

THE PECULIARITIES OF THE DIRECT METHOD USAGE IN TEACHING SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN GALICIA AND BUKOVINA (1890–1918)

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Rezumat: În acest articol sunt analizate particularitățile aplicării metodei directe în studierea învățării limbilor străine în Galiția și Bucovina (în perioada anilor 1890–1918). Autoarea pune în evidență premisele aplicării metodei directe de studiu a limbilor străine, precum și influența altor științe asupra dezvoltării metodicii de predare a acestora. În continuare, sunt dezbătute particularitățile aplicării metodei directe de învățare a limbilor străine în provinciile austriece Galiția și Bucovina. De asemenea, este prezentată metodică învățării vorbirii limbilor străine în Galiția și Bucovina, în contextul utilizării metodei directe de predare.

Abstract: The given article researches the peculiarities of the usage of the direct method in teaching foreign language speaking in Galicia and Bukovina (1890–1918). It analyses the preconditions of appearance in the European science of the direct method of teaching of foreign languages and the influence of contiguous sciences on the methodology of teaching of foreign languages. In this article, the peculiarities of realization of the direct method of teaching (i.e. for foreign languages) in Galicia and Bukovina are observed. The methodology of teaching of foreign language speaking in the process of realization of the direct method in the west of Ukraine is described.

Résumé: Dans cet article il s'agit des particularités de l'utilisation de la méthode directe dans l'apprentissage des langues étrangères en Galicie et en Bucovine (les années 1890–1918). On fait l'analyse des conditions de l'apparition de la méthode directe, l'impact des sciences adjacentes sur le développement de méthodes d'étude des langues étrangères. On explore les particularités de réalisation de la méthode directe d'étude des langues étrangères. On décrit la méthodologie d'enseigner à parler dans le processus de la réalisation de la méthode directe dans l'apprentissage des langues étrangères en Galicie et en Bucovine.

Keywords: methodology, teaching of foreign languages, the direct method, Galicia, Bukovina.

Modern ideas of the place and role of methods of teaching foreign language in Galicia and Bukovina in the first half of the 20th century harmonize with the theory of globalization as the expanding and extending the retrospective knowledge given the parallel processes of differentiation, regionalization and multiculturalism. Naturally, in this regard, the importance of regionalization in all of its manifestations

is constantly increasing. Regional peculiarities Galicia and Bukovina act not as the relics of the past, but as a direct result of a multi-faceted in its manifestations process of cultural evolution. The research of the peculiarity of the development of teaching foreign languages (FL) methods in Galicia and Bukovina allows supporting the idea of the 'multi-facetedness' of the historical process with the specific historical material, to identify the causes and consequences of the existing diversity of approaches, principles, methods of teaching FL. The chronological framework of the research allows better to take into consideration the historical, social and political factors that influenced the development of the methods.

In this regard, there emerges the need for system research of the trends in methods of FL teaching in Galicia and Bukovina, the expansion of the problem field, the formation of historical thinking. The analysis of methodological works, including the ones by I. V. Rachmanov (studied the methodological problems of teaching of the modern western European languages of the 19th and 20th centuries)¹, V. Ye. Raushenbah (analyzed the methods of I–XX centuries), H. Ye. Vedel (continued to shed the light upon this issue up to the middle of the 20th century)², O. O. Mirolyubov (analyzed the state of the methods of foreign languages teaching in the 19th-21st centuries)³, R. A. Kuznetsova (researching the history of methods of teaching foreign languages in the Soviet non-linguistic higher educational institutions)⁴, N. I. Gez, H. M. Frolova (studied the history of foreign language teaching methodology)⁵ and others enables us to make the statement – in the historiography of FL teaching methods the given problem in Galicia and Bukovina had not been the object of the scientific research.

Considering all of the above, we define the objective of the given article as to analyse the features of using the direct method in teaching speaking foreign languages in Galicia and Bukovina (1890–1918).

¹ И. В. Рахманов *Очерк по истории методики преподавания новых западноевропейских иностранных языков* [Methodological problems of teaching of the modern western European languages], М.: Учпедгиз, 1947. – 196 с.

² Г. Е. Ведель, *Из истории методов преподавания иностранных языков* [The history of the methods of foreign languages teaching], Воронеж: Изд-во Воронеж. ун-та, 1979. – 54 с.

