side insists that the negotiations are in order to find a mutually acceptable name that will be the official name of Macedonia. While Macedonia represents the position as inserted in resolution 817, it is negotiating a name that is acceptable to Greece in bilateral communication, while the only possible option for international use is the Republic of Macedonia. This principle is categorized as a dual formula principle. Meanwhile, a number of countries in the world have recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name. By December 2011, 133 countries in the world have recognized Macedonia as the Republic of Macedonia, representing over 66% of the total number of UN member states, with which the Republic of Macedonia has a two-thirds majority in the United Nations.

On June 12, 2018, the Prime Ministers of Macedonia and Greece, Zoran Zaev and Alexis Tsipras, after a second official telephone conversation, came to a joint decision to name the Republic of Macedonia as the Republic of Northern Macedonia for overall use. Other issues that were open, such as nationality and language, remain the same, ie "Macedonian / citizen of the Republic of Northern Macedonia" and Macedonian language, which is also provided by a confirmation on the country's language in the UN. This agreement was formally signed on June 17, 2018 in the village of Nivitsi, Greece, located on the shores of Lake Prespa, by the heads of diplomacy of Macedonia, Nikola Dimitrov and Greece, Nikos Kodzias, as well as by the mediator for the UN Dispute, Matthew Nimetz.

*Фросина Ременски:* Легитимно право на секој граѓанин е да има став по однос на Референдумот, и тоа е неспорно, затоа што и самото изјаснување на пратениците во Собранието по однос на тоа каков став ќе заземат во однос на јавната пропаганда за Референдумот – се изјаснија „за“, некои воопшто не се изјаснија, колегата Антонио Милошоски уште пред да излезат информациите, разбравме дека се определува за бојкот. И секако, просторот за промовирање или аргументирање на застапниците на промовирање на овие три тези е отворен во јавноста и медиумите. Секој има право да го аргументира својот. Јас сум застапник на тезата дека овој референдум е клучна историска пресвртница за Република Македонија, имајќи предвид дека со него, со позитивниот исход од референдумот, се заокружува меѓународно-правниот субјективитет на Македонија, што во минатите години, знаеме, беше предмет на оспорување од страна на соседните држави, меѓутоа генерално и од сојузите во кои претендираме да влеземе, а тоа е Европската унија и НАТО ... Кога зборуваме за тоа зошто треба граѓаните на Република Македонија да го искористат уставно загарантираното референдумско право на глас, мислиме на следново: ако направите историска ретроспектива на сите политички реторики, вклучително и на владата на ВМРО-ДПМНЕ и сите политичари кои обавувале одговорна јавна позиција ... ќе видите дека нема ниту една изјава во која се негира правото на изјаснување. Напротив, сите политички партии велеа дека било каков договор помеѓу двете влади ќе биде прашање на одлука на граѓаните на референдум ... И сега доаѓаме до ситуација кога таа декларирана заложба на политичките партии ... денес се претвора во немање на став, што за мене претставува несериозна политичка одлука и порака во овие клучни моменти ... кога зборуваме за она што значат евроатлантските интеграции на Република Македонија<sup>124</sup>.

### ***Counterpoint:***

*Антонио Милошоски:* Зошто ќе го бојкотирам референдумот? Прво, затоа што се работи за неуставен Договор потпишан со Грција, на противзаконски начин, бидејќи меѓународните договори ги потпишува, според законите во Република Македонија, Претседателот на државата.

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<sup>124</sup> Every citizen has a legitimate right have an opinion regarding the referendum, and this is an undeniable right, as is the judgment of the MPs in the Assembly regarding the way they vote and the public propaganda for the referendum – some voted "yay", some did not answer, and my colleague Antonio Milososki, even before we knew the results, said that he was determined to boycott. And of course, the space for promoting or arguing these three theses is open to the public and the media. Everyone has the right to present his own reasoning. I support the thesis that this referendum is a key historical milestone for the Republic of Macedonia, bearing in mind that with it, with the positive outcome of the referendum, the international legal subjectivity of Macedonia will be completed, which in the past years we know was subject to challenge by of the neighboring countries; but also has to do with the organizations we are trying to become members of, and that is the European Union and NATO ... When we argue why the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia should use their constitutionally guaranteed right to vote, we bear in mind the following: if you make a historical retrospective of all political rhetoric, including the government of VMRO-DPMNE and all politicians who have held a responsible public position ... you will see that there is not one statement denying the right to vote on this question. On the contrary, all political parties said that any agreement between the two governments would be a matter which needs to be decided by the citizens in a referendum ... And now we come to a situation when this commitment of these political parties ... turns into a lack of opinion; for me this shows an unserious political decision and a message in these key moments ... a time when we discuss what the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Republic of Macedonia means for us.

