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## **INTEGRATION OF CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN THE INSTRUCTION OF ROMANIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: STRATEGIES AND METHODS**

This paper explores the integration of cultural elements in the instruction of Romanian as a foreign language, emphasizing the interplay between language, culture, and intercultural competence. Drawing on prior empirical research and a comparative analysis of Romanian language textbooks, the study reveals significant deficiencies in the representation of cultural content and the predominance of textual over multimodal cultural forms. Findings indicate that teachers frequently serve as the primary mediators of cultural knowledge, compensating for the lack of comprehensive cultural materials. The paper argues that authentic cultural content, particularly artistic, folkloric, and musical dimensions, must be systematically integrated into Romanian language teaching through innovative, multimodal, and student-centered approaches to foster intercultural awareness and communicative competence.

*Key words:* Romanian as a foreign language, cultural integration, intercultural competence, language pedagogy, textbook analysis

### **INTRODUCTION**

The inseparable connection between culture and language suggests various research trajectories that emphasize either language or culture, their interrelationship, reciprocity, or the varying degrees of influence each factor exerts, particularly in the context of learning and acquiring foreign languages. Culture encompasses its constituent elements, which include tangible products, creations, artistic works, and human performances. Thus, we can assert that the elements of culture comprise all that individuals create and utilize for communal

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living. Cultural elements can be categorized based on their complexity, primarily through the creation of objects, the demonstration of skills, and behaviors that are evident in lifestyle practices. Subsequently, with enhanced understanding, the interconnections among individuals, organizations, institutions, statuses, occupations, activities, and regulations (norms, laws, and customs) are elucidated, extending to more abstract and intricate cultural manifestations such as spirituality, beliefs, values, moral concepts, and the essence of existence (Branković, 2009: 25). Civilization can define culture as a compilation of diverse behavioral norms, beliefs, communication methods, and value systems—essentially, the historically evolved explicit and implicit life patterns that consistently serve as potential guides for individuals' actions and conduct within social communities, forming the basis of their institutions and worldview (Bugarski, 2005). When discussing culture in a comprehensive manner, encompassing both the material and spiritual assets of a community, it is evident that we are addressing it in three pertinent dimensions: anthropological, relating to lifestyle; civilizational, emphasizing physical and mental labor and its creative outcomes; and behavioral, concentrating on behavioral patterns (Bugarski, 2005: 15). According to Sapir, language is primarily a cultural or social product and must be understood as such. Among all cultural elements, it is reasonable to surmise that language was the first to attain a sophisticated form, and its fundamental refinement is a prerequisite for the advancement of culture in its entirety (Sapir, 1958). Claire Kramsch posits that language is profoundly connected not only to contemporary and historical cultures but also to the imaginative culture that influences individuals' decisions and actions more significantly than we might realize. Moreover, language constitutes a system of signs recognized for its cultural significance. Language represents the social identity of speakers. The prohibition of its use is perceived by its speakers as an insult to their culture and social identity. Consequently, we can assert that language embodies cultural reality (Kramsh, 1998). In the context of the interplay between culture and language in foreign language education, prior research indicates that a prevalent belief is that one of the most effective methods for acquiring a foreign language is to establish friendships with native speakers and engage in communication with them in that language. Numerous studies indicate that students ought to engage in foreign/L2 social interactions beyond the classroom setting (Kurata, 2011: 6). Multiple viewpoints on L2 learning as a social practice exist, including sociocultural theory and language socialization, both of which typically regard L2 learning as a socially constructed phenomenon through interaction in contextual activities (Kurata, 2011: 10). Moreover, foreign and second language instruction and acquisition is unequivocally the most advanced

sector of applied linguistics. The concept that language acquisition should extend beyond mere vocabulary and grammatical structures, incorporating the principle of communicative competence derived from sociolinguistics, has emerged as a more favorable objective than linguistic precision, thereby elevating the significance of culture in the learning process (Mišić Ilić, 2004: 10).

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CULTURE AS A PART OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

We assert that culture must invariably be integrated into language instruction, regardless of the intended outcomes (Ivanić, Branište, 2024). Furthermore, the methods by which culture is incorporated, taught, and presented are of equal significance in all forms of foreign or second language education. Consequently, culture-oriented foreign language instruction promotes students' critical analysis of their own cultural norms as well as those of the target culture. According to the intercultural approach, acquiring a foreign language facilitates engagement with diverse values and norms, thus relativizing the universality of one's own culture. This fosters intercultural competence, encompassing the analysis and assessment of one's own culture, alongside the acknowledgment of other distinct cultures as equal and significant (Inosavljević Vučetić, Krstić, 2017: 483). This process necessitates continuous engagement and "negotiation" with other members concerning the conceptualization of shared experiences and the utilization of language (Sharifian, 2007).

Sharifian asserts that learners obtain schemas, categories, and metaphors from both linguistic and non-linguistic experiences. In this context, second language acquisition may become considerably more intricate, depending on the degree to which the cultural frameworks associated with the learner's native language intersect with those typically linked to the foreign languages. During this process, learners may encounter a minimum of four potential scenarios:

1. The second/foreign language they are acquiring does not typically represent certain cultural conceptualizations.
2. The second/foreign language possesses terms for conceptualizations that only partially correspond with those of the learners.
3. The second/foreign language conveys conceptualizations that are absent from the cultural cognition the learners initially utilize.

4. Both the second/foreign and the first/native language express analogous conceptualizations (Sharifian, 2007: 47).

Experiencing a foreign language and its associated culture constitutes an encounter with novelty and divergence, frequently eliciting stress responses such as heightened anxiety, insecurity, indecision, fear of the unknown, and skepticism regarding one's acquired knowledge. Comprehending foreign languages entails engaging with content from a different cultural community. Gardner highlights that language learning extends beyond mastering a linguistic code; it requires students to internalize words, sounds, and structures as elements of another culture. Consequently, learners' attitudes toward the target language community significantly affect their ability to incorporate elements of that language (Gardner, 1985: 6). Other scholars have contended the intricate interconnection between language and culture; while Boas primarily regarded language as a reflection of thought and culture, with only occasional direct influence, Sapir acknowledged language as a potent shaping force, recognizing its role as a creative symbolic instrument in the interpretation of experience. Effective learning necessitates that learners navigate between linguistic systems while recognizing the culture that underpins them (Morgan, Cain, 2009: 6). To fully comprehend the essence and role of language, we must examine culture. The interrelation between language and culture is so profound that cultural distinctions surface even at the syntactic level, influencing categories such as gender, animacy, number, intimacy, or formality. Language, therefore, functions less as an autonomous code and more as a representational system of cultural meaning (Brooks, 1975: 43). The integration of culture in second-language teaching is essential, since successful communication requires not only linguistic skills but also awareness of cultural norms and expectations. Beyond language acquisition, such instruction fosters intercultural understanding while engaging students through their interest in the lives and perspectives of native speakers (Chastain, 1976). In Serbia, the integration of culture into foreign language instruction currently encounters numerous longstanding obstacles. The intricate nature of this relationship indicates that the successful integration of cultural topics in foreign language education is contingent upon numerous factors, with the proficiency of educators and the caliber of textbooks and supplementary teaching resources being paramount (Pavlović, Petrović, 2018: 461). Despite considerable efforts over recent decades to enhance the inclusion of cultural topics in foreign language education, challenges persist in their implementation, particularly concerning the teacher's role, which is a crucial aspect of this dynamic within the teaching context.

