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PROFESSOR YURIY ZHLUKTENKO'S CONTRIBUTION TO METHODOLOGY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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This article discusses Yu. O. Zhluktenko's views and ideas about foreign language teaching presented in his articles and manuals. Specifically, it focuses on Zhluktenko's approach to language teaching to students with both linguistic and non-linguistic majors and on his comprehensive system of teaching Ukrainian to speakers of English and Russian.

Key words: Professor Yu. O. Zhluktenko, language teaching, methodology, teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language.

Prof. Yu. O. Zhluktenko dedicated much effort to elaboration of different language teaching materials, theoretical assumptions concerning foreign language teaching, and analysis of the current situation with foreign language teaching at the universities in the country. His bibliography includes many items on the topic, which deserve a full-fledged research and a thorough analysis. This article is an attempt at a brief overview of his achievements in the sphere.

Yu. O. Zhluktenko's biography speaks for itself. He graduated from the T. Shevchenko University in Kyiv in 1946 majoring in the English language and literature and dedicated the rest of his life to teaching foreign languages. In 1946–1954 he worked first as a teacher and then as a head of the department of foreign languages at the Kyiv Institute of Motion-Picture Engineers. In 1954–1955 he taught at the Kyiv Polytechnical Institute, and in 1955–1969 chaired the department of foreign languages at the Kyiv Finance and Economy Institute (later known as the Institute of National Economy). Later on, he was teaching at the Taras Shevchenko University in Kyiv.

The level of foreign language teaching in non-specialized educational institutions concerned Yuriy Oleksiyovych very much and he dedicated much time and effort to the detailed research of this issue. As a result, a number of articles appeared, such as “Из практики работы кафедр иностранных языков” (1951), “Некоторые вопросы организации и методики проведения практических занятий по иностранным языкам в неязыковых вузах” (co-authored by L. Yampolskiy and H. Yatel) (1965), “Вопросы методики преподавания языков” (1956), “Організація навчального процесу” (1971), etc.

In 1951 he was quite extensively quoted in the article “Из практики работы кафедр иностранных языков” (“From the experience of foreign languages departments”) published in the “Вестник высшей школы” (“Higher Education Bulletin”). Here, Yu. O. Zhluktenko analyzed the new curriculum. In his own opinion, despite being generally good, it contained

a number of fatal drawbacks, which included lack of an explanatory note, as well as unclear objectives concerning teaching/learning of vocabulary. The author believes that having worked with the curriculum for a year and tested it, it was possible to introduce some changes to improve it [8, c. 39–40].

Further, in his articles Yu. O. Zhluktenko raised some other issues of language teaching in non-specialized institutions which seem to be quite topical even today, more than 50 years later. The main concerns raised in his articles are as follows:

There is no clear differentiation and succession between school and university curricula. Textbooks and manuals for first-year students are designed to start practically from scratch, ignoring the fact that the majority of students have received some knowledge of a foreign language at school. As a result, the material is repeated, the students are bored and lose their interest in study [4, c. 39].

The existing textbooks and manuals are mostly built upon socio-political texts, despite the fact that the curriculum postulates that one of the goals of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic higher educational establishments should be the students' ability to read and understand written materials in the area they are majoring in, as well as holding a conversation on specialized topics [2; 4].

The students from different schools, especially those coming from comprehensive schools and vocational schools have different level of foreign language knowledge, as in the latter more attention is paid to development of their practical skills, and, consequently, fewer hours are allocated to foreign languages. Therefore, it would be reasonable to divide such students into separate groups and, if it is possible, make the language course for vocational school leavers more intense for them to be able to catch up with the others by the end of the first academic year [4].

Many students entering technical universities and institutes have not mastered a foreign language at the level presupposed by school curriculum, and the teacher may face the necessity to start from scratch [2, c. 85].

In some higher educational establishments the process of language learning during the 4th and 5th years of study is becoming rather a mere formality. The number of class hours is ridiculously little, and the majority of work should be done by students on their own. In most cases, they receive a reading task, but the lack of original specialized materials result in them reading any texts (including some literary and adapted literary ones), just to read the necessary number of pages. Such approach cannot be effective [4].

A necessary precondition for effective foreign language learning in a non-linguistic educational establishment is the teacher's interest in the main technical or other problems connected with his/her students' major [4].

