Traditional culture in language for specific purposes and its teaching in the university environment

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Abstract The paper deals with language for specific purposes, its definition and classification and its specificities in humanities with an emphasis on the area of traditional culture, which combines several scientific disciplines. We practically applied the acquired knowledge to create a professional trilingual dictionary and an online language course intended for students, but also for experts in the fields of traditional culture. The article describes the processes of their creation and the problems associated with the translation of regionally, historically and linguistically specific Slovak words into English and German. At the same time, it outlines the ways in which the international presentation of Slovak traditional culture in foreign languages could be improved.

Keywords education, foreign language, language for specific purposes, traditional culture

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of industry and technology is closely linked to the rise and spread of specific terms and new concepts. The vocabulary of language for specific purposes (further LSP) is rapidly expanding and subdividing into many specialised areas, the number of which is constantly increasing, creating the problem of adequate structuring of LSP. Very simplistically, LSP can be defined as language enabling communication and understanding between people working in a specific field. The problem of distinguishing between LSP (German: Fachsprache) and ordinary, colloquial language (German: Gemeinsprache) is among main ones. In other aspects of linguistic reflection, the notions of LSP, used mainly in older theoretical approaches, and professional language communication, which appears in more recent conceptions of professional language, resonate. While several branches of science have sophisticated specialist vocabularies (e.g. medicine, engineering, technical branches, law), the similar vocabulary of the humanities is limited, with exception of a few branches. One reason for this is undoubtedly the affinity between terminology of their LSP and everyday language. In foreign language education in a university environment, the acquisition of terminology close to the

field is required. In education at universities we are thus faced with the difficult task of combining the teaching of everyday, communicative language and LSP. An even more difficult situation arises when there is no definition of the professional vocabulary of a given field.

In the article we will focus on the LSP, with the subject of our investigation aimed primarily on the partial field of traditional culture. We describe the theoretical background of the understanding of the concept of LSP in different contexts. Then we will describe the methodological approaches to the definition of vocabulary in the field of traditional culture, which were the basis for our conception of a multilingual dictionary. Our interest in the problem of defining the vocabulary of traditional culture is based on our activities in project KEGA 001UKF-4/2021 Traditional Culture of Slovak Regions in Foreign Language Teaching - Distance Learning. Within the framework of the project, we worked on research and definition of the above-mentioned specialised vocabulary. Then, based on created dictionary, we were able to create didactically prepared texts which serve as a basis for online language course. In the conclusion of the paper, we outline possible application of the selected vocabulary, which in our case is an online-course on the LMS Moodle platform in English and German aimed on strengthening professional skills of students in presenting Slovak traditional culture in international forums.

1. LANGUAGE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

The definition of content of LSP in the cultural studies, with the focus on traditional culture, is preceded by an explanation of the interconnection between the use of professional and common vocabulary. The issue of the definition of LSP has been resonating in linguistic studies since the beginning of the 20th century, being fuelled mainly by the development of industry. In the 1930s, the so-called economic linguistics began to be established. Its task was primarily to lay the theoretical foundations for the teaching of foreign LSP in secondary and higher education. At the same time, representatives of Prague structuralism began to pay attention to professional vocabulary, who, within the framework of the concept of functional stylistics, distinguished between LSP with its own

linguistic means and the way of their use, and economic language as one of the "functional dialects" (Levická & Zumbík, 2019: 569). A more elaborate structure of the LSP can be found in the works of German linguists. In the Slovak environment, there is a tendency to use the term LSP as the equivalent of the term professional style (Levická & Zumbík, 2019: 570).