Students should be able to identify various cultural patterns in classes to effectively navigate the new frameworks that impact behavior and communication (Durić, 2022: 79).

### THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE IN ROMANIAN CLASSES

The foreign language in question is distinctive due to its multifaceted nature, as Romanian is utilized, acquired, and spoken in Serbia as a native tongue, a second language, and a foreign language. It is one of the languages spoken by national minorities in Vojvodina, predominantly utilized by Romanians in the Serbian Banat, although Romanians also reside in other regions of Serbia, particularly along the border with the neighboring country (Durić, 2024: 24). In our previous studies, including this one, we examine the Romanian language as a foreign language, which distinctly signifies a divergent methodology and research concepts that facilitate comparisons with other foreign languages and their mutual influences. The educational framework significantly underrepresents Romanian culture, especially for international students, which is particularly common in this context (Durić, 2024: 25). Consequently, it is imperative to adopt an alternative approach and transition to a more comprehensive cultural strategy. Teaching Romanian as a foreign language inevitably involves integrating the cultural dimension, since the Balkans become a symbolic construct reflected in diverse cultural and literary discourses (Ivanić, Durić, 2025) which is a very important cultural component. Thus, the rich and layered Romanian cultural heritage explains why literature and art are essential resources for language learning (Ivanić, Durić, 2025). Contemporary students anticipate a novel, modern methodology that incorporates up-to-date data concerning both educational resources and the delivery of cultural and linguistic information. Regarding instructional resources for acquiring the Romanian language, students have access solely to Romanian-language textbooks, frequently lacking exercise sheets and supplementary materials, with cultural content significantly minimized, which will be elaborated upon in the subsequent section. Beginners depend significantly on the teacher, whereas advanced learners are anticipated to possess comprehensive grammatical knowledge, proficient lexical usage, and contextual understanding of the entirety of the language material (Durić, 2024: 26). The context presents a significant challenge, especially when we discuss and teach language without considering its cultural context. Regrettably, resources such as textbooks, manuals, and workbooks for learning Romanian as a foreign language are lacking in sufficient, informative, and up-to-date cultural content (Durić, 2024: 26). It is

crucial to illustrate the importance of Romanian language teachers as foreign language educators, given the methodological and cultural sensitivities involved. The teacher serves as a mediator and initial point of contact between the two cultures, effectively presenting Romanian culture and facilitating its integration for the students, thereby ensuring that the language acquisition process occurs organically and with intent (Ivanić, Durić, 2022: 118). The teacher is tasked with identifying suitable methods and resources that facilitate the effective integration of cultural elements in Romanian language instruction, necessitating proper teacher training and relevant prior education encompassing interculturality. The integration of cultural components in language instruction is predominantly facilitated by textbooks, worksheets, manuals, and dictionaries that incorporate cultural elements within their curricula (lessons, exercises, assessments), which is essential for effective intercultural education (Ivanić, Durić, 2022: 119). Ultimately, it is imperative to facilitate the incorporation of the aforementioned elements into instructional practices and educational resources, particularly when the foundational teaching materials are either entirely devoid of these elements or lack them to an adequate degree.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS ON CULTURE IN ROMANIAN CLASSES

This section will present all current findings related to Romanian culture, cultural elements in Romanian language instruction, and interculturality, which serve as the foundation for subsequent research on these subjects. Cultural elements present a challenging aspect in the instruction of Romanian as a foreign language, beginning with the quality of textbooks and educational resources. In 2022, research was undertaken, serving as the foundation for more comprehensive studies and the composition of a monograph on the didacticization of cultural elements in Romanian language textbooks for foreign learners in the subsequent year. The study focused on analyzing the content and evaluating the representation of cultural elements in textbooks for learning Romanian as a foreign language at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad (Ivanić, Durić, 2022: 114). It involved the examination of six textbooks to assess the extent of cultural representation across selected categories (landmarks, tourism, education, art, tradition, and sport) and the manner in which these elements are presented within the texts (Ivanić, Durić, 2022: 119). An initial study was undertaken regarding the form and content of cultural elements in the context of learning Romanian as a foreign language, with all data sourced from the same corpus of textbooks (refer to Table 1).

<i>Book title</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Year of Publication</i>	<i>Publisher</i>
Limba română – Manual pentru studenți străini, Anul pregătitor – Semestrul I	Grigore Brâncuș, Adriana Ionescu, Manuela Saramandu	2003	Editura Universității din București
RLS Româna ca limbă străină, Caiete didactice, A1+	Elena Platon	2012	Editura Casa Cărții de Știință
Manual de limba română ca limbă străină (RLS) A1–A2	Elena Platon, Ioana Sonea, Dina Vilcu	2012	Editura Casa Cărții de Știință
Puls – Manual de limba română pentru străini, Curs A1–A2	Daniela Kohn	2009	POLIROM
Cours de langue roumaine	Boris Cazacu, Clara Georgeta Chiosa, Valeria Guțu Romalo, Matilda Caragiu Marioțeanu, Sorina Bercescu	1978	Editura didactică și pedagogică București
Limba română pentru străini nivel A1–A2	Cristina Dafinoiu, Veronica Nedelcu, Laura Pascale, Lucia Opreanu	2020	Editura Eurodidactica

**Table 1.** Textbook corpus for the preliminary survey on cultural elements

The primary findings from the initial research of this nature affirm the author's observations, specifically that cultural elements are inadequately represented in the aforementioned textbooks for learning Romanian as a foreign language. All data were categorized according to their frequency of occurrence across various tasks and lessons, facilitating a comparative analysis to illustrate the overall representation of cultural elements in the teaching material, which also served as the research model for the subsequent monograph. The initial research focused on cultural elements, specifically the names of renowned individuals (athletes, artists, historical figures), landmarks in Romania (historic buildings, monuments, streets, etc.), traditions and customs (national cuisine, lifestyle, beliefs, etc.), prominent tourist destinations (resorts, hotels, natural resources, etc.), as well as proverbs, quotes, and folk songs that constitute the oral and written culture of the Romanian populace (Ivanić, Durić, 2022: 120). Initial research on form and content revealed inconsistencies and deficiencies. The cultural elements were categorized based on their form and content as follows:

1. Text (shorter, longer)
2. Image (photo, illustration)
3. Image and text (an assembly of imagery and text that more accurately elucidates a particular cultural subject)
4. Quotation (sayings, proverbs, brief excerpts from literature) (Ivanić, Durić, 2022:123).