The objective set by the curriculum presupposes that by the time the students graduate they should master both skills of spoken foreign language and reading/writing skills within the everyday topics and topics connected with their major. However, in some institutions, teachers tend to concentrate either on speaking or on reading/writing ignoring the necessity to teach everything together [2].

The groups of students are usually mixed. Some of them may have a notably better command of the foreign language than the others. Therefore, the teacher should apply a differentiated approach asking better students more complicated questions, and poor students – easier questions [2].

Due to the fact that too few hours are usually allocated to foreign languages in non-specialized educational institutions, the lectures should be very intense, and well-thought for the students to be able to receive maximum effect in minimum time [2].

Forms of control are very important for systematic study. It is possible to put credit marks on the basis of the marks received by the student during the semester, but there should definitely be an exam after their last semester of foreign language learning to see what knowledge they have acquired during the whole period of their study. It is not advisable to neglect different forms of success control during the semester, as regular checks will make the students approach their study in a more systematic way [7].

A common thread in the analyzed articles by Yu. O. Zhluktenko is his idea that teaching foreign languages in non-linguistic educational establishments, especially technical ones, should be supported by specialized manuals and textbooks specifically tailored to meet the needs of the students majoring in certain subject area.

In June-August 1965 Yu. O. Zhluktenko had a unique opportunity to be a member of the first Soviet group of scholars to go to a Georgetown summer school in the United States. The group was international and included representatives of different Soviet republics (included also P. H. Zelenskyi from Lviv). He attended a course of lectures on language teaching methodology, which in 1969 resulted in his book “Навчання іноземних мов за методичною системою Ч. Фріза – Р. Ладо” (“Teaching Foreign Languages according to the Methodological System of Ch. Fries – R. Lado”), describing one of the most influential language teaching methodologies in the US.

The book consists of a descriptive part, where Yu. O. Zhluktenko dwells upon the main ideas of the method developed by Ch. Fries and R. Lado and generally characterizes foreign language teaching trends in the USA, and so to say, subjective part, where the author expresses his opinion concerning the strong and weak aspects of the methodology.

American methodologists believed that:

It is impossible to master a language learning it in small portions. An intense course of some 10 to 25 hours per week would be much more effective.

Most attention in classroom should be paid to speaking.

It is very beneficial to combine the work of an experienced language teacher with the work of a native speaker.

Language cannot be taught without grammar, but students should not automatically learn grammatical rules by heart [6, c. 9].

One of the characteristic features of their methodology is the fact that unlike some other specialists in the field, Ch. Fries and R. Lado do not demand teaching foreign language in its detachment from the learner's mother tongue. On the contrary, they suggest the idea that to make study and teaching most effective, it is necessary to have student's books designed for every national language specifically. We believe that this idea appealed to Yu. O. Zhluktenko because of his interest in Contrastive Linguistics. He himself supported and approved of the idea to include the elements of contrasting the English, Russian and Ukrainian languages into the theoretical course of English grammar [3, c. 118].

Quite a dubious point criticized by Yu. O. Zhluktenko was the fact that Ch. Fries recommends avoiding traditional linguistic terminology, and replacing such words as *noun* or *verb* with *first class word* and *second class word* respectively [6, c. 46]. In our opinion, this approach would not be beneficial for Ukrainian learners, as they most probably have heard

about nouns and verbs at school (in the context of learning their mother tongue), but telling them about *first, second, third* or *fourth class words* might confuse them and require additional processing to associate them with specific items in a sentence.

Prof. Yu. O. Zhluktenko approached Ch. Fries's and R. Lado's methodology quite critically:

Many drawbacks of the methodological system are connected with the fact that it is only suitable for the initial stage of foreign language learning.

The methodology has been elaborated on the basis and for the purposes of teaching English as a foreign language to people who live in an English-speaking milieu and, consequently, it is enough for a teacher to concentrate on the initial automation of language models use, whereas further practice will take place outside the classroom. In other countries, where English or another foreign language is taught outside the language environment, such minimum is definitely not enough for the students to employ these models.

Being convinced that language learners should use language patterns unconsciously Ch. Fries and R. Lado believe that they should learn/memorize them unconsciously as well. Yu. O. Zhluktenko is opposed to this idea believing that not all language patterns can become equally automatic, and thus speech or writing may require a conscious application of this or that model.

Learning dialogues by heart is not enough to make learners use the same patterns in a real-life situation.

It is impossible to agree with the idea that learning grammatical rules, terms and paradigms is unnecessary.