Второ, затоа што се работи за незаконски референдум. За вакви договори, каде што вие влегувате во ЕУ и НАТО ... вие мора да имате задолжителен референдум. Ова е консултативен. Тоа се коси со законот. Во Законот за референдум пишува: „ако има референдум, прашањето мора да биде недвосмислено и едноставно“. Значи, прашањето треба да биде, доколку имаме референдум, „Дали сте за Договорот потпишан помеѓу Димитров и Косијас, Македонија да го смени својот устав и своето име и да биде Република Северна Македонија со менување на својата историја?“, тоа би било коректното прашање за овој референдум. Ако има манипулација, ако се злоупотребува Собранието, ако овој Договор не ја помине ратификацијата на Комисијата за надворешна политика, ако се прекршува Уставот, каде што е пропишано дека за вакви прашања референдумот мора да е задолжителен – тогаш се гледа дека постои узурпација од власта, дека ова е наметнато решение, кое што не извира од самата власт туку од друго место, бидејќи и самиот Заев пред година или две се колнеше во своите татко, мајка, деца, потомци и сè друго дека нема да се менува Уставот, единствениот демократски начин како да одговорите на таквата манипулација и незаконски дејствија со наметнат и штелуван референдум е да го бојкотирате, како легитимна порака и дејство на граѓаните согласно Законот за референдум, член 7, каде што пишува дека „никој не може да биде повикан на одговорност за гласање, односно негласање на референдум“. Негласањето е демократска опција со која се испраќа силен сигнал до власта дека ги крши законите и Уставот на Република Македонија<sup>125</sup>.

These three examples demonstrate how the polycontextual approach could work in practice. The overview of this topic was taken from Wikipedia (in Macedonian). As one can see from this text, it is an encyclopedic and neutral overview of the topic of the name change with facts and chronology of the issue. Even though numerous pages can be presented on this issue, it is truly important to present a short, yet comprehensive overview of any issue. Additional relevant links to any issue can be added for further reading, should the student want to expand his knowledge.

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<sup>125</sup> Why will I boycott the referendum? First, because the Agreement signed with Greece is unconstitutional, in an unlawful manner, since international agreements are signed, according to the laws in the Republic of Macedonia, by the President of the State. Second, because it is an illegal referendum. For such agreements, where you vote to enter EU and NATO ... you must have a compulsory referendum. This is a consultative one. It's against the law. The Law on Referendum says: "If there is a referendum, the referendum question must be unequivocal and simple." So, the question should be, should we have a referendum, "Do you concur with the Agreement, signed by Dimitrov and Kodzias, by which Macedonia will change its constitution and its name and to be the Republic of North Macedonia by changing its history?" That would be the correct question for this referendum. If there the process is manipulated, if the Assembly is abused, if this Agreement fails to pass the ratification of the Foreign Policy Committee, if the Constitution is violated, where it is stipulated that the referendum must be mandatory for such issues - then there is a usurpation from the Government; that this is an imposed solution that does not come from the government itself but from another place, since Zaev himself one or two years ago swore in his father, mother, children, descendants and everything else that the Constitution will not change, the only democratic way and the responses to such manipulation and unlawful actions with a forced referendum is to boycott it, as a legitimate message and action of citizens in accordance with the Law on Referendum, Article 7, which states that "no one can be called to account for voting, that is, not-voting ". Non-voting is a democratic option that sends a strong signal to the government that it violates the laws and the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia.