According to the preliminary research data, cultural elements predominantly appeared in textual format (52.9%), with a majority in shorter text (75.6%), whereas longer text and quotations were considerably less prevalent (24%). Pictorial representations in textbooks predominantly appeared as images (82%), followed by illustrations (12.7%), and least frequently as a combination of image and text (4.4%) (Ivanić, Durić, 2022: 127). The content of cultural elements was delineated through the preliminary categories, revealing that the predominant category, surpassing *Landmarks* (24.5%) and *Tradition* (21.3%), is *Art* (37.4%), primarily due to its inclusion of all forms of artistic expression found in literature. The categories with the least representation were *Education* (0.4%) and *Sport* (0.3%), a notable finding (Ivanić, Durić, 2022: 127). In the preliminary research, we began to classify the textbooks based on the form and content of the identified cultural elements, revealing varying percentages among the texts. It became evident that certain textbooks contained minimal cultural elements, indicating an unequal distribution and potentially flawed conclusions regarding their prevalence. This discrepancy prompted a more comprehensive investigation on the subject, as detailed in the monograph.

The analysis of the relationship between culture and language, particularly concerning the Romanian language and culture in the specified monograph, required the assembly of a complex corpus. The pertinent textbooks primarily comprised older editions in various foreign languages, which were exceedingly challenging to locate in both printed and digital formats (Ivanić, Durić, 2023: 47). The foundational corpus for the analysis of cultural elements comprised textbooks and manuals for learning Romanian as a foreign language from various countries (Bulgaria, Russia, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America), alongside Romanian publications that constituted the corpus of prior research. The entire corpus encompassed materials ranging from levels A1-A2 to B1 (refer to Table 2) (Ivanić, Durić, 2023: 48). Table 2 presents all the titles utilized for research in the composition of the monograph, excluding those from prior work to prevent redundancy.

<i>Book title</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Year of Publication</i>	<i>Publisher</i>
ABC pentru România; Manual de limba română pentru străini Avansați	Otilia Hedeșan, Elena Jebelean, Florentina Leucuția	2012	Tipografia Partoș
Bun venit în România! Manual de limba română pentru străini - Începători	Otilia Hedeșan, Elena Jebelean, Florentina Leucuția	2012	Tipografia Partoș
Bun venit în România! Manual de limbă română și de orientare culturală pentru străini	Otilia Hedeșan, Elena Jebelean, Florentina Leucuția, Nicoleta Mușat, Dana Percec, Corina Popa	2008	MIRTON
Colloquial Romanian – The Complete Course for Beginners – Third Edition	Dennis Deletant, Ramona Gönczöl- Davies	2002	Routledge
Il romeno senza sforzo	Vincent Iluțiu	2002	Assimil Italia
Introduction to Romanian	George O. Seiver	1953	Hafner Publishing Company
Kezdők román nyelvkönyve	Helen Davies	2021	Holnap Kiadó
Le roumain – Langue, Littérature, Civilisation	Valeriu Rusu	1992	OPHRYs
Le roumain sans peine	Valeriu Rusu	1989	Assimil France
Limba română – Curs superior	Zaiunčkovski Jurij Petrovič, Repina Tamara Aleksandrovna	1989	Высшая школа
Limba română de bază. Manual pentru studenții străini	Ana Dorobăț , Mircea Fotea	1999	Institutul European
Limba română=Limba străină; Curs intensiv pentru studenții străini din anul pregătitor	Nicoleta Mihaela Ștefan	2013	Editura Universitaria
MANUAL DE LIMBA ROMÂNĂ pentru adultii Beneficiari de Protecție Internațională în România și Străini din afara Uniunii Europene – Nivel A1, A2, B1	Andreea Floari, Daniela Muntean, Daniela Stoicescu, Ioana Barbu	2019	Fundația Schottener Servicii Sociale

Metodo Pratico da Lingua Romena	Fernando V. Peixoto da Fonseca	1944	Editorial Gleba
Parlons roumain – Langue et culture	Gilbert Fabre	1991	L'Harmattan
ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ КУРС РУМЫНСКОГО ЯЗЫКА	A. C. САДЕЦКАЯ	1962	ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО ИНСТИТУТА МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ
Quiero Aprender Rumano – Vreau să Învăţ Româna – La Guía de Rumano en español	David Martínez Montero	2006-2007	DMM
Romanian Reference Grammar	Cristina N. Hoffman	1989	U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Institute
Romanian Verb Handbook	Ronald Feldstein	2004	Indiana University Press
Romanian grammar	Dana Cojocaru	2003	SEELRC
Romanian: An Essential Grammar	Ramona Gönczöl- Davies	2008	Routledge
Román nyelvkönyv – nemzeti tankönyvkiadó	Lucia Borza	1997	Regisztr Kiadó és Nyomda Kft
Román nyelvtan alaktan	Jeno Farkas	2019	Palamart Könyvkiadó
Română cu sau fără profesor	Liana Pop	1991	Echinox
Rumano de cada día – Româna de fiecare zi	Stan Nechifor, Javier Lorente	2007	Difusión, Centro de Investigación y Publicaciones de Idiomas
Rumunština pro samouky	Jiri Felix	1965	SPN
Rumänisch – Wort für Wort	Jurgen Salzer	2012	Reise Know-How
Teach Yourself Romanian	Martin Murrell & Virgiliu Ștefănescu- Drăgănești	1970	Hodder & Stoughton
Teach Yourself Romanian	Dennis Deletant, Yvonne Alexandrescu	2003	Hodder Headline

Учебник Румынского языка	Заюнчковский, Ю. П., Николеску, Т., Репина, Т. А.	1982	Высшая школа
Учебник по румынски език	Бужорел Испас	1984	Наука и изкуство
VITAMINA Română ca limbă străină – limbaj general și medical culegere de exerciții pentru nivelurile A1, A2, B1	Daniela Kohn, Diana Boc-Sînmărghițan, Daniela Șilindean	2018	Editura Victor Babeș

