

9. STATNIC, O. *Optimizarea predării limbii germane prin intermediul strategiilor comunicative*: tz. de doct. în pedagogie. Chișinău: Tipografia UPS „Ion Creangă”, 2013. 141 p.
10. STEEN, G. *The cognitive-linguistic revolution in metaphor studies*. In JR Taylor & J Littlemore (eds). *The Bloomsbury companion to cognitive linguistics*. London, England: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. ISBN: HB: 978-1-4411-9509-8.
11. АФАНАСЬЕВ, А.Н. *Мифы древних славян*. Москва: РИПОЛ Классик, 2014. 290 с. ISBN 978- 985-529-103-0.
12. ПАЛЕЙ, О.И. *Работа с поговорками и поговорками на уроке английского языка в IX классе*. Иностранные языки в школе. №1, 2000. ISSN 5-8822-2241.
13. РАХМАНИНА, М.Б. *Реализация принципа опоры на включенность культуры в процесс обучения в методах обучения иностранным языкам*. Вестник Томского государственного университета, 2006. № 291. С. 239-243. ISBN 5-93386-015-8.

## CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH THE LENS OF STRUCTURALISM AND CULTURALISM

### NOȚIUNEA DE CULTURĂ PRIN LENTILA STRUCTURALISMULUI ȘI CULTURALISMULUI

*Lucia Șchiopu, doctor, conf. univ.  
UPS „Ion Creangă” din Chișinău  
Lucia Șchiopu, PhD associate professor  
SPU „Ion Creangă”, Chisinau  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8342-1385>*

**CZU 008:378**

#### Abstract

Culture is not a collection of data, but is "an attribute of all members of society ... and can create consciousness" capable of constituting a "social construction and personal experience" [4]. This article highlights the features of philosophical schools: culturalism (1960) and structuralism (1970) which defines and approaches the concept of "culture" from various angles; contrasting the active, dynamic capacity to build significant experiences (culturalism) with the anti-humanistic analysis of experiences through the prism of matter or structure. The concept of culture relates the objective structure to the subjective experience of social life.

**Key-words:** culture, culturalism, structuralism, objective structure, subjective experience.

#### Rezumat

Cultura nu reprezintă o culegere de date, ci este „un atribut al tuturor membrilor societății ... și poate crea conștiință” capabilă de a constitui o „construcție socială și o experiență personală”[4]. Acest articol scoate în evidență trăsăturile curentelor filosofice: culturalismul (1960) și structuralismul (1970) care definește și abordează conceptul de ”cultură” din varii unghiuri; contrastând capacitatea activă, dinamică de construire a experiențelor semnificative (culturalismul) cu analiza anti umanistă a experiențelor prin prisma materiei, sau structurii. Conceptul de cultură relaționează structura obiectivă cu experiența subiectivă a vieții sociale.

**Cuvinte- cheie:** cultură, culturalism, structuralism, structură obiectivă, experiență subiectivă.

Many academic disciplines like Anthropology, Literature, History, Geography, Sociology, Politology etc. are approaching culture from different perspectives. In the sociological sense, the term "culture" is denominated as the whole as patterns of thinking, attitude and action that characterize a particular population, including the materialization of certain patterns. Therefore, the concept of culture includes two categories of components:

- Ideal components are beliefs, norms, values, symbols, patterns behavior and actions etc.

- Material components are tools, housing, clothing, means of transport etc.

Culture performs special functions in relation to human social life among which are:

- The function of adaptation, which includes culture providing ideal models and materials standardized adaptation to environmental conditions and more;
- The function of socialization states that human individuals become members of social communities by mastering symbols, language, specific norms by storing, storing and transmission of cultural elements;
- The reproductive function of the community, which ensures the transmission of the data to the next generations;
- The function of cultural individualization that determines the identity of the culture of the society.

The study of a culture is not a gathering of data, it is “an attribute of all the members of society... and can create consciousness” able for “social construction and personal experience” [4, p.8].

Cultural knowledge is made up of meanings that shape the quality and depth of cultural sensitivity and awareness [4, p. 25]. Kramer advocates that culture is a complex network of signs and anyone studying a culture needs to construct their own schemata of knowledge [11]. Byram suggests viewing the agents who study culture through the lens of “insider” or the native speaker and “outsider” the agent who is discovering the culture through the language [4, p. xviii].

There should be mentioned two waves: culturalism (1960s) and structuralism (1970s) that are approaching culture from different angles i.e. contrasting active, dynamic ability of construction of meaningful experiences (culturalism) to anti- humanist analysis of experiences through the prism of the matter of structure.

