

## The Contribution of Lev Vladimirovich Shcherba to the methodology of teaching foreign languages.

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### ABSTRACT

The coronavirus pandemic has spread globally, upending the personal and professional lives of millions of people, including students, educators, and education researchers. At all levels of education, instructors, institution leaders, and policy makers are facing an unprecedented challenge, trying to ensure that high quality and equitable teaching and learning continues under rapidly changing and unpredictable conditions. During this time, distance-learning solutions were implemented to ensure education continuity, and much of the current debate focuses on how much students have learnt during school closures. However, while this potential learning loss may only be temporary, other elements that happen in the absence of traditional schooling, such as the curbing of educational aspirations or the disengagement from the school system, will have a long-term impact on students' outcomes, thus distance-teaching has also faced rapid changes. For educators to turn traditional classes into video classes was also unexpected. But still the methodology that was used in offline classes also was the good aid in online classes but a little bit limited. For example excluding teachers physical presence, kinesthetic learning and etc.

Article Received: 18 October 2020, Revised: 3 November 2020, Accepted: 24 December 2020

The article begins by providing a reader with the information about the great academician L. V. Shcherba and establishing a theoretical framework for language and learning, teaching methodology and bilingualism. . It then goes on to examine some issues in second language science learning and then looks at some possible strategies that may be used to help students in this situation. The article was written inspired by book "Teaching Foreign Languages in Secondary School (General Questions of Methodology)" of Russian academician L.V. Shcherba.

2020 marks the 140th anniversary of the birth of the outstanding linguist L.V. Shcherba. Great linguist, academician, one of the founders of the Leningrad Philological School. His works are devoted to the problems of general linguistics, Russian studies, romance studies, Slavic studies, lexicography and pedagogy.

L.V Shcherba was born in 1880 in the city of Igumen, Minsk province and grew up in Kiev. From a young age, being very diligent and impetuous, Lev Vladimirovich Shcherba graduated from the 2nd Kiev Medical School with a gold medal.

Then he continued his studies at Kiev University and, for a good reason, transferred to the Faculty of History and Philology of the Imperial St. Petersburg University, where he met the Russian linguist of Polish origin Baudouin de Courtenay, a man who made a great and significant contribution to the science of language and comparative analysis of the Slavic languages. L.V Shcherba was a student of Baudouin de Courtenay.

Shcherba was very active public figure, for several decades he was organizer and participant in almost all events in the field of philological sciences, not only in Leningrad but also in Moscow. Shcherba began his career in science in 1906, when he lived in Europe, studying grammar, comparative historical linguistics and phonetics in Leipzig, Paris, and Prague and studied the Tuscan and Lusatia dialects. In addition, L.V. Shcherba taught deaf and dumb and teachers of foreign languages at the higher courses for women at the Psycho neurological Institute. It can be assumed that the great academician learned the teaching skills and the foundations of teaching methods in this very environment. [1]

In 1947, the book "Teaching Foreign Languages in Secondary School (General Questions of Methodology)" was published, this book of L.V. Shcherba differs from previous collections. It is based on the methodology of teaching foreign languages, which he developed in terms of considering the language in its three aspects, thus connecting it with general linguistics. In this book, academician, linguist L.V. Shcherba gave a broadly significant explanation to the science of teaching methods as an independent technical discipline. And that this discipline needs to be constantly developed and delved and widespread and interconnected with other scientific disciplines. In his book, academician, linguist L.V. Shcherba wrote about the methodology of teaching foreign languages as a separate science, about the relationship between native and foreign languages, the general educational significance of foreign languages and their place in the system of school subjects and revised issues related to bilingualism. The methodology of teaching foreign languages requires a professional approach. According to the academician, linguist Shcherba, in many wide public circles, but even in a narrower circle of specialists, it is believed that a natural Frenchman or German is an already ready teacher of French or German, if only he has at least some general education. But this opinion is a relic of the era when languages were taught by governesses. In fact, an educated linguist, even with a relatively imperfect command of this language, should be preferred as a school teacher. [2]. Therefore, we see that academician, linguist L.V. Shcherba confirms that not everyone can become a teacher of foreign languages; this requires special training and knowledge of teaching methods.

A teacher of foreign languages must be comprehensively developed and know how to easily and correctly convey the material to his students, he must be aware of the latest techniques and methods in teaching, he must also help students achieve a deeper understanding of the

language, culture, nation, and the history of this language.

Language is a central factor to all learning. Its importance in the learning of science has often been underestimated, as there is a belief that the student's meaning will 'come through' despite language difficulties. According to L.V. Shcherba there are numerous factors which can increase human's capability of developing cognitive aspects of language learning. And mostly it depends on teacher's contribution on education.