**Table 2.** Textbook corpus for the concluding survey on cultural elements (monograph)

The greatest number of recorded cultural elements is found in two publications: *Limba română – Curs superior*, written in Russian (13.1%), and *Cours de langue roumaine*, written in French (12.5%). All remaining titles exhibit markedly lower representation percentages, with moderate values (4-6%) for several titles: *ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ КУРС РУМЫНСКОГО ЯЗЫКА*, *Română cu sau fără profesor*, and *Manual de limba română ca limbă străină (RLS) A1–A2*. Additionally, several titles lack any cultural elements (Romanian Verb Handbook, *Limba română=Limba străină*, *Curs intensiv pentru studenții străini din anul pregătitor*, and *Kezdők román nyelvkönyve*), while others include a single element from one of the categories (Ivanić, Durić, 2023: 56). The predominance of the text format over all other forms is evident in the larger sample, highlighting the supremacy of textual material compared to other categories. The Image form category is markedly underrepresented in textbooks relative to Text, even when including its subcategories (Ivanić, Durić, 2023: 60). The analysis focused exclusively on culturally relevant images, excluding all other pictures, photographs, or illustrations, while all texts were thoroughly read and analyzed to identify and categorize cultural elements. Among these form categories, *Short text* (62%) and *Image* (72%) are predominant. A broader sample allowed for a comparative analysis by categories of form, revealing that no textbooks incorporated cultural elements across all content categories; rather, one category (text or image) typically predominated, accompanied by specific elements in associated subcategories. The most prevalent situations involve the absence of elements across nearly all categories, while the overall percentage is predominantly influenced by the textbooks containing the highest number of recorded elements. The sample of textbook editions encompassed titles from 1944 to 2021, necessitating a classification into older and newer editions (post-2000) to analyze the disparities in the number of cultural elements present in each edition.

The newer editions exhibit a reduced quantity of text form elements due to the uneven distribution of cultural components in the overall sample, while slightly over half of the elements are presented as images, which is anticipated, though not universally applicable to all elements (Ivanić, Durić, 2023). The inventory of textual and pictorial formats has been augmented for the objectives of this comprehensive research. The predominant textual forms are *Excerpt from a literary work* (20%), *Informative text* (19%), and *Explanation in the task* (15%), in comparison to the others<sup>1</sup>. The predominant image formats are *Black and White Photography* (21%) and *Color Photography* (15%), while the content distribution includes *Photographs of Landmarks* (18%), *People* (8%), *Objects* (7%), and *Nature* (5%) relative to other categories<sup>2</sup> (Ivanić, Durić, 2023). A more extensive sample, featuring situational descriptions and specific details, yielded a broader compilation of general content categories compared to the preliminary research, which includes *Landmarks and Localities*, *Geographical Data*, *Historical Data*, *Civilization and Society*, *Literature*, *Art (all categories)*, *Media*, *Tradition and Customs*, *Lifestyle*, and *Sport and Recreation*<sup>3</sup>. The *Literature* category is the most prominent at 37%, whereas the *Landmarks and Localities* category is nearly half as represented at 19%. The category *Traditions and Customs* rank third at 15%, while *Historical Data* occupies the last position among high or medium representation at 10%. The remaining categories (*Civilization and Society*, *Geographical Data*, *Art*, *Media*, *Lifestyle*, and *Sport and Recreation*) exhibit percentage representation between 5% and 1% in the overall sample<sup>4</sup>. (Ivanić, Durić, 2023: 146). The predominant category in recent textbook editions is *Landmarks and Localities*, succeeded by *Traditions and Customs*. The *Literature* documenting the highest values in the general sample indicates an average, suggesting a significantly greater variety of literary forms in older editions (Ivanić, Durić, 2023: 193). In the overall sample, the primary category of text content is *Literature* (35%), succeeded by moderate representations in *Society and Tradition* (7.8%), *History* (7.3%), *Language* (6.3%), *Media and Press* (5.3%), and *Tourist Guide* (4.5%)<sup>5</sup>. The predominant categories of image content are *Geography*

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<sup>1</sup> The entire list and graphs can be found in the monograph “Didaktizacija elemenata kulture u udžbenicima rumunskog jezika kao stranog jezika“ (Ivanić, Durić, 2023), as well as comparisons between different years of publication as well as among publications in other foreign languages.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Further information regarding the categorization and their significance is available in the referenced monograph.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The comprehensive list of general categories of text content and comparisons of both general and

(11%), *Architecture and Landmarks* (10%), *Society and Tradition* (8.5%), and *Food and Beverage* (7.8%), relative to other categories<sup>6</sup>. In conclusion, based on the research conducted for this monograph, we identify that the most exemplary resources for cultural content are Romanian language textbooks designed for teaching Romanian as a foreign language, as they encompass all categories to varying extents, with the exception of one textbook that lacks such elements (Ivanić, Durić, 2023: 268). The prevailing values within specific categories, as observed in textbooks in other languages (Russian - Literature, Hungarian - Lifestyle, French - Historical Data), exert minimal influence on the trend of element representation and consistency across all categories, unlike the situation with textbooks in the Romanian language (Ivanić, Durić, 2023: 268). The content format of Traditions and Customs is predominantly located in Romanian language textbooks, which is anticipated; however, we must not presume this exclusively. The primary issue identified in these two studies on cultural elements is the absence of a comprehensive form and category for Image and Text, which is deemed the most desirable and informative category, potentially encompassing all that a cultural topic can provide per lesson (Ivanić, Durić, 2023).

Based on data from prior studies, Durić (2024) examined students' perceptions of cultural elements in the teaching of Romanian as a foreign language in her master thesis, revealing that learners recognized the teacher as the primary and most effective source of cultural knowledge. The study demonstrated that cultural exposure during lessons positively influenced students' attitudes toward Romanian culture, reshaping their linguistic experience and fostering intercultural awareness. However, findings also indicated a disparity between the cultural content in textbooks and that offered by instructors, highlighting the insufficient integration of culture in Romanian language materials and the persistence of biases that influence students' understanding of Romanian culture.

In the following year, the authors (Ivanić, Durić, Branište, 2025) concluded a study that focused on integrating culturological dimensions into Romanian language courses in Serbia from an intercultural perspective, using Byram's model of intercultural competence (ICC) alongside Critical Discourse Analysis (CuDA). The results indicated a significant dominance of descriptive and normative discourse types, while intercultural dimensions were notably underrepresented (Ivanić, Durić, Branište, 2025). The study underscored the necessity for more reflective, student-centered, and multimedia-based activities to

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individual samples is available in the monograph.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

promote intercultural competence and awareness since critical cultural awareness signifies the ability to evaluate cultural viewpoints, practices, and artifacts through a well-reasoned, reflective, and principled lens (Ivanić, Durić, Branište, 2025).