Since we have identified a sophisticated theory in German linguistics about the content, definition, and delimitation of LSP, we present in the following paragraphs of the paper a brief reflection on this issue from the perspective of the German linguistic milieu. We refer to the codified, basic form of the national language as the standard language. The standard language serves as the universal means of communication of a nation. While standard language is intended for all users, it is characteristic for LSP that a certain degree of professional education or at least a general understanding of the field is required to understand it, since used vocabulary usually only suggest their meaning. Only an expert knows their exact meaning, especially for less common terms. LSP (German: Fachsprache) is closely related to ordinary language (German: Gemeinsprache) and the common vocabulary. A text of LSP does not consist only of specialist expressions, but uses a variety of common linguistic tools, whether at the grammatical, lexical, or syntactic level. Common vocabulary is understood by Möhn and Pelka (1984) as a variant of the national standard language (German: Gesamtsprache), which all members of a given nation know at approximately the same level. Ordinary language, in written or oral form, primarily serves the communication of general topics of everyday, social and public life.

LSP uses both the general linguistic basis of standard language (vocabulary and grammar) and professional terminology. It is understood as the sum of all linguistic means that are used in the field defined by the scope of a certain profession - scientific field (Felber, 1986: 133). An essential part of professional texts is a vocabulary (professional vocabulary, terms). A term is generally understood as the naming of a concept in the system of some scientific and technical field; however, from the point of view of communication theory, attention is drawn to their functionality, i.e., that they are means of professional expression. A term is an element of vocabulary denoting a concept defined by its definition and place in the system of concepts of a particular scientific field (Imrichová, 2014: 209).

In older conceptions, the meaning of LSP, according to Schmidt (1969: 17), is understood as a means of optimal communication about a subject among experts, and it is characterised by a specific expert vocabulary and specific norms for the selection, use, and frequency of lexical and grammatical tools of ordinary language. He further argues that technical language is not an independent manifestation of language, but is actualised in professional texts, which, in addition to the LSP, always contain elements of ordinary language.

Among more recent conceptions of the content focus of LSP in the German linguistic environment, we can mention the one of Hoffmann (1987: 53). According to him LSP represents the sum of all linguistic tools used in a technically definable field of communication to ensure understanding between people working in that field. Paintner & Schmäling (2019: 23) argue that a universally valid definition of LSP is neither possible nor meaningful against the background of the evident professional and thus linguistic complexity and difference of various (academic) disciplines and their technical and linguistic characteristics. In this context, they find it more appropriate to speak of a model of linguistic for special purposes that combines systemic linguistic, pragmalinguistic and cognitive linguistic elements. In this model, systems of technical linguistic features with their lexical and morphosyntactic peculiarities, as well as their use in oral or written communicative situations and the cognitive and emotional assumptions of the producer and the recipient are equally adequately considered (compare Roelcke 2010: 14).

The most recent conception is the cognitive-linguistic functional model (from the 1990s to the present). In addition to human cognition and knowledge and its actual processing, this model represents certain specialised disciplinary communicative functions such as abstraction and concretisation, association, and dissociation, as well as internalising and externalising the transfer of knowledge to the centre of scientific interest. In this process, applied communicative functions such as exactness and unambiguity, but also clarity, intelligibility or economy, receive a new evaluation, which is often diametrically opposed to the evaluation from the perspective of the systemic language model (Roelcke, 2019).

1.1 Horizontal and vertical division of LSP

In the division of LSPs, horizontal and vertical divisions are used. According to Hoffman (1987: 107), the horizontal division corresponds to the extra-linguistic classification into communicative spheres used to delimit the language of the different disciplines among each other. This is the LSP within economics, law, medicine, or technology, which can then be specified within narrower professional domains, e.g., in medicine we can define surgical, dental, or psychiatric professional vocabulary. There is no comprehensive and uniform horizontal division, as new fields of science and their associated specialist vocabulary are constantly emerging.

The vertical division is implemented within the individual disciplines. This division is not uniform, it depends on the applied criteria and the disciplines. According to the terminology handbook of the KÜDES publishing house (2002: 19), the criteria of the subdivision can be the degree of expertise, the participants of the communication, the mode of communication (oral, written). The most widespread is the vertical subdivision according to Hoffmann (1987: 65 – 66), who lists several distinguishing criteria, such as the degree of abstraction, the external expression, and the environment of communication. Based on the degree of abstraction, he describes five levels of vertical subdivision of professional languages.