The ‘point’ and ‘counterpoint’ texts present a transcription from a TV debate that took place on September 24<sup>th</sup> on TV 24 between two representatives from the largest political parties in Macedonia. I chose to use a TV debate as a source of authentic material for the ‘point’ and ‘counterpoint’ texts because these kinds of debates allow the student to have a direct contact with non-normative language, to see and learn language as it is spoken by Macedonian citizens at the time when certain topic was current and to witness two opposite contexts from which these politicians draw their arguments. This specific debate lasted for around 70 minutes, but future authors (should they choose to extract text from TV debates) can decide what parts of should be presented in the corresponding topic. Even though only 6-7 minutes of this debate was transcribed and used in the ‘point’ and ‘counterpoint’ texts, a direct link to the debate will be offered for future reference and for those who want to expand their knowledge (but also hear the audio-video version of the debate).

Other sources of authentic materials that can be used include:

- Literature – using literary texts as language learning material
- Video clips of music videos
- TV debates
- Historical propaganda (audio, video or written)
- Commercials (audio, video or graphic)
- Travel brochures
- Newspapers
- Movies
- Leaflets
- Songs
- Comics
- Catalogues
- Menus
- Facebook comments
- Tweets
- Comments coming from other platforms

Even though many teachers are interested in adapting authentic materials, it is my opinion that they can be adapted, although it is highly recommended to use authentic materials

that haven't been adapted, as the language e-textbook is intended to be used by students that would like to progress on C1 and C2 level.

Beside these three texts, additional texts and multimedia can be added to 'point' and 'counterpoint', which would help expand the understanding of the specific topic. In the case of this example, it would mean adding texts authored by different people – politicians, scientists, sociologists etc. The 'point' context can be supported by many different people, and most of them would have different angles and explanations how they came to support their view. This also applies for the 'counterpoint' section.

Beyond these three views on one issue, the multimodal method allows to add several more contexts on one issue by various other groups in a society. Depending on the nature of a topic, several other viewpoints can be added. For example, when it comes to 'Work rights', feminists can also have a say in this issue; teenagers and the Church can also have a say in 'Sexual education' or 'Teen pregnancy'.

When it comes to the topic 'Macedonia's Name Change', beside the viewpoints coming from various politicians in Macedonia on this issue, there is also a group of professors and intellectuals from Macedonia and different countries in the world, most famous of which is Milan Kundera, which expressed their view on the issue of the name change. Their 'Open letter to the political leaders in Macedonia' can be used as a multimodal linguacultural text in this topic.

### **Multimodal view:**

[Отворено писмо](#) до политичките лидери на Република Македонија:

Шчо напраиџме и шчо требит да праиме за однапред?

Длабоко загрижени и вознемирени од начинот на кој Владата на Република Македонија го води процесот на разговори со Република Грција околу нашето уставно име и национален идентитет, чувствуваме историска одговорност да не молчине и да ѝ се обратиме на целата македонска и светска јавност, во духот на мислата на Мисирков: шчо напраиџме и шчо требит да праиме за однапред?

Сакаме да истакнеме дека:

1) Република Македонија е мирољубива членка на меѓународната заедница, и нема ниту еден активен спор со ниту една држава членка на ОН. Нашето право на самоопределување и на самоидентификација не потекнуваат од 1991 година, туку се резултат на историски процес на самоафирмација и на борба за сопствена држава која симболично започна со првиот Илинден во 1903 година, а беше крунисана со вториот – со Заседанието на АСНОМ од 1944 година.

Третиот Илинден, од 8 Септември 1991 година беше само чин на континуитет, легитимиран со наодите на Извештајот на Бадинтеровата комисија и со пресудата на Меѓународниот суд на правдата од 2011 година.

2) Приемот на Република Македонија во ОН беше извршен со флагрантно кршење на Повелбата, при што на државата ѝ беа наметнати два дополнителни и згора нелегални услова – обврска во меѓународните односи да биде претставувана под референцата „БЈРМ“, како и да разговара со Грција околу разликите во врска со името. Поради слабоста на државата, неспособната дипломатија и плашливото и субмисивно државно водство, разговорите прераснаа во преговори. Денеска сме исправени пред ултиматум да го промениме уставното име на државата, нашата заедничка политичка заедница.

3) Одлучувањето за ова прашање излегува од рамките на уставот утврдените надлежности на носителите на власта. Никој, вклучително и Владата, Собранието и Претседателот на Републиката, нема уставно овластување да одлучува за промена на името, дури и ако е „само“ за меѓународна употреба. Ветувањето дека народот ќе одлучи на референдум, исто така, не е засновано ниту на Устав ниту на закон, бидејќи за промена на името на државата, а особено за одредбите за идентитетот, не постои норма од позитивното право за распишување референдум, ниту консултативен ниту задолжителен.