Following the aforementioned research and the emphasized necessity for cultural inclusion in the instruction of Romanian as a foreign language, the authors commenced this year the initial phase of a series of investigations into distinct cultural elements and their impact on the perception of Romanian culture, as well as on potential advantages in the pedagogical process. The initial research incorporated music and musical elements as components of the cultural repertoire, anticipating that this cultural facet is profoundly rich, significant, and advanced within Romanian culture, yielding extensive positive impacts on interculturality. The research commenced within a comparable theoretical framework to the previously mentioned studies, involving an examination of the professional methodological corpus utilized in Romanian language instruction (texts, manuals, dictionaries, and supplementary materials). The preliminary review concluded that the research will be unsuccessful due to the absence of concrete data on musical elements necessary for examining the cultural dimension in language instruction. In the corpus of 16 textbooks designed for learning Romanian as a foreign language, spanning levels A1 to B2, a comprehensive review of all lessons revealed a near-total absence of musical elements. These findings further compelled us to advance this discovery and to present it as significant. The complete collection of textbooks is located in the table (refer to Table 3), accompanied by the presentation of several work methods intended for this research (refer to Tables 4, 5, and 6). Furthermore, we will visually illustrate various instances in literature where music is referenced in this context, aiming to advance our analysis by at least one method.

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Bun venit în România! Manual de limba română pentru străini - Începători	Otilia Hedeșan, Elena Jebelean, Florentina Leucuția	2012	Tipografia Partoș

Bun venit în România! Manual de limbă română și de orientare culturală pentru străini	Otilia Hedeșan, Elena Jebelean, Florentina Leucuția, Nicoleta Mușat, Dana Percec, Corina Popa	2008	MIRTON
Limba română=Limbă străină; Curs intensiv pentru studenții străini din anul pregătitor	Nicoleta Mihaela Ștefan	2013	Editura Universitaria
MANUAL DE LIMBA ROMÂNĂ pentru adulții Beneficiari de Protecție Internațională în România și Străini din afara Uniunii Europene – Nivel A1, A2, B1	Andreea Floari, Daniela Muntean, Daniela Stoicescu, Ioana Barbu	2019	Fundația Schottener Servicii Sociale
Limba română – Manual pentru studenți străini, Anul pregătitor – Semestrul I	Grigore Brâncuș, Adriana Ionescu, Manuela Saramandu	2003	Editura Universității din București
RLS Româna ca limbă străină, Caiete didactice, A1+	Elena Platon	2012	Editura Casa Cărții de Știință
Manual de limba româna ca limbă străină (RLS) A1–A2	Elena Platon, Ioana Sonea, Dina Vilcu	2012	Editura Casa Cărții de Știință
Puls – Manual de limba română pentru străini, Curs A1–A2	Daniela Kohn	2009	POLIROM
Limba română pentru străini nivel A1–A2	Cristina Dafinoiu, Veronica Nedelcu, Laura Pascale, Lucia Opreanu	2020	Editura Eurodidactica
VITAMINA Română ca limbă străină – limbaj general și medical culegere de exerciții pentru nivelurile A1, A2, B1	Daniela Kohn, Diana Boc-Sînmărghițan, Daniela Șilindean	2018	Editura Victor Babeș

LIMBA ROMÂNĂ PENTRU STRĂINI NIVEL B1-B2	Cristina Valentina Dafinoiu, Veronica Cristina Nedelcu, Laura Elena Pascale, Lucia Opreanu	2021	Total Publishing
Manual de limba româna ca limbă străină Puls B1-B2 Curs	Daniela Kohn	2012	POLIROM
Manual de limba româna ca limbă străină Puls B1-B2 Exerciții	Daniela Kohn	2012	POLIROM
Manual de limba româna ca limbă străină Nivel A1-A2	Iuliana Wainberg- Drăghiciu	2018	Aeternitas
Manual de limba româna ca limbă străină Nivel B1-B2	Iuliana Wainberg- Drăghiciu	2018	Aeternitas
Limba română: Manual pentru adulți, reprezentanți ai minorităților naționale: Nivelul A1	Alexandra Barbăneagră	2024	Bons Offices SRL

**Table 3.** Textbook corpus incorporated in cultural studies - Musical elements and music as components of learning Romanian as a foreign language

Book Title	Author	Page Nr.	Book Section	Musical Element Type	Description	Purpose in Book	Activity Type	Frequency
ABC pentru România Manual de limba română pentru străini Avansați	O. Hedeșan, E. Jebelean, F. Leucuția	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bun venit în România Începători	O. Hedeșan, E. Jebelean, F. Leucuția	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bun venit în România! Manual de limbă română și de orientare culturală pentru străini	O. Hedeșan, E. Jebelean, F. Leucuția, N. Mușat, D. Percec, C. Popa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Limba română=Limbă străină; Curs intensiv pentru studenții străini din anul pregătitor	N. M. Ștefan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manual de Limba Română—Nivel A1, A2, B1	A. Floari, D. Muntean, D. Stoicescu, I. Barbu	178	3	0	Brief description of styling, including two singers	Vocabulary Learning, Storytelling	Writing (passive)	1
Limba română – Manual pentru studenți străini, Anul pregătitor – Semestrul I	G. Brâncuș, A. Ionescu, M. Saramandu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RLS Româna ca limbă străină, Caiete didactice, A1+	Elena Platon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manual de limba română ca limbă străină (RLS) A1–A2	Elena Platon, Ioana Sonea, Dina Vîlcu	163	3	Listening task, Writing task	Biographical notes about George Enescu	Vocabulary Learning	Listening, Writing (passive)	1
Puls – Manual de limba română pentru străini, Curs A1–A2	Daniela Kohn	65	1	Listening task, Writing task	Text mentioning Gărâna Jazz festival and festival poster	Vocabulary Learning	Listening, Writing (passive)	1
Limba română pentru străini nivel A1–A2	C. Dafinoiu, V. Nedelcu, L. Pascale, L. Opreanu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VITAMINA A1, A2, B1	D. Kohn, D. Boc-Sînmărghița n, D. Șilindean	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LIMBA ROMÂNĂ PENTRU STRĂINI NIVEL B1-B2	C.V. Dafinoiu, V. C. Nedelcu, L. E. Pascale, L. Opreanu	78 79	1	Reading task, Quizz	Biographical notes about George Enescu	Vocabulary Learning	Listening, Writing (passive)	1
Manual de limba română ca limbă străină Puls B1- B2 Curs	Daniela Kohn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Manual de limba română ca limba străină Puls B1-B2 Exerciții	Daniela Kohn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manual de limba română ca limbă străină Nivel A1-A2	Iuliana Wainberg Drăghiciu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manual de limba română ca limbă străină Nivel B1-B2	Iuliana Wainberg Drăghiciu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Limba română: Manual pentru adulți, rep. ai min. naț.: Nivelul A1	A. Barbăneagră	107	3	Song, Listening task, Writing task, Memory game	Listening to the song “Bucurați-vă, prieteni” and remembering verses; Finding information about authors of the song	Vocabulary Learning, Engagemen, Culture	Listening, Writing (passive), Remembering, Active listening (active)	

**Table 4.** Research methodology for musical analysis—fundamental steps

Table 4 presents all the textbooks utilized for this research. Some textbooks, as previously noted, contain references to Romanian music, musicians, composers, or musical events. Following the identification of elements, the research should encompass their classification according to the page number and section of the textbook (with sections denoting the textbook's divisions: beginning, middle, and end, serving as reference points for locating the elements), the type of musical element (e.g., song, chant, rhythm activity, rhythm exercise, listening task, etc.), the element's description (including the exercise description, title of the song or dance utilized), the textbook's objective (such as vocabulary, pronunciation, phonological awareness, culture, engagement, etc.), the activity type (passive, active, creative), and the frequency of the exercise (including repetition or occurrence of the exercise type). Additionally, the musical elements were intended to be categorized in order to assess the frequency of all classifications (songs, rhymes, rhyme games, listening tasks); however, due to insufficient data, this step could not be fully implemented. Consequently, a comparative analysis using bar charts, pie charts, or frequency tables was not conducted. Instead, illustrative examples are presented in a descriptive table (see Tables 5 and 6).