It must be admitted that in the process of globalization, the English language has reached the level of the world language and day by day the need is growing to learn this foreign language and to do it more productive.

For foreign language teachers, it is imperative to master teaching skills that meet the standards of world requirements. This definitely requires a lot of effort and hard working, on the teaching skills, because the further we work, the deeper we find the qualities that will give us the opportunity to find the fastest and most productive ways of teaching foreign languages. It is safe to say that there is a growing demand for good and professional methodologists who are masters of their job.

In the theoretical book "Teaching foreign languages in secondary school (General questions of methodology)" of L.V. Shcherba's there are many useful information that will be irreplaceable source for even in modern, non-traditional teaching methodology. For example, academician, linguist L.V. Shcherba maintained that the ability to speak two or even more languages contributes to a more developed cognitive thinking, even when we trying to speak our native literary language, we activate special areas of our brain that systematically analyze the process of reproducing a language as a foreign language, since the native literary language is also a foreign language in which this is at least because we do not use our native literary language in everyday communication. [3]

Consequently, knowledge of different foreign languages gives us the opportunity to develop our communication functions and, in addition, develop our memory. According to academician L.V. Scherby bilingualism can be:

Bilinguals that mutually exclude each other or bilinguals that cover each other. In the first case, both languages are completely isolated from each other, that is, they cannot mix the two languages. For example, at school, a student speaks one language and at home another because at home people do not speak the language the student is used to speak at school. In the second case, when two social groups cover each other to some extent, people constantly switch from one language to another without noticing which language they speak [3]. These examples are demonstration of that different social circles can really influence people and their dialectics.

In order to successfully master a language in natural conditions, certain abilities are required. Note that the term linguistic (linguistic) abilities itself is conditional. In this case, we do not mean the actual ability to master any of the national languages in ontogenesis, but a predisposition to mastering languages.

Rumyantseva defines linguistic ability "as a mental and psychophysiological function of a person, inherent biologically and genetically, but formed and developed socially on the basis of the anatomophysiological and neurophysiological organization of a person; a function that allows the human psyche to reflect and generalize external linguistic material, translating it into special internal codes in the form of unconscious and conscious rules of the language "[4]. The key in this definition, in our opinion, is the recognition of the combination of biological and social; this combination provides the ability to generalize and "translate" the result of processing the input into a set of rules both with the participation of consciousness and unconsciousness. Language abilities represent mental and psychophysiological functions, formed in the course of evolution due to

the need for social interaction and the importance of socialization for the individual. The psychological characteristics of a person, his readiness to realize and develop this mental and psychophysiological function are of great importance for the development of linguistic talent; the decisive quality for the manifestation of a talent for languages is extraversion as an attitude towards communication [5].

It is more difficult for an introvert to master a language, since an introverted attitude does not contribute to quick adaptation in society, active interaction with others. Meanwhile, introverts have another advantage that allows them to compensate for the duration of socialization, namely, developed reflection, which implies the use of a different strategy of language acquisition: cognitive instead of communicative [6].

For receptivity of languages, such mental functions as memory and attention are essential. Cognitive abilities are manifested and developed in the process of solving current problems of social interaction. For their manifestation, an intention is necessary - a motive to realize, formulate and solve a problem. In the activity of an individual, the cognitive component manifests itself simultaneously and due to the formed motivation: "It is proposed to recognize that the cognitive cannot exist except in a triad, ie it participates in the work of a well-coordinated ensemble, which includes the perceptual, cognitive and emotional-evaluative as constantly interacting aspects of the individual's life "[7].

Mass bilingualism is due to global changes in the world economy and the transformation of the socio-demographic situation in developed countries. The possibility of self-realization outside the home country, the availability of movement and employment in different regions of the planet create motivation to purposefully study foreign languages. Language teaching and language acquisition itself is usually interpreted as cross-cultural and global communication, as the

development of a new cultural tradition and new models of behavior. New trends in the examination of the existence and functioning of languages in the global world presuppose a departure from such an unambiguous interpretation; a more differentiated approach to multilingualism is presented in publication [8].

