

PEDAGOGY

Yuriy Zhluktenko as an Educator

O. Litvinyak*

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Lviv, Ukraine

*Corresponding author. E-mail: oleksandrapylpchuk@gmail.com

Paper received 02.07.15; Accepted for publication 14.07.15.

Abstract. Since Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, its representatives have been trying to return it to the general context of world research. However, to make any field develop and progress it is necessary to know its origins and evolution well. Therefore, this paper presents an attempt at comprehending the role of Yuriy Zhluktenko, a prominent Ukrainian scholar, who contributed to the development of many branches of linguistics in Ukraine, to the elaboration and improvement of foreign language teaching methodology in Ukraine, as well as methodology of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language abroad.

Keywords: *Yuriy Zhluktenko, methodology of language teaching, teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, methodology of Charles Fries and Robert Lado*

Due to different historical and political processes that took place on its territory in the 20th century, Ukrainian scholarly achievements are not widely known outside its territory. Being a part of a bigger entity called the Soviet Union, Ukraine's contribution to the development of different fields of research, particularly language teaching, linguistics, and so on got lost within the so-called "Soviet research". However, Ukraine's independence brought about the necessity to distinguish Ukrainian contribution into the "common" scholarly heritage. To discover what was done in a country in this or that sphere, it is necessary to focus on separate personalities that contributed to the development of national science and research. Foreign language teaching started in Ukraine very long ago. The year 1576 is named as a date when foreign languages started to be taught at higher educational establishments, namely – the Ostroh Academy [17]. Much time has gone by since then, however, we do not know much about the people who were working on improvement of teaching methods. This paper focuses on one of the most prominent personalities in Ukrainian linguistics and language teaching methodology of the 20th century, Yuriy Zhluktenko.

This year the Ukrainian scholarly community is celebrating the 100th anniversary of Yuriy Zhluktenko's birth. He was born on 31 August 1915, lived through the most turbulent times in the Ukrainian history, and passed away at the age of 75 on 4 February 1990, right before Ukraine's independence.

Methodology of foreign language teaching in Ukraine from historical perspective has been covered by a number of researchers, who published their results in the form of articles (e. g. Kryshko [17]), books/manuals (e. g. Chekal et al. [20]), and even candidate dissertations (e. g. Lytniova [18]). Meanwhile, the contribution of Yuriy Zhluktenko into the development of different fields and branches of linguistics in Ukraine was covered by Roksolana Zorivchak [15], Oleksandr Cherednychenko [21], Nataliya Bykhovets [1], Stanislav Semchynskiy [19], and others.

To form an opinion about Yuriy Zhluktenko's views and approaches to foreign language teaching, it is necessary to consider them in a broader context, i.e. taking into account the official standpoint concerning foreign language teaching in the Soviet Union. Contemporary

Ukrainian researchers divide the Soviet language teaching methodology (the way it was applied in Ukraine) into several historical stages that were marked by prevalence of different methods. According to Lytniova, 1930s-1950s were marked by priority of the receptive (passive) mastering of the foreign language, where language was considered to be necessary for reading purposes mainly [18, p. 12]. Among the productive skills, writing was considered to be of most use [20]. Translational-grammatical method was widely used at that time. Lev Shcherba, a Russian methodologist, wrote that this method is very useful, as it allows acquiring the skills that are most necessary for the Soviet people, i. e. reading and writing. He wrote: "Really, considering our great geographical spaces, direct communication with nations of the Western Europe will always remain relatively limited, while with growth of the general culture and engineering, the necessity in foreign books with increase dramatically" [22, p. 30]. A great role in teaching and learning was played by the mother tongue, and the main principle applied was the principle of conscious learning [20]. This approach was developed by Shcherba, and presupposed thorough understanding of language phenomena and their usage, and comparative study of language phenomena [16, p. 23-24].

In 1960's approaches to language teaching started changing. More attention started being paid to communicative aspect [18, p. 12]. This turn happened at the official level, as in 1961 a governmental decree was issued postulating that a practice-oriented approach to foreign language teaching should be applied. Thus, despite the fact that major attention was still paid to reading and writing, listening and speaking acquired more importance than previously [20].

Throughout his career, Yuriy Zhluktenko was involved into many different activities. He was an educator, a translator, a linguist, a translation studies scholar, a sociolinguist, a lexicographer, a foreign language teaching methodologist, an editor, and much more. His main creed was to propel Ukrainian science and research. His whole life was dedicated to introduction of something new into the Ukrainian linguistics, and giving impetus to young scholars, so that they develop its different branches further and further.

Yuriy Zhluktenko dedicated much effort to improvement of foreign language teaching methodology in Ukraine. He worked at the department of foreign languages of the Kyiv Polytechnical Institute, headed the department of foreign languages at the Kyiv Institute of National Economy. Zhluktenko was the dean of the faculty of Romanic and Germanic philology (1968-1977) at Taras Shevchenko State University in Kyiv, and head and professor of the department of English philology there. These facts of his biography played an important role in his interest in the methodology of foreign language teaching.