4) Во изминатите 27 години, дури 137 држави нè признаа под уставното име, а нашите официјални државни претставници во меѓународната комуникација го користат уставното име (the Republic of Macedonia, во англиската комуникација). Интелектуалците, културните работници, писатели, научници, уметници, лекари и професионалци од сите области, со своите меѓународни постигнувања успеаја да се изборат нивните колеги и партнери да ги почитуваат и да ги ословуваат на начин вообичаен за сите други државјани на трети земји<sup>126</sup>... [excerpt of the letter].

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<sup>126</sup> As scholars and authors, we wish to take issue with the distortion of the Prespa ‘agreement’ in some quarters, and portrayal of opponents as nationalist and extremists. The agreement does not serve the needs of Macedonia or Greece. It shows no respect for international law, human rights and democratic principles.

An agreement trying to define political, historical and cultural boundaries between “classical Macedonia” and (would be) North Macedonia is a bizarre undertaking in the 21st century. The construction of identities is not for governments. Macedonia is subjected to arbitrary international engineering against the will of the people. With little public support a highly polarized atmosphere deepens internal divisions. The asymmetric ‘deal’ will not lessen regional tensions as only the weaker (Macedonian) side was forced to compromise, to force (North) Macedonia into NATO – itself in an identity crisis.

The deal denies constitutional sovereignty of Macedonia, with final say given to the MPs of a foreign country (Greece). The new name is intended for not only international relations but also internal legal order. The attribute Macedonian is to be erased from all official documents and public use under threat of Orwellian sanctions. History teaching is going to be decided by governmental bodies rather than by scholars.

International mismanagement continues. While supporting confidence building, conflict resolution, and reconciliation, we argue that the Prespa Agreement is not an accord that promises sustainable peace. NATO membership is unlikely to bring social and economic progress or security to the small Macedonian state; ironically, Greece offers the best proof of what international dictates do on the European periphery [the official English version distributed for the media].



As it was described in previous chapters, the structure of a topic consists of three texts (overview, point and counterpoint), viewpoints from different categories of society and a historical view. The last one represents the issue as it was presented years or centuries on preserved media. Documents dating hundreds, or thousands of years can be used for a relevant topic, but the most probable choice for linguacultural texts in the historical overview module would be newspaper archives. They are abundant, easy to find, as almost every newspaper has a digital archive and present the view of an issue as it was years ago, but most importantly, the state of the language when the article was written. Using historical overviews, language students will have access to syntax and vocabulary that may have been widely used at some point in time but has changes ever since.

When it comes to the topic of the name change, I did manage to find an article dating from October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004 in the daily newspaper “Dnevnik”. The article from 2004 is about Donald Rumsfeld’s (US secretary of Defense) visit in Macedonia. In 2018 Macedonian citizens are told that the name change is the last obstacle for Macedonia’s accession in NATO (also part of the referendum question). However, this article states a different condition for the country’s membership in NATO.

#### **Historical overview:**

##### ***Рамсфелд: Членството во НАТО зависи од Охридскиот договор***

Американскиот државен секретар за одбрана, Доналд Рамсфелд, вчера порача дека САД ќе го поддржат зачленувањето на Македонија во НАТО, но брзината ќе зависи од примената на Охридскиот договор и децентрализацијата.

„Успехот и приближувањето кон НАТО ќе зависи од брзината на примената на Охридскиот договор, вклучително и создавањето на посебна локална власт преку процесот на децентрализација“, изјави Рамсфелд, кој завчера допатува во Скопје во официјална посета по покана на македонскиот министер за одбрана Владо Бучковски. Инаку, ова е прва посета на државен секретар за одбрана на земјава по 11 години, кога му бевме домаќини на Вилијам Пери.

Рамсфелд оцени дека Македонија направила објективен напредок во период од пет години и изрази поддршка за напорите и целосна имплементација на Рамковниот договор. За претстојниот референдум околу новите општински граници, тој рече дека е избор меѓу минатото и иднината [excerpt from the article].

The main overview, point and counterpoint texts, along with viewpoints of other relevant group and the historical viewpoints, represent the optimal linguacultural approach toward foreign language learning.