- *The highest degree of abstraction* (German: höchste Abstraktionsstufe) is used by experts as a means of communication to express theoretical technical content in professional areas.
- *A very high degree of abstraction* (Ger.: sehr hohe Abstraktionsstufe) is used among experts and workers in certain fields to communicate theoretical and practical professional content.
- *A high degree of abstraction* (Ger.: hohe Abstraktionsstufe) is used as a common language with a very high proportion of technical terminology.
- *The low level of abstraction* (Ger.: niedrige Abstraktionsstufe) represents a common language with a high proportion of technical terminology in the production sphere.
- *A very low degree of abstraction* (Ger.: sehr niedrige Abstraktionsstufe) represents a common language with a low proportion of technical terminology by which content is communicated between laypeople.

As another example, the vertical division of professional languages according to Ischreyt (Fluck, 1996: 20 – 21) divides professional language into three professional and linguistic levels:

- *Workshop language* (Ger.: Werkstattsprache) is characterised by the use of professional terminology mainly from the environment of technical production, it is characterised by the use of many terms from the field of craft production.
- *Scientific professional language* (Ger.: wissenschaftliche Fachsprache), which is characterised by a high degree of abstraction, objectivity, precision, and accuracy. Hahn mentions the *theoretical language* (German: Theoriesprache), referred to as the language of science, which exists mainly in the written form of language, and is used mainly in the field of science and technology, and therefore possesses the corresponding linguistic tools.
- *Professional colloquial language* (Ger.: Fachliche Umgangsprache) serves the communication of professionals and contains elements of both professional and ordinary language. *Distribution language* (Ger.: Verteilerssprache) could be characterised as a language in the technical-industrial field. It is a means of communication in warehousing, sales and marketing and is in closer contact with advertising language.

2. DEFINITION OF SPECIALISED VOCABULARY IN TRADITIONAL CULTURE

As is evident from the above attributes, technical-industrial, manufacturing, scientific, and business terminology dominate in the vocabulary of LSP. Areas of the humanities, such as cultural studies, ethnology or ethics, are not given sufficient space. However, it cannot be argued that these fields do not have a specialist vocabulary. Consequently, the lack of definition of these fields affects the teaching of foreign LSP. Within the focus of our paper, we will attempt to incorporate a partial field of cultural studies: traditional culture, into horizontal and vertical subdivisions, and then present the procedures we used to create a terminological basis for the creation of a trilingual dictionary of terms from traditional culture.
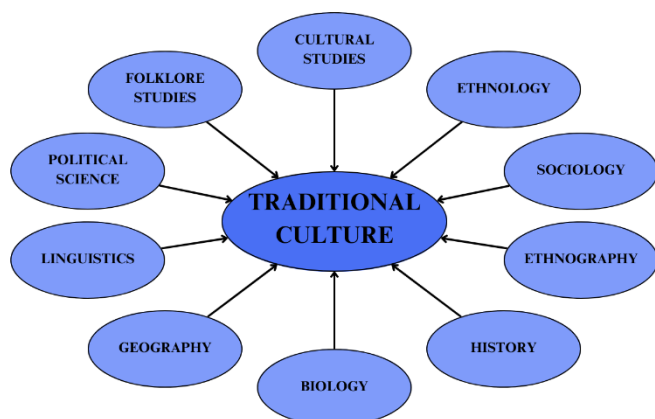
Traditional culture is most easily defined by defining the individual parts of the term. While culture has received countless definitions over the decades of research (Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) collected over 160 definitions from English-language sources alone in publication named Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions), one of the most widely used definitions to this day is that of Tylor (1871: 1), which states that culture is a complex whole including 'knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'. In practical terms, it can be argued that culture is a phenomenon that encompasses all aspects of human creative activity. Thus, in addition to abstract constructs such as morals, skills, or customs, it also includes material artefacts of anthropogenic origin (from tools to money, clothing, food to architecture). The fact that a particular part of a culture is traditional, refers to its mode of transmission. Tradition means the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next, primarily by oral transmission. In this way, we can distinguish, for example, traditional log houses from socialist prefabricated housing.