The documented exercises are unsuitable for the research objective because they do not contribute to language acquisition or (inter)cultural competencies through music-based exercises or lessons. The information is frequently presented out of context, fails to engage students actively, and does not relate these cultural elements to the subject matter. The task from the textbook "Limba română: Manual pentru adulți, representatives of national minorities: Nivelul A1" includes an effective approach that uses music and musical elements to stimulate student interest and encourage active exploration of music. The assignment also serves as a beneficial exercise for memorizing the text, as it builds on prior knowledge at the A1 level and includes independent research on the song's authors. In addition, excerpts from textbooks will be provided to illustrate the designated tasks, along with selected examples of other textbook activities that incorporate musical formats in some capacity. These examples are included as representative instances relevant to this type of research, although further analysis of this data was not possible (see Figures 1, 2, and 3).

Type of Musical Element	Count
Songs	1
Rhymes	0
Rhythm Games	0
Listening Tasks	4

**Table 5.** Descriptive analysis for the proposed methodology in music studies

	Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Culture	Total
Songs	1	0	1	2
Rhymes	0	0	0	0
Listening Tasks	4	0	0	4
Rhythm Exercises	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	5	0	1	6

**Table 6.** Contingency table analysis for the proposed methodology in music studies


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## Lección 2 Stilul vestimentar 2

U5

Describe stilul următoarelor personaje!

Poți folosi interactiv pentru a afla mai multe informații despre persoanele din din imaginii!




Maria Tănase

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Dela Matache

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_

7 Ce motiv de bucurie aveți?

Mă bucur de copilul meu!

Mă bucur de familia mea!

Mă bucur ... (Continuauți!)



Mă bucur că vorbesc română!


Mă bucur de părinții mei!

Mă bucur de rudele mele!


8 Audiți cântecul „Bucurați-vă, prieteni!...”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4HP1MU0rmQ>

9 Memorati versurile din cântec.  
 Eu mă grăbesc. Tu te grăbești. El se grăbește.  
 Îmbătrânesc. Îmbătrânești. Îmbătrânesc...  
 Bucurați-vă, prieteni, de prieteni și de trași...

10 ☒ Selectați (din surse accesibile) informații succinte despre autorii piesei  
 audiate: poetul Dumitru Matcovschi și compozitorul Ion Aldea-Teodorovici



Dumitru Matcovschi



Ion Aldea-Teodorovici

CE FACEM ZI DE ZP 107

**Figure 1.** Examples from textbooks: 1. Manual de Limba Română—Nivel A1, A2, B1 and 2. Limba română: Manual pentru adulți, rep. ai min. naț.: Nivelul A1

lieduri în limba germană. Era un invitat permanent la palatul regal, unde lua parte la seratele muzicale organizate de regiă. Din primii ani ai secolului al XX-lea detacează compozițiile sale mai cunoscute, cum sunt cele două *Rapsodii Române* (1901-1902), *Suite Nr. 1 pentru orchestră* (1903), prima sa *Sinfonie* (1905), *Septe cântece* (1908). Activitatea sa muzicală alternă: între București și Paris și întreprinde turnee în mai multe țări europene.

În anul Primului război mondial rămâne în București continuându-și activitatea artistică. În 1915, are loc prima ediție concursului de compoziție „George Enescu”, în cadrul căruia compozitorul oferă câștigătorilor, din veniturile proprii, sume c bani generoase, precum și sena interpretării acestor piese în concerte.

După război își continuă activitatea în Europa și face mai multe călătorii în Statele Unite ale Americii, unde dirijează orchestra din Philadelphia (1923) și New York (1938).

Activitatea sa pedagogică este de o importanță considerabilă. Printre elevii săi se numără și Yehudi Menuhin, virtuoz cu profundă cultură umanistă, cel care a păstrat un adevărat cult și o profundă afecțiune pentru Enescu, considerându-l părinte său spiritual.

Între anii 1921 și 1931, lucrează la opera *Oedip*, monumentală creație dramatică și muzicală, care eble în ultimii ani început să se impună pe scenele teatrelor de operă din lumea O. dedică Mariei Rosetti (fostă Căciucăscu), cu care se va căsători mai târziu. Premiera operii a avut loc la Paris pe 13 martie 1936 și s-a bucurat de un succes imediat. *Oedip* se inspiră din ce două piese plătite din ciclul de tragedii ale lui Sofocle, *Oedip la Colonos* și *Oedip rege*. Cariera internațională a operii a fo însă întreruptă de decesul celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial. Opera și-a păstrat însă popularitatea în România, fiind de m multe ori montată în timpul *Festivalului Internațional „George Enescu”* din București, premiera românească datând din 1958. I ultimii 20 de ani, se observă un puternic reviriment al operii, prin montări în mai multe țări ale lumii.

În ultimii ani ai vieții a compus *Cuartetul de coarde Nr. 2*, *Sinfonia de Cameră pentru douăzeci instrumente soliste*, desăvârșit poemul simfonic *Vox Maris*, *Sinfoniele Nr. 4 și 5*, rămase neterminate.

Odată instaurată dictatura comunistă, George Enescu s-a autoexilat definitiv în Paris, unde s-a stins din viață în noaptea dintre 3 și 4 mai 1955. A fost înmormântat în cimitirul Père Lachaise din Paris, într-un covou de marmură albă.