In the modern methodology of teaching foreign languages, there are many controversial issues related to language teaching, for example: some argue that the best way to learn a foreign language (for example, English) is to create that English environment and constantly speak English without using your native language and not be limited to the grammar of this language, but according to other experts, grammar is the basis of colloquial speech and that without grammar it is impossible to competently learn a language. In this regard, an example of academician and linguist L.V. Shcherba in the book "Teaching Foreign Languages in Secondary School (General Questions of Methodology)" in the paragraph "Grammar and its relationship with vocabulary" from a methodological point of view, we see vivid examples of the importance of grammar in the formation of sentences, since our vocabulary is a system of words, and grammar helps to build its syntagm [9]

Grammar is very important, but if you combine and integrate it with modern technologies such as: audio visualization, or develop their critical thinking by giving conversational materials for discussion, include more exercises where students will have the opportunity to freely express their opinions in a foreign language, and at the same time, it is necessary to exclude the correction of grammatical errors by the teacher. This can be done after the student has expressed their opinion. The most important for modern methodology in the works of L.V. Shcherba is a substantiation of a communicative approach to teaching foreign languages. The communicative approach in the methodology is determined by the very essence of

speech communication as the process of communication:"... although the individual process of speaking and understanding themselves are purely biological ( to some extent psychological ) they become a language only in the conditions of their social life and therefore language should be considered as a social phenomenon. This social nature of language is reflected primarily in the unity of the processes of speaking and the processes of understanding, constituting a single whole the process of communication.

L. V. Shcherba points out the need to take into account all three aspects of linguistic phenomena in educational materials, with the leading role of the aspect of the individual's speech activity in the communication process. In teaching, ready-made units (word forms, combinations of words and ready-made phrases) are mastered first of all, which are distinguished and observed in direct speech experience. However, a person's linguistic experience consists not only in the simple repetition of ready-made phrases, but also in the compilation of new phrases in accordance with the communication situation.

The communicative approach is the most widely used and most widely accepted approach to classroom-based foreign language teaching today, and in many ways, is a culmination of those approaches and methodologies that appeared before. It emphasizes the learner's ability to communicate various functions, such as asking and answering questions, making requests, describing, narrating and comparing. Task assignment and problem solving—two key components of critical thinking—are the means through which the communicative approach operates. Unlike the direct method, grammar is not taught in isolation. Learning happens in context and here some other types of learning. Other Methods. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) — There are a number of commercial products and online products which

are generally used by independent language learners. These fall under the CALL method, though some—with careful preparation—have been used in tandem with traditional classroom instruction. Reading Method — Sometimes graduate students or researchers will only need to learn how to read scholarly articles in a language, so they learn through the Reading Method, where enough grammar is taught to make it through a standard article in their field. Students do not work on speaking or listening comprehension; rather, they concentrate on building up a large reservoir of specialized vocabulary. There are also a number of lesser-used and lesser-accepted methodologies, including: Suggestopedia, where the learning environment is made as relaxed as possible so students' brain is able to soak up language. Community Language Learning, where the instructor serves as a counselor rather than as an instructor. Language analysis/awareness, a retrograde approach that concentrates on analyzing language data sets instead of actively using language in the classroom.

Some of the main approaches and methods of foreign language teaching may be considered obsolete from a scientific point of view, some others seem to be more current, but in fact all of them have introduced innovations at a given moment. However, all methods have at least two things in common: their belief to be the best one, and a set of prescriptions that teachers have to follow necessarily. Teaching shouldn't be approached following a particular method as a set of prescriptions, but on the contrary as a dynamic and reflective process, which means a permanent interaction among the curriculum, teachers, students, activities, methodology, and instructional materials. What actually happens in the classroom, alongside careful planning and evaluation, becomes the most important thing teachers have to reflect on and then relate to theory or to other experiences. An active role for teachers, who design her or his own content and tasks, classroom interaction, materials,

methodology, evaluation, etc., is proposed instead of a passive role which means dependence on other people's designs and methods. It is the best way of curriculum, teacher and learner development.

Each method possesses its own certain importance and answers the specifically set pedagogical tasks e.g. grammar and textual-translation methods are better suited for grammar material training before tests, direct methods are more appropriate for language medium immersion and for reconstructing the real communication situations, visual aids assist to represent visually and to systemize the unknown material. The teaching literature review makes it possible to state that nowadays there is no an ideal, universal method yet that would enable to cover all the aspects in such a short time given to the foreign language learning in a technical high school. The combination of the existing methods known and the teacher's qualification, therefore, enables to make the lessons interesting and effective. On the basis of the foregoing we can conclude that during the whole history of foreign language teaching methods development methodologists and teachers highlighted different types of speech activities (reading, listening, translation) focusing on a particular era goal. In addition, each method has its own specific value and responds to specific pedagogical objectives set.

Pedagogics couldn't stay at the same place. It required the reforms meeting the social necessities of that time for foreign language fluency. The new school, however, was created by theorists-practicians having no sufficient proof for scientific explanations of their methods. They were guided only by their teaching feeling. There developed the direct teaching methods among them natural approach, direct, audiovisual and aural-oral methods.