Given that despite the narrowing of culture to the traditional, it is still a broad concept, its study requires interdisciplinarity and examination from different perspectives. The disciplines most widely dealing with traditional culture include cultural studies, ethnology and ethnography, with folklore studies dealing with the folkloric part of it, but some aspects are also dealt with by history (the development of culture at the background of other events, migrations, trade routes), geography (the influence of natural conditions on the development of cultures, the use of land), sociology (traditional social hierarchies, social classes), linguistics (linguistic expressions, dialects, vernaculars), biology (the relationship between humans and indigenous flora and fauna) or even political science (state systems, forms of government). Therefore, the horizontal classification of the lexis of traditional culture is also problematic. Although most of it comes from the fields of cultural studies and ethnology, other disciplines cannot be omitted. This intermingling of disciplines also gives the specialist lexis associated with traditional culture not only expressions from all fields, but also several specific features. On the one hand, there is the archaic and colloquial part of the lexis, on the other hand, there is the exactness and expertise coming from different scientific fields, and thus we can assign it to the professional colloquial language, but also to the scientific language.

2.1 Attributes of the definition of LSP in traditional culture

The intention of our research, which was carried out within the framework of the project activities, was to define the professional terms of traditional culture in Slovak, then to search for their equivalents in German and English. We used the defined terms in the realisation of a dictionary of traditional culture in English, German and Slovak. The summarised terminology was subsequently used in the conception of didactically processed texts in foreign languages. The first step was to define the LSP of traditional culture. The characteristic features of a LSP are precision, unambiguity, conceptuality, and systematicity (Fluck, 1985: 22). In the case of defining the LSP of traditional culture, we encounter the problem outlined above that the overlapping with the general colloquial style is very strong, the relevant concepts are familiar to the laypeople and are part of the active or passive vocabulary. Often, regionally specific terms are found in the language of traditional culture (e.g., *drevenica, žinčica…*).

The task of graduates of cultural studies and professionals in cultural institutions is to be able to translate or express, if necessary, also such specific terms that are not part of everyday language. For this purpose, we have specified the basic concepts of the professional vocabulary in traditional culture, to which we have subsequently assigned their equivalents in English and German. Professional publications and information from museums of traditional culture served for the initial definition of the terms. The actual realisation of the dictionary was preceded by the defining of the main categories

of traditional culture terms. The categories we investigated were: construction - clothing - traditional diet and cuisine – ways of making a living - traditions. The selected categories reflect the professional focus of each aspect of traditional culture. The division is presented in the following table.

Construction	Clothing	Diet
Profane buildings	**Men's clothing**	**Food procurement**
Urban dwellings Village dwellings	Trousers Shirt Belt Apron Hat	Gathering Hunting Honey picking Farming Husbandry
Sacral buildings	**Women's clothing**	**Diet of cereals and legumes**
Temple Rotunda Cross Chapel	Shroud Bodice Apron Skirt Bonnet	Types of legumes Types of cereals Porridges Cakes Types of dishes
Technical buildings	**Children's clothing**	**Dairy products**
Mills Bridges Wells Mines	Diaper Shirt Bonnet	Milk Cheese Preparations Dairy dishes
Farm buildings	**Festive Clothing**	**Meat**
Stables Pigsty Barn	Circlet Embroidered sleeves Coat	Pork Beef Poultry Meat dishes
Museums	**Materials**	**Food preparation**
Ethnographic Mining Museums of traditional culture	Wool Linen Leather	Cooking Stewing Baking
	Methods of production	**Food preservation**
	Weaving Sewing Embroidering	Drying Smoking
	Decoration	**Drinks**
	Blueprinting Embroidery Lace	Boiled sheep whey Juniper spirit