#### C. George Enescu (1881 - 1955)

George Enescu a fost compozitor, violonist, pedagog, pianist și dirijor. Este considerat cel mai important muzician român. George Enescu, născut la 19 august 1881, în județul Botoșani, a fost pasionat de muzică încă din copilărie, începând să cânte la vioară la vârsta de 4 ani, iar la vârsta de 5 ani a apărut în primul său concert și a studiat compoziția sub îndrumarea lui Eduard Caudella. Primele îndrumări muzicale le primește de la părinții săi și de la un vestit lăutar, Nicolae Chioru: „Eram, dacă-mi amintesc bine, un copil silitor și chiar destul de conștiincios. La patru ani știam să citesc, să scriu, să adun și să scad. Nu era meritul meu, căci îmi plăcea învățătura și aveam groază de aproape toate jocurile, mai cu seamă de cele brutale; le găseam neobișnuite, având simțământul că pierd timpul, fugeam de zgomot și de vulgaritate, iar mai mult decât orice simțeam un fel de spaimă înăscută în fața vieții. Cădat copil, nu!” - Bernard Gavoty, *Amintirile lui George Enescu*

Între anii 1888 și 1894 studiază la Conservatorul din Viena. Se încadrează rapid în viața muzicală a Vienei, concertele sale, în care interpretează compoziții de Johannes Brahms, Pablo de Sarasate și alții, entuziasmând presa și publicul, deși avea doar 12 ani. După absolvirea Conservatorului din Viena cu medalia de argint, își continuă studiile la Conservatorul din Paris, între anii 1895 și 1899. În 1898, debutează în calitate de compozitor în cadrul Concertelor Colonon din Paris cu suita simfonică *Poema Român*. În același an, începe să dea lecții și recitaluri de vioară la București. Admirat de Regina Elisabeta a României, era deseori invitat să interpreteze piese pentru vioară la Castelul Peleș din Sinaia. Enescu a pus pe muzică câteva dintre poemele reginei, dând naștere mai multor



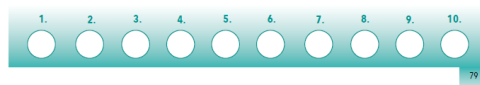
Puneți enunțurile de mai jos în ordinea în care apar în text:

1. Prima compoziție enesciană a fost interpretată în concertele de la Paris.
2. Încă din copilărie, George Enescu știa să cânte foarte bine la pian și la vioară.
3. Adolescențul impresionează imediat publicul vienez.
4. Concursul care îi poartă numele detacează din 1915.
5. Copilului nu-i plăcea să se joace.
6. Compozitorul moare departe de casă.
7. Ce profesor, Enescu reușește să rămână în sufletul unor elevi celebri.
8. În țară, George Enescu este un preferat al casei regale.
9. Inspirându-se din tragediile lui Sofocle, Enescu lasă moștenire cea mai elaborată compoziție muzicală.
10. Cele mai importante opere ale artistului au fost compuse în începutul secolului al XX-lea.

10 punct

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**Figure 2.** Example from the textbook LIMBA ROMÂNĂ PENTRU STRĂINI NIVEL B1-B2



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**Figure 3.** Examples from textbooks: 1. Manual de limba română ca limbă străină (RLS) A1–A2 and 2. Puls – Manual de limba română pentru străini, Curs A1–A2

The draft of this research incorporates only recent editions of the cited books (published post-2000), featuring advanced-level textbooks (B2) and those released recently, thereby differentiating it from the previously referenced studies. This approach was driven by a smaller than anticipated number of cultural elements, coupled with the presumption of insufficient musical elements, as prior research indicated their absence, despite the documentation of cultural elements in the realm of art. With multiple new editions, including level B2, it was anticipated that alongside new cultural insights, there would be an enhanced focus on musical elements and music as a significant aspect of Romanian culture, particularly regarding pop music, music festivals, and the contemporary music landscape in Romania, especially in light of advancements in digital tools and the utilization of the Internet for active and unrestricted foreign language acquisition. We aim not to discourage authors and readers but rather to serve as a cautionary tale and a chance to approach the topic effectively. These elements should be gradually integrated into the pedagogy of teaching and learning Romanian as a foreign language, initially by training educators, followed by the incorporation of relevant content into educational materials through exercises and lessons. This content may include traditional dance, folk costumes, traditional instruments, folk songs, musical genres in Romania, prominent performers, music festivals, musical spectacles, authentic Romanian songs and melodies, and regional music, among other

suggestions. Contemporary technologies facilitate the introduction to the life of different cultures; specifically, through music and its elements, one can gain insights into Romanian culture, representing a singular aspect of cultural education and the acquisition of competencies that foster interculturality. Upon examining the existing literature regarding the acquisition, development, maintenance, and cultivation of cultural competencies through the integrated instruction of the Romanian language and culture, we will subsequently present a series of recommendations in the form of strategic actions in this domain, informed by the authors' experiences and those of other researchers, which would undoubtedly be applicable to the instruction of other foreign languages and cultures.

### STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING (INTER)CULTURAL COMPETENCIE

By incorporating cultural elements into Romanian language learning materials, we can remedy the absence of such elements, which requires a competent and professional methodology. Some authors contend that the cultural repertoire currently available for learning Romanian as a foreign language is overlooked, despite the presence of original and innovative approaches to contemporary cultural trends, particularly in Romanian cinematography (Bârlea, 2018: 116). These elements could be effectively integrated into foreign language instruction, representing merely one of numerous proposals for cultural engagement, alongside media (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, podcasts, social networks, etc.), art (film, music, literature, theater, adaptations of Romanian literature in acting workshops, i.e., role-playing in a foreign language, etc.), and new technologies (applications in a foreign language relevant to students, platforms for language and culture acquisition, blogs, video games, quizzes for language learning, language puzzles, and associations, etc.) (Durić, 2024: 26). This creative activity can be successfully applied even with elementary learners of Romanian, as it fosters not only logical thinking and structured expression, but also cultural awareness, tolerance, and curiosity toward different ways of life. By engaging with cultural content in a guided manner, students move beyond mechanical reproduction of information and develop a more reflective and meaningful understanding of the target culture (Braniște, 2022: 89).

Although the books were rich in cultural elements, this alone would not suffice to elucidate everything for the students. The teacher's role is paramount, and the texts should ideally provide links to relevant pages, chat rooms, blogs, and vlogs that address the cultural topic presented in the lesson. Additionally, links

directing to cultural information beyond the book that incorporate activities (such as repetition, listening, creative writing, etc.) would enhance students' sense of empowerment and facilitate (inter)cultural competencies. If we integrate these elements into tasks similar to those found in textbooks, our discussions would cover topics like museums, galleries, and cultural sites. This format would involve texts on specified topics, including site presentations accompanied by relevant photographs and hyperlinks for further information, followed by tasks that facilitate active recall and comparison with analogous data from the student's native culture, while allowing personal evaluation. All of the aforementioned is undoubtedly relevant, with specific modifications, to every cultural subject.