³ А. А. Миролубов *История отечественной методики обучения иностранным языкам* [The history of foreign methodology of foreign languages teaching], Москва: Ступени; Инфа-М., 2002. – 448 с.

⁴ Р. А. Кузнецова *Из истории методики обучения иностранным языкам в советских неязыковых вузах* [The history of the methods the foreign languages teaching in 1900-1923], Изд-во Казан. ун-та, 1969. – 46 с.

⁵ Н. И. Гез, *История зарубежной методики преподавания иностранных языков: учебное пособие для студ. лингв. ун-тов и фак. ин. яз. высш. пед. учеб. заведений* [The history of foreign methodology of foreign languages teaching], Москва, Издательский центр Академия, 2008. – 256 с.

It is significant to bring up that in the researched period (1890–1918) Galicia and Bukovina belonged to Austria-Hungary. Educational reforms that began in Europe in the 70-80's of the 19th century, were considered in the history of FL teaching methods as the reaction to the translation methods used in teaching classical languages and were transferred to the methodology of teaching foreign languages.

Development of methods of teaching FL in the west of Ukraine was taking place in dissoluble connection and under the influence of world-wide, European, economic, social, and cultural progress. Methodical trends of the “Reform movement” in Europe influenced the development of FL teaching methods in Galicia and Bukovina. In particular, the end of the 19th century is characterized by the increase of interest in FL teaching. Questions concerning FL teaching during this period were being raised as the regional school boards of Galicia and Bukovina in pedagogical periodicals at that time, as well as at the state level – in legal documents concerning education, which led to changes in curricula, textbooks, FL teaching methods and others.

The leading ideas in the development of FL teaching methods in Galicia and Bukovina in the period relevant for our research includes the change of the FL teaching objective, which led to the transition from the translation methods to the direct method of FL teaching.

Methodological trend of the Reform was not homogeneous, as many linguists, psychologists, methodologists participated in it: B. Eggert, H. Wendt, W. Vietor, F. Franke, M. Berlitz and M. Walter in Germany, F. Gouin, P. Passy, S. Schweizer, H. Sweet, E. Simonot and J. Carre - in France, K. Breul in England, S. Alge in Belgium, O. Yespersen in Denmark, and M. Pilmgren in Sweden⁶.

The method that emerged during the period of reforms in the European countries had the following names: antigrammar, rational, specific, natural, visual, intuitive, immediate (this name is found in Western methodological works), direct. The most common name is the direct method, which we shall use in our thesis.

Let us mention that the representatives of the direct method opposed the following:

- primacy of the printed text;
- rigid grammar rules which were not appropriate for the actual spoken language;
- lack of attention to the study of phonetics;
- isolated study of words;
- use of translation⁷.

Thus, the direct method prioritized the practical purposes, and above all – teaching speaking, which gave students a quick, though not quite accurate, at most,

⁶ Н. И. Гез, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

limited knowledge of the FL, namely, the ability to verbally communicate with foreigners within the limits of casual short dialogues. The proponents of this method anticipated that a child who is studying FL, knows neither translation nor grammar, he/she just listens to the language, trying to imitate it. Hence, while teaching FL one should avoid translation and grammar; the pupil should listen to a foreign language, try to imitate it, thus this is the way of gaining proficiency in oral speech. Because of this, the teaching-learning process should be conducted only in FL; from the first lesson the teacher had refuse to use the native language, replacing it with various facial expressions, gestures, pictures, synonyms, antonyms etc. A lot of effort and attention were required from the pupils to imitate the teacher. However, despite the shortcomings of the direct method, it has gained wide acceptance, particularly, as a result, the school back then had to had meet a new goal stipulated by social development.

The purpose of teaching FL in Galicia and Bukovina in the studied period was to make the pupils able to express their thoughts orally and in writing, to learn the syntax and declination (at the lower proficiency level), be able to talk quickly (at the highest proficiency level); to know about the foreign language literature from reading the most famous literary works of 18th-19th centuries⁸. The levels of education at that time were as follows: primary forms (lower level - I, II and III forms), middle forms (middle level - IV, V and VI forms), senior forms (higher level- VII and VIII forms).