Upon graduation, he worked at institutions, where foreign languages were "secondary" subjects taught to students majoring in something else. This raised his concerns about teaching foreign languages to students with non-linguistic majors, as these subjects were often marginalized. Thus, he started exploring the approaches to foreign language teaching in these institutions and trying to make them more effective. As a result, there appeared a number of articles on the topic (e. g. «Из практики работы кафедр иностранных языков» [10], «Вопросы методики преподавания языков» [9], «Некоторые вопросы организации и методики проведения практических занятий по иностранным языкам в неязыковых вузах» (co-authored by L. Yampolskiy and G. Yatel) [12], «В межвузовском научно-методическом объединении» (co-authored by G. Yatel) [13], «Про спеціалізацію вузівського курсу іноземної мови» [7], «Измерения в обучении» (co-authored by G. Yatel et al.) [14], «Теорія двомовності і методика викладання іноземних мов» [8], «Научная и учебно-методическая деятельность кафедр факультета романо-германской филологии КГУ» [4]).

Zhluktenko was quite consistent in the development of methodology of foreign language teaching. Having analyzed his papers on the topic, we may distinguish several main ideas that constitute the core of the language teaching methodology he supported and developed.

Zhluktenko supported the idea that a foreign language should be studied in connection to one's mother tongue, drawing some parallels between the two languages or stressing the differences between them. Being shaped on the basis of practice that existed in his native country, these views were reinforced by the approaches of Charles Fries and Robert Lado, whose lectures on the methods of teaching English as a foreign language Zhluktenko attended at the Georgetown University in 1965. The American methodologists believed that most effective language learning occurs when the material taught is tailored to accommodate the needs of a student taking into account his/her mother tongue [5]. Advocating similar views, Zhluktenko prepared the first comparative grammar of the English and Ukrainian languages designated to be an aid for the teachers of English [11].

In line with prevalent views of the epoch and the country, Zhluktenko was in favor of conscious language learning. He believed that the best way to learn a foreign language is not just to learn some structures by heart, but to understand where they come from, how to form them, and to be able to create similar ones using the already known patterns [2; 5]. His support of the ideas of conscious language learning manifested also in his criticism of Fries' and Lado's methodology in the part where they

believe that to be able to use some language pattern unconsciously it is necessary to learn them unconsciously. Zhluktenko, on the contrary, believed that it is not possible, and, probably, not even very necessary to have all patterns automated. Sometimes conscious application of structures is necessary, but it is not possible if they were memorized and trained without real understanding [5].

Zhluktenko advocated a clear succession of curricula starting from secondary school and proceeding to the higher education. This was necessary to make the study of foreign language consistent and evoke more interest in students by offering them new topics. In addition, the topics should be connected to the students' major, as the main aim of teaching foreign languages to students of non-linguistic majors is to enable them to participate in professional communication (be it written or oral). In connection with this, it is also important for the teacher to be interested in and to understand at least main technical or other problems connected with the students' field of study [9].

Zhluktenko paid much attention to forms of control believing that they are one of the most important motivating factors for the students. Therefore, in his opinion, a teacher should apply different forms of control throughout the semester to keep the students focused and motivated [14].

Supporting Fries and Lado, Zhluktenko was in favor of the idea that teacher talking time in classroom should be limited. A language class should not turn into lecture where students are just passive listeners. On the contrary, teacher's explanations should be interspersed with active work of the students themselves [5].

However, Yuriy Zhluktenko's work as an educator was not limited to some theoretical considerations expressed in his articles. He was a very practice-oriented person, and supported his views with different manuals. He was the author of 7 textbooks in English and German for secondary schools and higher educational establishments.

Nevertheless, one of the most important contributions of his is the fact that he was one of the first to compile and publish textbooks for learning Ukrainian as a foreign language: "Ukrainian. A textbook of the Ukrainian language" (for English speakers, co-authored by Totska and Molodid) and "Изучаем украинский язык" ("Learning Ukrainian") (for speakers of Russian, co-authored by Karpilovska and Yarmak). In the former, all explanations are in English. The material starts from the basics – phonetics and basic grammar and proceeds to topics that are more complicated. The manual is supplemented by a glossary of words used in the lexical and reading parts of the book, and key to the exercises, which allows for the use of the book both in the classroom and for self-study. The units are quite extensive, presenting many materials, which suggests that depending on the student's needs and ability a teacher could extend the use of one unit to several classes [6].