WAYS OF MAKING A LIVING	TRADITIONS
Crafts associated with agriculture	**Annual**
Viticulture Pastoralism Hunting Fishing	*Spring* Morena Easter Maypoles *Summer* Solstice Feast of St. John *Autumn* Harvest Festival *Winter* St. Lucy Christmas
Crafts associated with woodworking	**Family**
Woodworking Carpentry Woodcarving	Christening Transition to Adulthood Wedding Funeral
Crafts associated with ironworking	**Work**
Blacksmithing Tinkering Bell making	Building a house Cattle drive Harvest
Crafts associated with transport	
Rafting Coachmanship	
Other crafts	
Saffron production Pipe making Tanning	

We further subdivided these thematic categories into sub-categories, for example, in the ways of making a living category, based on the available literature, we identified different types of traditional crafts, e.g.: crafts related to agriculture, wood and iron processing, transportation, and other specific types of crafts.

We then expanded each sub-category with relevant terms that were related to the issue. We selected appropriate number of terms, different for each category. In the case of crafts, we proceeded as follows:

- The name of the person who practiced the craft;
- The place where the craft was practiced;
- The activity he performed;
- The raw materials that were necessary for the craft;
- The tools that the person used in performing the craft;
- The products that his work produced.

We were able to assign most terms to the raw materials, tools and products. We were able to assign the fewest terms to the subcategories place and occupation name.

	Person	Place	Activity	Material	Tool	Product
SK	kováč	vyhňa	kuť	kov železo uhlie oceľ	kladivo kliešte mech nákova	podkova motyka klinec meč
GER	Schmied	Esse	schmie-den	Erz Metall Kohle Stahl	Hammer Zanke Schmie-debalg Amboss	Hufeisen Hacke Nagel Schwert
EN	black-smith	forge	to forge	ore iron coal steel	hammer tongs bellows anvil	horseshoe hoe nail sword

In this way we have created a thesaurus of traditional culture concepts in the Slovak language. Nouns and verbs have a dominant position in it. To a lesser extent, adjectives and phrases occur. Other parts of speech are absent in the dictionary. Below is an example of the breakdown for the category construction with the subcategories and further division.
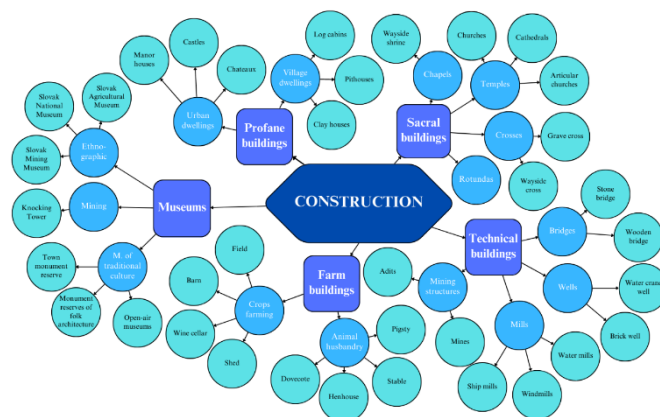
We used various publicly available dictionaries or other foreign language corpora, and we also verified the correctness of the terms by searching for images on the Internet. Due to the specificity of lexis related to traditional culture, we encountered several types of problems with translation. Some expressions do not exist in the foreign language since the named phenomenon is not found in the culture of the given nation (e.g., *bryndza* or *tajch* have no equivalent in English). Other objects and phenomena exist in the cultures but do not have a specific one-word name. In these cases, we have either translated the terms in a descriptive way or retained the Slovak expression. In specific cases, we combined both variants, using the Slovak term in the descriptive way (e.g., we translated the word *guba* into English descriptively as woollen cloth with long woollen strands on the outside, and in the case of name of the craft *gubárstvo* we used the Slovak term guba handicraft for simplicity). When translating the terms, we also encountered the problem of the meaning shift of the term in a foreign language, which probably stems from the cultural and historical specifics of the traditional Slovak culture (*Beánie* - a student festival in the Slovak language context, *die Beanie* - a cotton cap). Another specificity are terms that are differentiated in Slovak, but foreign languages know only