Ch. Fries and R. Lado's methodological system concentrates mainly on speech disregarding writing to a great extent. In Yu. O. Zhluktenko's opinion, it is necessary to pay equal attention to speaking, reading and writing.

Yu. O. Zhluktenko believes that most people use foreign language mainly for reading, and not for speaking. Therefore, language teaching methodology should take that into account.

Ch. Fries and R. Lado believe that translation is not a good way to teach foreign language, as it prevents the students from understanding that not all words or grammatical forms of their mother tongue have equivalents in the foreign language. Nevertheless, Soviet language teaching methodology considered translation to be a useful tool, especially at more advanced stages of foreign language learning [6, c. 82–90].

Features of the methodology outlined by Yu. O. Zhluktenko that deserve special attention are as follows:

Analysis and comparison of this language with the student's mother tongue should be the basis of foreign language teaching.

The approach to study process where every important language model is introduced and practiced separately.

Along with grammatical patterns, the methodology presupposes practicing some patterns that used to be considered lexical phenomena and paid not enough attention to.

Positive is the requirement to work orally in the classroom on all the material from the units, and activate the material and patterns learned in mock everyday-life situations; the use of technical equipment and visual aids [6, c. 91–93].

Among Yu. O. Zhluktenko's achievements in the sphere of language teaching is a num-

ber of manuals for students of foreign languages. Of special interest is the fact that he is one of the first authors of manuals in Ukrainian as a foreign language. He published his book "Ukrainian. A text-book for beginners" (co-authored by N. I. Totska and T. K. Molodid, first edition – 1973; second edition – 1978) and "Elementary Ukrainian" (co-authored by N. I. Totska, 1989) aimed at English-speaking learners of the Ukrainian language, and the book "Изучаем украинский язык: самоучитель" ("Learning Ukrainian: a self-study guide") (co-authored by Ye. A. Karpilovska and V. I. Yarmak, 1991).

The book "Ukrainian. A text-book for beginners" consists of 54 units (lessons) and additional reading material. All explanations in the book are given in English. First units of the manual contain phonetic material and basic grammar. Reading materials are presented by simple two-to-five-word sentences. The units include lexical topics starting from more simple ones, like *Our Family* or *In the yard* to much more complicated ones like *In Kaniv*, *Working at a Plant*, *The St. Sophia Cathedral*, etc. The manual is supplemented by a list 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 [5].

The self-study guide "Изучаем украинский язык" ("Learning Ukrainian") 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 structure of the book is different from the manual "Ukrainian. A text-book for beginners". Apparently, the approach adopted in here was grounded on the assumption that a person who knows Russian (which is the language of instruction and explanation in the book) should not have particular difficulties learning Ukrainian. At least, they are bound to have some associations that are supposed to facilitate the process of language learning. The book is supplemented by a short Ukrainian-Russian and Russian-Ukrainian wordlist. The units (lessons) in it are quite short and present more theoretical material than exercises for practice [1]. We believe that absence of answers to the exercises is a drawback inasmuch the book is marked as *self-reference guide*.

Yu. O. Zhluktenko's contribution to foreign language teaching methodology is quite substantial, poses much interest, and is yet to be studied and comprehended in more detail.

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ВНЕСОК ПРОФЕСОРА ЮРІЯ ЖЛУКТЕНКА У МЕТОДИКУ ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ

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Стаття присвячена поглядам проф. Ю. О. Жлуктенка на методику викладання іноземних мов, висловленим у низці статей, посібників та методичних рекомендацій. Розглянуто підходи професора до навчання іноземним мовам студентів лінгвістичних та нелінгвістичних спеціальностей, а також навчання англо- та російськомовців української мови як іноземної.

Ключові слова: професор Ю. О. Жлуктенко, навчання мов, методика, навчання української мови як іноземної.

ВКЛАД ПРОФЕСОРА ЮРІЯ ЖЛУКТЕНКО В МЕТОДИКУ ПРЕПОДАВАННЯ ІНОСТРАННИХ ЯЗЫКОВ

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Статья посвящена взглядам проф. Ю. А. Жлуктенко на методику преподавания иностранных языков, высказанным в ряде статей и методических рекомендаций. Рассмотрено подходы профессора к обучению студентов лингвистических и нелингвистических специальностей иностранным языкам, а также обучению англо- и русскоговорящих украинскому языку как иностранному.

Ключевые слова: профессор Ю. А. Жлуктенко, обучение языкам, методика, обучение украинскому языку как иностранному.