Frosina Remenska's point

Antonio Miloshoski's  
counterpoint

Name change; Referendum

Donald Rumsfeld: The  
implementation of the  
Ohrid accords – a  
condition for NATO  
membership (2004)

Academics Take Issue with Prespa Agreement

Going back to Bregar's view on the role of the learner in e-learning (Bregar et al. 2010), this model would enable the language student to:

- To be creator of its own knowledge, according to its personal needs and interests;
- Solve complex linguacultural issues with ease, as it will receive several viewpoints on one issue;
- Be able to detect and consider an issue from different aspects, giving him an advantage in translating texts, teaching culture-sensitive material to other language students etc.
- Be aware of the various viewpoints and even design their own question and look for answers;
- Develop increased cultural awareness of other peoples' views on different issues;
- Determine their own learning time and curve;
- Discuss the newly learned material with teachers and other learners, and developing their language competence in the process;
- Be active in creating, rather than reproducing other peoples' knowledge.

The conclusions presented in this thesis may sound brilliantly and even receive commendable words from the linguistic community... However, the real value for the idea presented in this thesis will come in real life, reflected by its usefulness. I, alone, am powerless to bring this idea to life with my budget, but hopefully, one day this idea will see the light and be presented an opportunity to prove its usefulness for language students. Until that day comes, I hope others will acknowledge its importance and even fill the gaps I have forgotten or did not

remember of, improving it and making it even better. Languages evolve, develop... Textbooks should follow.

## ***5. Conclusion***

In the course of the work on this thesis, I came to the conclusion that current approaches in linguoculturology have insufficient practical application in the way to reveal the mechanisms and relations between language and culture. It is also a fact that contemporary linguoculturology lacks sufficient methodological grounds, as well as scientific substantiation. Regarding this, one can notice a clear semi-paradigmatic process going on in Western linguistics, meaning that several paradigms of scientific research are overlapping, the manifestation of which is the emergence and development of linguoculturology. Fairly unknown in Western Europe, with most of the research in this area located in Russia, linguoculturology lies at the junction of numerous and diverse areas of scientific research like ethnolinguistics, cultural studies, semantics, pragmatics, intercultural communication, communication theory, theory of speech acts, language learning etc. This means that linguoculturology is still developing its apparatus and theoretical grounds, which does not mean that applied work should be limited. There is also the question on terminology used with the unexplained elementary positions of the interaction between language and culture, which leads to creating individuals scientific base and terms. Even though linguoculturology's terminological apparatus is still developing along with its methodological base, there are several things we can be sure of: language and culture of every particular people develop synchronically and interdependently; this means that this interdependence is also reflected in the level of cultural developments of a language; all events that take place in society are reflected in the vocabulary, word formation, syntax, the influx of new words etc.; rapid social upheavals can reflect in language, too – as long as the social reality changes, language changes along with it.

Contemporary linguoculturology rests mainly on the teachings of Wilhelm von Humboldt, Sapir–Whorf's hypothesis on linguistics relativity and the theory of the language persona / worldview – all of which are described in the thesis. It is unfortunate to say that linguoculturology hasn't gone far from Humboldt's teaching, while Sapir and Whorf's teachings have been widely attacked in the last century, only to be rediscovered again in this one. Therefore, the main task of contemporary linguoculturology is to escape this vicious circle and turn towards practical use of its findings. Only by delivering visible results,

linguoculturology will be able to emerge from the writings and present how practical processes in language and culture can shape our understanding of their interdependency.

Linguoculturology also comes out as a kind of a breakthrough when it comes to answering the question on how language is learned, apprehended, understood and used. It tries to answer the question on what remains in language after pure linguistic analysis is applied, i.e. to explain what constitutes the living tissue of the language that cannot be described by purely objective means. Inspired by translational and pedagogical practice, along with analysis of communicative miscommunication events, linguoculturology attempts to clarify this question, capturing ever wider areas of language operation.