Opportunely, we should also mention that we discovered the concept of the middle level of learning-teaching FL only in Galicia curricula and methodological works of the studied period⁹. There is no proof of teaching FL at the middle level in Bukovina, it is all just about learning in the middle forms, at the middle level. In these regions the education was divided into lower and higher levels. Thus, the middle forms, according to the methodologists of Galicia, we shall call the middle level.

According to the demand of the society in the new socio-economic conditions the contemporary in Galicia and Bukovina methodologists had to implement a new objective in the secondary school as soon as possible. Therefore, in addition to social factors, the achievements of the relevant for methods of FL teaching sciences were of great significance.

The achievements of linguistics had some influence on the development of the direct method of FL teaching. Thus, a new trend in linguistics became the linguistic school of "Neogrammarians" that emerged in the 70's in Leipzig (Germany). The representatives of this trend were K. Brugmann, H. Paul, B.

⁸*Plany Naukowe dla Szkół ludowych Pospolitych pięcio-i szescio-klasowych męskich, żeńskich i mieszanych wraz z instrukcją*[Research Plans for the ordinary folk Schools with five-and six-class male, female and mixed with the instruction], Lwowie, 1893, p. 4.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 2

Delbrück, H. Osthoff¹⁰. Their idea consisted in identifying the language and national spirit, the study of folk psychology manifested in customs, material and spiritual culture of the nation. Based on numerous observations and comparisons of linguistic phenomena “Neogrammarians” created a lot of linguistic laws in the fields of phonetics and morphology. Their main achievement was the complete denial of verbal-scholastic research methods, of the old ideas of language and learning of the actual spoken language, of recognition of the priority of speech over written language. Neogrammarians denied any comparison, considering that the linguistic material can only be understood from the context, hence the requirement for learning grammar by inductive method, allowing to accumulate grammatical material, compile it and get the results appeared. In addition, it was considered that the words do not exist beyond the context and one can study the words and understand the causative relations between them only in the context.

The Neogrammarian School had a positive impact on the development of linguistics: they justified the importance of phonetics in the study of language as well as in teaching FL, linguists began to distinguish between sounds and letters; the international phonetic transcription was developed; phonetics became an independent linguistic science.

Noteworthy, the conceptual framework of Neogrammarians in Galicia and Bukovina was only partially implemented, in particular advantage of speech over written language was not supported, since writing was perfected not only by forming ability to express one’s views on the read works everyday situations, but also by writing letters of various kinds, business papers. Therefore, we believe that oral and written speech at that time were equally important means of mastering FL. As for the idea of identifying language and national spirit, material and spiritual culture, the language of which was studied, it was fully implemented. This is proved by the curricula, textbooks and works of methodologists which dealt with exploring culture and customs of the people and the study of linguistic phenomena based on the content of the coherent text and various genres of literature. Furthermore, a comparison of linguistic phenomena of FL with native language in the studied period in Galicia and Bukovina was believed to be one of the methods of explanation of the grammatical material.

The linguistics of that period can be characterized by a psychological approach to the analysis of linguistic phenomena. The emergence of new application field of psychology, namely educational psychology, contributed to the rapprochement of the two sciences. The main role in this interaction was played by the associative psychology, later called experimental psychology of W. Wundt¹¹,

¹⁰ Н. И. Гез, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

who investigated the properties of consciousness, attention and memory based on visual and auditory senses. He strongly believed that the formation of more stable feelings and ideas in the mind depends on the number of roused feelings, and the strongest of them are caused by visual and auditory sensations. Wundt said that in the process of speech the sentences appear in the consciousness as a coherent picture, the components of which are created at the moment of speaking. Associations as passively experienced processes are not confined to mere unity of images or elements. At the same time, Wundt introduces the concept of apperception, i.e. conditionality of perception of certain objects or phenomena of objective world via one's previous experience and psychological state at the moment of perception. He analyses the actively experienced processes¹². Overall the psychology of the given period allowed the authors of the reform to identify the following principles of teaching FL: as the memory is based on associations, remembering and forgetting of verbal material depends on the strength of associative links; translation as the main way of setting interlingual associations was replaced the associations between concepts and words of FL.

Note that the theoretical basis of associative psychology in the studied period was partially used, in particular, translation remained the main link between a word and a concept.