The *Image and Text* form category, embodying a hybrid between two modalities, effectively facilitates the reliable transmission and retention of comprehensive cultural information within a specific context in students' long-term memory. It has demonstrated itself as the most significant yet susceptible among the materials for learning Romanian as a foreign language, undoubtedly serving as the foremost exemplar of the aforementioned proposal, irrespective of the cultural subject matter addressed. In the development of this category, particularly in composing textbooks for learning Romanian as a foreign language (or foreign languages in general), it is essential to consider several factors, primarily the textbook's objective and its methodological intent. Consequently, grammars contain minimal culturally pertinent data, as the emphasis is placed on grammatical rules, aiming to isolate the linguistic substrate, which is neither absolute nor the most effective approach (Ivanić, Đurić, 2023: 62). Subsequently, it is imperative to consider the expertise, familiarity, and interest of the team or individuals responsible for a particular textbook regarding cultural information and knowledge of culture and language. This acknowledgment does not undermine the authors' efforts thus far; rather, it points out the complicated nature of the project, which encompasses financial, scientific-technological, and professional elements (Ivanić, Đurić, 2023).

Ultimately, we will enumerate various strategies derived from the findings thus far, which may be modified and implemented in the acquisition of additional foreign languages and cultures:

1. An instance of employing genuine Romanian songs, incorporating active listening (both in the classroom and at home), through translation assignments and comparisons with songs from the native culture;
2. Engaging with instruments and music characteristic of Romanian culture through interactive activities and quizzes (identifying the instrument, musical genre, or vocalist) linked to previously covered material (e.g.,

utilizing only the present tense, employing adjectives for descriptive practice, etc.);

3. The advanced creative endeavor of composing rhyming songs facilitates students' ability to generate original compositions while engaging in tasks involving specific tenses, verb forms, and gender-specific nouns, as well as practicing grammatical cases at elevated levels.
4. The potential to organize workshops addressing topics such as holidays in Romania and the exploration of customs from different cultures in relation to native traditions is feasible. These workshops, under suitable conditions, could also evolve into sessions focused on handicrafts, culinary arts, or other forms of artistic expression.
5. Engaging in role-playing scenarios from daily life (such as utilizing public transport, visiting markets or stores, and shopping in malls) through structured preparation based on selected materials, accompanied by teacher guidance and text editing exercises, particularly at advanced levels, while remaining adaptable for lower levels as well;
6. When the course objectives permit, the design and validation of exercises pertaining solely to the cultural aspect, particularly at advanced levels, should encompass expression in the Romanian language, with the possibility of adapting the exercises for lower levels as well;
7. In addition to the previously mentioned links in the books and a more digital approach that requires the engagement of the students, it would be possible to create adequate cultural material that accompanies the material by lesson as a separate supplement at the end of the lesson that in a certain way summarizes what has been learned by expanding it to the cultural context, with verification tasks that can be done based on the watched video material, as was realized in the "Nuovo Espresso" books for learning the Italian language, within the "Videocorso" section. This idea requires a greater investment from authors and publishers and involves a demanding logistical undertaking; however, it is feasible to implement, even with previous proposals regarding external data (available on the Internet or certain servers) that students can access through a link or registration.

All of the aforementioned necessitates further education for the educator, encompassing training in initiating, sustaining, and preserving (inter)cultural dialogue. This is particularly crucial as the educator serves as the primary initiator of this approach, a mediator, and a guide between two cultures, often being the sole source of cultural information, as evidenced by our prior research findings.

Due to their significance and the intricacy of the task at hand, teachers ought to participate in the development of resources for teaching Romanian as a foreign language. This involvement should encompass the appropriate and contextual integration of cultural elements, informed by their pedagogical experiences, student feedback, and evolving teaching trends, to ensure the quality and relevance of cultural information in instruction.

## CONCLUSIONS

All previous research substantiates that the incorporation of cultural elements is essential in the teaching of Romanian as a foreign language. The results from the textbook analyses, cultural elements assessment, and student perception surveys indicate a notable discrepancy between linguistic and cultural content. Textbooks often insufficiently depict essential cultural aspects, particularly regarding art, tradition, and daily practices, leading to teachers being the primary, and frequently exclusive, transmitters of cultural knowledge. This reliance not only amplifies the pedagogical demands on educators but also constrains students' engagement with genuine cultural contexts that could enrich linguistic and intercultural education. This research underscores that successful cultural integration necessitates the creation of extensive, multimodal educational resources that amalgamate textual, visual, and auditory elements. The integration of music, folklore, and literary excerpts, coupled with interactive and reflective activities, enhances the immersive quality of the learning experience. This integration fosters intercultural competence, allowing learners to interpret, compare, and critically assess cultural phenomena instead of simply memorizing linguistic structures. Moreover, the findings suggest that intercultural competence cannot be achieved solely through exposure; it must be actively cultivated through reflective and comparative pedagogical practices. Consequently, educators must possess not only linguistic and methodological proficiency but also intercultural training that empowers them to act as mediators between cultures. Educational institutions ought to promote collaboration among linguists, cultural researchers, and educators to guarantee that cultural dimensions are represented accurately and comprehensively in instructional materials. The paper advocates for future teaching strategies to emphasize the integration of Image and Text modalities, which have demonstrated superior efficacy in long-term retention and contextual comprehension. Utilizing multimedia tools, genuine cultural content, and project-based learning, Romanian language instruction can transform into an integrative and dynamic model that surpasses linguistic limitations. This methodology

corresponds with overarching trends in applied linguistics and intercultural education, emphasizing that language acquisition fundamentally constitutes a process of cultural engagement and reciprocal comprehension.

Ivana Ivanić

Ema Durić

## INTEGRACIJA KULTURNIH ELEMENATA U NASTAVI RUMUNSKOG KAO STRANOG JEZIKA: STRATEGIJE I METODE

### *Rezime*

U radu se razmatra integracija kulturnih elemenata u nastavi rumunskog kao stranog jezika, sa posebnim naglaskom na međusobni odnos jezika, kulture i interkulturene kompetencije. Polazeći od prethodnih empirijskih istraživanja i komparativne analize udžbenika za učenje rumunskog kao stranog jezika, studija pokazuje da su kulturni sadržaji u tim udžbenicima nedovoljno zastupljeni i da se uglavnom predstavljaju kroz pisani tekst, dok su multimodalni oblici (slike, audio-zapisi, video-materijali i interaktivni sadržaji) znatno zapostavljeni. Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da u postojećim udžbenicima nema dovoljno jasno strukturisanih kulturnih sadržaja, zbog čega profesori često sami kreiraju sadržaj, dodaju sadržaj za njihovo objašnjavanje i tumačenje na času. Zbog toga se u radu zaključuje da je neophodno sistematski uključiti autentične kulturne sadržaje, posebno iz oblasti umetnosti, folkloru i muzike, u nastavu rumunskog jezika, koristeći multimodalne i na studente usmerene pristupe, kako bi se omogućilo bolje razumevanje kulture i razvoj interkulturene svesti i komunikativne kompetencije.

*Ključne reči:* rumunski kao strani jezik, kulturna integracija, interkulturena kompetencija, jezička pedagogija, analiza udžbenika

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