one wider term. These are mainly names of family members (e.g., English and German do not differentiate between the female relatives *teta*, *tetka*, *ujčiná*, *stryná*, they use only one term for all of them). This regional phenomenon of defining Slovak traditional culture and its cultural and social specifics was realised in the context of translation by using a universal term, or we used its descriptive explanation.

The most distinctive feature of the identified terms from traditional culture is archaicity, which can be seen, for example, in terms denoting extinct professions, ways of processing raw materials, or parts of clothing (*fajkár* - pipe maker, *voštinár* - beeswax harvester, *rubáš* - shroud). Archaicity is closely related to regional and historical-cultural specificity. Many of the terms are part of the passive vocabulary in the Slovak language and are familiar to the public, but they do not have any specific content attached to them (e.g., *rubáš* - a garment, *fajkár* - one who made pipes, *jarmo* - work in the field). We tried to translate archaic forms of some words that have now been replaced by newer expressions (e.g., *pobehlica*) in a similar archaic form; if we did not find such an equivalent, we translated the word with a contemporary expression. In order to determine the adequacy of the translation of archaic terms that do not belong to the active foreign language vocabulary, we used the method of multiple verifications through historical documents as well as through research. Paradoxically, we experienced the least problems with highly specialised terms (autochthonous, socialisation) since these terms often have the same origin (especially in Latin) and only their form changes based on language.

3. CONCLUSION

In general, LSP has its own specific features that distinguish it from ordinary speech. In addition, each scientific discipline adds to it characteristics of its own, adapting it to its own needs and thus simplifying its use. The field of traditional culture is more specific in its broad interdisciplinarity because it combines the characteristics of the LSPs of several fields and, in addition to these, combines not only ordinary colloquial language but also archaic and historic vocabulary. When translating terminology, experts in this field encounter several problems which they are not always able to resolve adequately (e.g., *modrotlač* is often mistranslated into English as blueprint with the presumption of simplicity). With the increasing emphasis nowadays on the internationalisation of science, it is not only necessary to be able to research thoroughly and professionally, but also to present research results in a foreign language accurately. This is one of the reasons why the Slovak-English-German Dictionary of Terms from Traditional Culture was created.

Another reason is the improvement of higher education in the fields of traditional culture research. If students are already exposed to the correct equivalents of words in a foreign language, this can only increase the quality of their publications or other scientific results in their future. For the same reason, a course aimed at educating students in the field of traditional culture in a foreign language has also been created. To make it more attractive and accessible, we have chosen a non-traditional form of an online course in LMS Moodle with interactive exercises. It is primarily intended for students of culture and tourism management, but at least some parts of the course are also applicable in the fields of cultural studies,

ethnology, folklore studies, etc. The course is available in English and German and consists of 38 lessons thematically divided into five areas - Slovak traditional culture, basic concepts of traditional culture, Slovak traditional food, Slovak folk architecture and its preservation, Slovak folklore festivals. In each lesson, students will get an overview of the most important concepts and terms related to the topic, but they will also improve their grammar and communication skills. A short glossary of the used terms is also included for better orientation.

We are convinced that in today's globalised world it is necessary not only to obtain in-depth and accurate expert information, but also to be able to disseminate it adequately and professionally in the scientific community in Slovakia and abroad. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasise the teaching of foreign languages specialised in particular scientific disciplines. We assume that the dictionary created by us can serve as a starting material for the creation of a comprehensive dictionary of traditional culture terms, which will make the presentation of Slovak specifics in the multicultural world more effective and easier.

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