The most distinguished representatives of the natural method M. Berlitz, F. Gouin, M. Walter thought that to learn a foreign language quickly and thoroughly was possible only by

reconstructing the verbal environment. Despite some differences their teaching concepts had something in common namely the total exclusion of the native language from the foreign language immersion process. "If we give the meaning of a new word, either by translation into the home language or by an equivalent in the same language, as soon as we introduce it, we weaken the impression which the word makes on the mind" [10] The main goal was practical oral speech acquisition. The teaching was to proceed by intuition like the child mastered his native language.

Up to date in some countries there are schools where teaching is based on Berlitz's methods. He believed that it was necessary to exclude the native language entirely from the foreign language teaching and moreover it was quite essential to teach thinking in a foreign language. The lesson based on his methods consists of the following basic stages: explaining the new vocabulary by means of objects (or their pictures), gestures, explanations in a foreign language etc.; the teacher's conversation with the audience or with himself; conversations or short descriptions of the pictures by the students. Berlitz advised to teach the grammar first as the vocabulary and not systematically but occasionally. The abstract concepts were to be explained by revealing their meanings from the context. Berlitz's system pursued the specific practical goals.[11]

Communicative language teaching (CLT), also known as the Communicative Approach, emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. The 'Communicative Language Teaching' is not so much a method on its own as it is an approach. In recent years, task based language learning (TBLL), also known as task-based language teaching (TBLT) or task-based instruction (TBI), has grown steadily in popularity. TBLL is a further refinement of the CLT approach, emphasizing the successful completion

of tasks as both the organizing feature and the basis for assessment of language instruction.[12]

[The direct method was established in Germany and France around 1900 and are best represented by the methods devised by Berlitz and de Saucé. The direct method operates on the idea that second language learning must be an imitation of first language learning, as this is the natural way humans learn any language - a child never relies on another language to learn its first language, and thus the mother tongue is not necessary to learn a foreign language. These methods place great stress on correct pronunciation and the target language from outset. Such methods rely on directly representing an experience into a linguistic construct rather than relying on abstractions like mimicry, translation and memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary. Learning of writing and spelling should be delayed until after the printed word has been introduced, and grammar and translation should also be avoided because this would involve the application of the learner's first language. The method relies on a step-by-step progression based on question-and-answer sessions which begin with naming common objects such as doors, pencils, floors, etc. It provides a motivating start as the learner begins using a foreign language almost immediately. [13] Today, innovative learning technologies are used in several ways. If we use them in a wide variety of topics and lessons, the lesson will be more effective and learners will be encouraged to do so. Of course, using the introduction and implementation of innovations in the learning process increase the effectiveness of education. The use of different roles and games in teaching foreign languages can also increase the interest in language learning. Working in pairs or small groups helps learners communicate with others.

The other representatives of this school F. Gouin and M. Walter adhered to the same teaching concepts but they introduced new

techniques for creating the natural verbal environment. In the field of Pedagogics Gouin followed J. Pestalozzi's ideas and his doctrine about sense-visual perception and in the field of Psychology he followed H. Steinthal's ideas who considered the language processes to be the reflection of man's mental activity.[14]

This is the creative nature of speech, the ability to express and understand new thoughts that a person has never heard or formulated before: "... it is impossible to imagine that our language consisted only of a finite number of retired phrases, like a mechanical organ with a certain number of rollers: we can always say and understand a phrase that we have never uttered before and which we have never heard before." [15]

The ordered linguistic experience of a particular group is characterized by the fact that it contains the grammatical and lexical rules of the given language, "... it is these rules that give us the ability to speak and understand what has been said, because, on the one hand, a person cannot be equated with a parrot that repeats only heard and learned phrases, and on the other hand, it is absolutely impossible to indicate anything else that would give us the opportunity to speak what has not yet been said and heard and understand never heard. It follows from this that the old and so ridiculed formula "grammar teaches to speak" is not at all stupid, but reflects objective reality" [16].

It is in the assimilation of lexical and grammatical rules that the mastery of the studied language consists: "... Speaking in all decisive cases begins to appear only when the language material begins to turn into a language, that is, when grammatical and lexical rules begin to be created in the student" [16].

L. V. Shcherba provided great assistance to the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language from the first steps of its development. According to the memoirs of I. M. Pulkina, he demanded from teachers not only familiarity with the linguistic coverage of the facts

of the language, but also attention to the living word, taught to thorough linguistic analysis of the text [3]. And today the influence of L. V. Shcherba on the development of the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language is difficult to overestimate, L. V. Shcherba has created whole directions in this science, which are successfully developed by modern methodologists.

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