

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,**

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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).

which would influence the second component. The nature of language-culture interaction is represented as a 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  $\diamond$  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.