The introduction of this thesis contains a description of how language and culture interact, how they reflect on the language system, on the worldview of any individual and finally on language learning. By no means this journey through this text was filled with different view on many issues that deal with one thing – how we learn a language, and by doing so, how we learn about the unexplored planes of other people’s worldviews. The national/cultural specifics as an integral part of language worldviews is the subject of research in a wide range of linguistic areas, each of which has designated areas of study of this issue, with its own terminological and methodological apparatus. For example, cognitive linguistics explore cognitive structures and mechanisms of each language, sociolinguistics aims to identify the corresponding factors between language and society etc., and linguoculturology studies the values and experience of the language persona of a given national/cultural community and it is focused on the manifestations of the interaction between language and culture (which prevails mostly within the framework of linguoculturology).

The goal of this dissertation is to use the approaches in linguoculturology and apply them in language teaching. As a result of this text, the fundamental building blocks of a new e-textbook for advanced level language-learning are presented, allowing language students and lecturers embrace the social character of the language system, its conventions which are adopted by native speakers, as well as to become competent nearly as a native speaker. The interaction of language and culture produces thinking that is specific to every language and manifests as a kind of a “cultural label”, which can be described within the organizational structure of the language persona. It should be highlighted that within the organizational structure of every society there are numerous sub-cultures, all of which have a modified cultural label coming from the dominant, mainstream linguaculture, but nevertheless, they are crucial for the extrapolation of linguaculture. There are, of course, difficulties when it comes to

implementing a balanced approach in conducting linguacultural research due to many factors, namely the specifics of the interaction between language and culture, as well as the identification of this interaction and significance. This is the reason why a polycontextual approach in the selection of sub-cultural materials coming from various sources in the linguacultural landscape. A holistic, polytextual, polycontextual approach in the description of linguacultural units in language was presented, as well as a methodological apparatus that helps organize the linguacultural units for use in language-learning e-textbooks.

The novelty introduced in this thesis is the argument that true linguacultural knowledge, epitomized by the knowledge of multiple viewpoints represented in the information coming from the public discourse within one language – can not only improve all aspects of decoding and encoding information and improve background knowledge, but can bring new life in the language classroom. Real understanding requires far more than just remembering words, facts, proper grammar or syntax... Words represent the tip of the iceberg – the linguacultural information that really matters is located underwater and is often not visible to the language student, while the native speaker can be familiar at least of one point of view coming from that information. If words and their meaning can be described as “icebergs”, then one simple, at first thought, word like “democracy”, can have multitude of icebergs in the language sea. Just knowing a word in the target language does not mean one know what that word represents. One can know a word but fail to grasp the concept. By failing to grasp the multitude of meanings and points of view over once concept, one cannot really cannot accurately understand what a particular word means and what implications this misunderstanding inflicts. Simply put, without linguacultural understanding of concepts and according background knowledge, one cannot say that is fully competent for an immersive communication in the target language. Edward D, Hirsch lived to republish his dictionary “Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know” several times. As he writes in his Foreword, *important key to solving the twin problems of learning and literacy is to attain the broadly shared background knowledge I have called ‘cultural literacy’*. The shared common and background knowledge of members of society, enabling them to cooperate in a synchronized notion and making good communication possible – he calls “cultural literacy”. What I call “linguacultural competence/knowledge” is the learning of concepts and polycontextual meanings in another language, making it possible for the language learner to become the “language persona” of the target language, immersing oneself in the full language experience. Even though the realm of linguoculturology may seem to be mystical and still not prepared for the harsh methodological reality science appeals to,

what I am proposing is a systematical tool for all language students that embark on their way to become fluent in the target language of choice. The number of textbooks for advanced language-learning today is significantly lower when compared to the A1-A2 or B1-B2 language textbooks, and those that do exist mostly fail to interest the learner to continue and become a proficient user, let alone linguaculturally competent.

But what may be particularly important is the practical application and usefulness of the proposed e-textbook in this thesis. That is the real test for every idea, no matter how good it may sound. My limited financial possibilities limit me from giving live to this e-textbook but modelling the idea should give you an idea on how it should work in practice. ‘One author – one textbook’ seems to be an outdated concept, as no single being can reflect the linguacultural minimum a language student has to master. As the e-textbook described in this thesis presents an idea where multiple points of view exist within subject, it would be naïve to think that one person can present a multitude of contexts in which one concept operates. Last but not least, learning a language should be a game of intellectual and cultural enrichment and not just plain reproduction of learned vocabulary and grammar. It should be fun. It should be engaging. It should be useful. It should open a world of meanings you’ve never even thought exist. It should be a journey to new parallel universes in our minds!

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