The self-study guide "Изучаем украинский язык" is a comprehensive manual for beginners. It contains an introductory course in phonetics, as well as elementary grammar, dialogues from different everyday life situations, and excerpts from Ukrainian literature and folklore texts. The book is supplemented by a short Ukrainian-Russian and Russian-Ukrainian glossary. The units

(lessons) in it are quite short and present more theoretical material than exercises for practice [3].

The role of Yuriy Zhluktenko as an educator is not limited to him writing the articles on theoretical aspects of language teaching methodology and preparing textbooks for language learners. His whole life was dedicated to teaching and advising. The major part of his career was connected with different higher educational estab-

lishments, where he taught dozens of students every year. His activity as an educator manifested itself also in the influence he had on his younger colleagues, and those for whom he was an academic advisor. In this latter role, he helped about 50 young researchers to choose the topic, write and present their theses, and there were many more who benefitted from his advice.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bykhovets, N.M. Yu.O. Zhluktenko in reminiscences // Linguistics, 2010. № 4/5. – 92-93 p.
- [2] Zhluktenko, Yu.A. Review of: G. F. Brazhnikova. Modern English Grammar (a theoretical course). Morphology. Kiev, 1960, 184 p. // Voprosy terii angliyskogo i nemetskogo yazykov, Kiev, 1962. – 117-120 p.
- [3] Zhluktenko, Yu.A., Karpilovskaya, Ye.A., Yarmak, V.I. Learning Ukrainian. Kiev, 1991.
- [4] Zhluktenko, Yu. Scholarly and methodological activity of the departments of the Romance and Germanic philology faculty at the Kyiv State University // Vestnik kievskogo universiteta. Romano-germanskaya filologiya, 1978. № 12. – 106-122 p.
- [5] Zhluktenko, Yu.O. Teaching foreign languages according to the methodological system of Ch. Fries and R. Lado. Kyiv, 1969.
- [6] Zhluktenko, Yu.O., Totska, N.I., Molodid, T.K. Ukrainian. A textbook of the Ukrainian language. Kyiv, 1973.
- [7] Zhluktenko, Yu. On specialization of the foreign language course at a higher educational establishment // Problemy vyshchoyi shkoly, 1971. №9. – 67-71 p.
- [8] Zhluktenko, Yu. Theory of bilingualism and methods of foreign language teaching // Pytannia menodyky vykladannia inozemnykh mov, Kyiv, 1971. – 1-16 p.
- [9] Zhluktenko, Yu. Issues of language teaching methodology // Vestnik vysshey shkoly, 1956. № 5. – 105-113 p.
- [10] Zhluktenko, Yu. From the practice of work of foreign languages departments // Vestnik vysshey shkoly, 1951. № 7. – 39-40 p.
- [11] Zhluktenko, Yu. Comparative grammar of the English and Ukrainian languages. Kyiv. 1960.
- [12] Zhluktenko, Yu., Yampolskiy L., Yatel G., Some issues of organization and methods of practical classes in foreign languages at non-linguistic higher educational establishments // Inostrannyye yazyki v vysshey shkole, 1965. № 1. – 85-92 p.
- [13] Zhluktenko, Yu., Yatel, G. At the inter-institute methodological union // Vestnik sysshey shkoly, 1970. №4. – 35-36 p.
- [14] Zhluktenko, Yu., Yatel, G. Measurements in teaching // Programirovannoye obucheniye, Kiev, 1971. № 8. – 8-14 p.
- [15] Zorivchak, R. Ukrainian Philology, Linguistics, and Literature Studies in the intellectual biography of Professor Yuriy Oleksiyovych Zhluktenko: Dedicated to the 95th birth anniversary // Vsesvit, 2010, № 11-12. – 251-262 p.
- [16] Kashina, Ye.G. Traditions and innovations in the methodology of foreign language teaching. Samara, 2006.
- [17] Kryshko, A. Peculiarities of the development of linguistic education in Ukraine in the 19th – beginning of the 20th century // Psykholoho-pedahohichni problem silskoyi shkoly, 2012. № 42. – 246-254 p.
- [18] Lytniova, T.V. Target component of teaching foreign languages in the context of development of the content of the national general secondary education (30ies of the 20th century – beginning of the 21st century): synopsis of the thesis. Zhytomyr, 2009.
- [19] Semchynskiy, S.V. Zhluktenko Yuriy Oleksiyovych // Ukrayinska mova: Entsyklopediya, Kyiv. 2000 – 185 p.
- [20] Chekal, H.S., Paliy, O.A., Potapenko, S.I., Andriyko, I.F. Methodology of foreign language teaching at comprehensive schools. Kyiv, 2010.
- [21] Cherednychenko, O.I. Your name in the eternity (instead of a foreword) // Movni i kontseptualni kartyny svitu, Kyiv, 2006. Iss. 17. – 3 p.
- [22] Shcherba, L.V. Teaching foreign languages at secondary school. General issues of methodology. Moscow, 1974.