Structuralism is the school of thought, a general theory of culture and methodology developed by the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss reached its height in the 1960s in France, in which cultures are viewed as systems and deep structures of language that are constituted outside of the intentions of actors. Structuralism outlines the connection between meaning and form and syntax.

Culturalism is the theory that stresses the production of meaning by human beings throughout different historical periods. Williams and Hoggart sustain that Culturalism “relate objective structure to subjective experience”- these two notions giving the concept of culture. Culturalism does not make the difference between the text and society; it is “freely expressive, moralizing in terms of personal experience” acknowledging both “high cultural artistic tradition and working class culture”. The method used was empiricist, pragmatic and descriptive [4, p.9]. Culturalism stresses the empirical work and the Man as the creator of meaningful practices.

Structuralism is an interdisciplinary theoretical and methodological orientation that studies the structure, functions and systems of relationships that characterize objects and processes in contemporary sciences, highlighting the totality in relation to the individual and the synchronicity of facts in relation to evolution.

An inseparable part of culture is the language. Language is defined as a closed system, on which several means of analysis can be applied to highlight the units of which it is composed and the rules for combining the various units. The function of language necessarily presupposes the existence of these rules that control the relationship between those units. Ferdinand de Saussure insists on important oppositions: thus, language represents a social phenomenon produced by memory, while speech is a fact of individual creation.

Hall elucidated in 1980 the distinction between Culturalism and Structuralism emphasizing the strengths of Structuralism: “recognition of determinate conditions and grasp of society as a kind of machine, theorization of culture that is an understanding of relative autonomy decentring of experience” and failure of Structuralism that relies in the ‘transformation’ regarded as the freedom to choose. Marxist Structuralism, seen as a theory of culture measures the “exactly the degree to which texts and cultural practices repeat or challenge the dominant ideology”. It is about the object and subject and ‘total perspective on culture, objective structures and subjective positions’ [4, p.11-12].

A critical stance on Culturalism is brought in the view through structuralism that “rejects humanism and moralizing attitudes”. There is no place for the notion of *culture* which is replaced by *ideology*; the notion of *experience* is replaced with *signs or representations*. Marxist Structuralism based on Althusser’s ideology disseminates the high cultures (ruling class culture) and popular culture (working-class culture) that depend on each other and evolve together within the capitalist economy. It does see the difference between the text and society; it provides autonomy to the text, but “it believes text and society should be understood together” [4, p. 10-11].

During 1970s when it was argued the relation between capitalism and patriarchy, it was established no place for a feminist politics inside Marxist Structuralism and its sense of totality. It is the time for the post- Structuralist trend (1980s) and Cultural Materialism. Post-Structuralism denied the stance of subjectivity, underlied that the subject is the effect of textuality setting the boundaries between ‘the subject as effect of the text and the subject as an empirical reader’. According to Dollimore, Sinfield Cultural Materialism denies the truth, centred on “it insists that culture does not transcend the material forces and relations of production” [4, p.7].

To synthesize Culturalism “elided subject and object ” into an entity, Marxist Structuralism set lines of subjectivity as the product of ideological and hermeneutical structures [4, p.15]; structuralism derives meaning from structures, from a system of signs and structured differences [6]. According to De Saussure (1960) the meaning is an output of conventions organized by signs constituted by signifiers (medium) and signified (meaning), which is produced through a process of reorganization of signs along two structures: the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic, so, meaning is produced through a process of selection. The basic features between culturalism and structuralism can be viewed in Table 1.

Table1. The Basic Features Between Culturalism and Structuralism

<b>Structuralism focuses on</b>	<b>Culturalism focuses on</b>
systems of relations	human relationships

how meaning is constructed	focuses on meaning production
synchronic approach	diachronic approach
culture as an expression of deep structures of language	on interpretation as a way of understanding meaning
objective knowledge	subjective knowledge
culture as an unconscious structure	consciousness and culture as collective concept
experience (is an effect of culture) is a pivotal source for understanding culture	culture as collective categories
people are 'bearers' of structures	

Hall has elaborated a model on how should be understood and approached "culture" in the process of human development. There should be conducted do two things [9]:

- 1) distinguish the content of culture (cultural texts and practices) from its context (its social, political, and economic conditions of possibility)
- 2) develop a model adequate to understanding the context.

Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson as the key practitioners stress on:

- Reflecting on the "culture" as an integral part of our life
- rethinking the term culture independently of its social, political, and economic context
- stress on wisdom, intelligence, abstract thinking.

Structuralism and culturalism are the theories that approach cultural phenomena in relation to society. Structuralism views popular culture through hegemonic ideologies, consumerist capitalism developed by culture industry. Culturalism in its turn stresses the human agency, the material conditions of meaning production.

To conclude, these two theories of culture deploy the concept of culture as an evolving phenomena, as a pattern of interaction between experience and practice versus level of thought and feelings. It is a paradigm of structuring an exploitative economic base inveigle in a certain way of life embroidered by traditions and customs that generate the concept of culture.

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. ADASKOU, K., BRITTEN, D., FAHSI, B . (1990). Design decisions on the cultural content of a Secondary English course for Morocco. *ELT Journal* 44/1: 3-10.
2. BALLARD, B., CLANCHY, J. (1991). Assessment by misconception: cultural influences and intellectual traditions. *Assessing Second Language Writing in Academic Contexts*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex: 19- 36.
3. BARKER, C. (2004). *The Sage Dictionary of Cultural Studies*. London: Sage Publications.
4. BASSNETT, S. (2003). *Studying British Cultures*. New York: Routledge.
5. CONNOR, U.(1996). *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross- cultural Aspects of Second Language Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
6. DE SAUSSURE, FERDINAND.(1966). *Course in General Linguistics* (Edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, Translated by Wade Baskin). New York, Toronto, London: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
7. GUILHERME, M. (2002). *Critical citizens for an intercultural world: Foreign language education ascultural politics*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
8. HAENFLER, R. (2014). *Subcultures: The Basics*. London: Routledge Kegan Paul.

9. HALL, S. ed. (1997). *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage Publications.
10. HOGGART, R. (2009). *The Uses of Literacy*. London: Penguin. 2009.
11. KRAMER, J. (1993). Cultural Studies in English Studies: A German Perspective. *Language, Culture, Curriculum*, vol.6, nr.1, pp. 27- 45.
12. KRAMSCH, C. (1993). *Context and culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
13. McKAY, S. (2002). *Teaching English as an International Language: Rethinking Goals and Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
14. McROBBIE, A. (2008). *The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture and Social Change*. London: Sage Publications.
15. SPRADLEY, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. Belmont: Wadsworth.
16. WILLIAMS, R. (2011). *The Long Revolution*. Wales: Parthian.
17. WILLIS, P. (2000). *The Ethnographic Imagination*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
18. YEGANEH, M., T., Raeesi, H. (2015). Developing Cultural Awareness in EFL Classrooms at Secondary School Level in an Iranian Educational Context. *Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol, 192, 534-542.

## **FORMATION OF SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN TEACHING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT THE UPPER-INTERMEDIATE LEVEL**

### **FORMAREA COMPETENȚEI SOCIOCULTURALE ÎN PREDAREA LIMBII ENGLEZE LA NIVELUL DE CUNOȘTINȚE PRAVANSAT**

*Eraneac Sagoian, dr., conf. univ.,  
UPS „Ion Creangă” din Chișinău*

*Eraneac Sagoian, PhD associate professor  
SPU “Ion Creangă”, Chișinău*

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9812-1094>

*Agunik Sagoyan, prof., grad did. II,  
LT „D.Cantemir”, Chișinău*

*Anna Solodovnicova, prof., Liceul Moldo-Finlandez, Chișinău*

*Anna Solodovnicova, Moldo-Finnis Lyceum, Chișinău*

**CZU 811.111:378.147**

#### **Abstract**

The notable shift of focus in the field of education in more recent years fostered the idea of teaching a foreign language communicatively, that is, acquiring linguistic competence and communicative skills. Our fundamental interest in this article is sociocultural competence, referring to the speaker's knowledge of how to convey messages within social and cultural context including a better understanding of the conventions of language usage in a society. The article deals with the necessity and value of implementation of teaching the sociocultural competence to students of the upper-intermediate level of English language proficiency and its integration into EFL classes in the context of culture, its values and society for successful communication based upon sociocultural knowledge.

**Key-words:** communicative competence, sociocultural competence, foreign language acquisition, English as a foreign language, upper-intermediate level, linguistics

#### **Rezumat**

Deplasarea vizibilă a centrului de interes în domeniul educației a încurajat ideea predării limbilor străine bazate pe competențe. Interesul nostru fundamental pentru acest articol este competența socioculturală care se