Gestalt psychology also influenced the teaching methodology. Its representatives (Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka)¹³ The main principles of Gestalt psychology were implemented in Galicia and Bukovina entirely, while speaking was being taught on the basis of whole sentences in the context of a specific conversational topic, using the texts of fiction.

So, as you can see, some conceptual principles of Neogrammarians, associative psychology were being used only to some extent, and some, such as those of Gestalt psychology were being used entirely, which allows us to affirm the deliberate use of new trends while teaching FL taken into account the learning environment in Galicia and Bukovina.

Having analyzed the impact of linguistic and psychological ideas of European scientists on the development of FL teaching methods, we shall move on to the details of the direct method of teaching FL in Galicia and Bukovina (1890–1918).

In 1890–1918 the direct method, which was implemented by combining the individual principles of the translation and direct methods functioned in Galicia and Bukovina. The teachers in Galicia and Bukovina were taking into account in FL

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹³ *Методика викладання іноземних мов у середніх навчальних закладах : підручн. для студентів вищих навч. закл.* [Teaching foreign languages in middle educational schools] / О. Б. Бігич, С. В. Гапонова, Г. А. Гринюк та ін.; керівн. автор. кол. С. Ю. Ніколаєва (2-е вид.), К. : Ленвіт, 2002, p. 290.

teaching the linguistic and psychological peculiarities of FL teaching, substantiated by the scientists of that period, and their implementation in the conditions of teaching, as well as the experience of teachers. This made it possible to outline the principles of the *direct method*, which remained *unchanged* during the researched period: the widespread use of phonetics, teaching speaking based on everyday language, the widespread use of figurative (pictures, objects, models, imitations) and verbal visualizations (synonyms, antonyms, word formation, definitions, etymology, context, etc.).

Principles which were interpreted differently: the use of the native language at an initial stage to explain unfamiliar vocabulary and grammatical phenomena; inductive method of grammar teaching (giving grammatical rules at the primary level); use of translation as a means of control of lexical and grammatical knowledge on the higher level of education.

New principles that appeared in the given period: knowledge of history, literature of the 18th - 19th centuries, familiarization of pupils with all genres of fiction; the comparison of the linguistic phenomena of FL with those of the native language.

The FL curriculum of 1894 contains information that proves that teaching speaking at the elementary stage was initiated by the teacher, who asked different questions, and the pupils had to give the correct answers, which were the core of further learning and in the future facilitated independent translation of excerpts from texts, works of fiction without teacher's assistance¹⁴.

The teacher had to address the question to the class, so that each pupil was ready answer it. Questions, which the teacher asked the pupils, had to be well thought-out and clear. Each next question had to follow logically the previous one; as such this kind of work had to be transformed into a dialogue. The teacher had also to predict the pupil's answer, check the lexical and grammatical knowledge, which pupils were using in their responses, at the moment of speaking. The contents of such conversations conformed to the text which was being learned at the given lesson. Later on, the pupils had to convey the meaning of the text on their own without the help of questions using the learned lexical and grammatical material.

At the middle level of education the communication between the pupil and the teacher was solely in FL. At first the conversational topics were based on the text about everyday life, which were later supplemented with information from other spheres; text were rendered in a modified form, for example, the pupils were retelling texts from the third person singular. If the student replied too closely following the text, the teacher would use follow-up questions to make him/her to digress from the text and render the fragment in some other form or show his/her own opinion using the factual material learned before¹⁵.

¹⁴ *Plany Naukowe...*, p. 102.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

At the primary level pupils were supposed to learn by heart excerpts of text (8-10 lines) word for word or with some minor changes. Changes were allowed as long as the pupil made them based on previously learned vocabulary. At the middle level pupils were to learn fragments of poetry or prose by heart. While their reciting the teacher had to pay attention to pronunciation, emphases on more important thoughts or expressions. The descriptions of paintings, sceneries, landscapes, ancient statues, pantheon, scenes from German legends and myths, exterior and interior of medieval castle etc. were the subject of the conversation at the higher level of education.

So, taking into account all of the found data on teaching speaking, we can conclude that it was carried out at all stages of FL learning. Conversation topics reflected real situation in the social context. An important condition while speaking was using correct pronunciation and lexical and grammatical material given within the framework of a particular topic. It was also recommended to teach speaking on the basis of literary works and others texts read by pupils.

The methodologist of that time, S. Kaniuk in his book “Pytannii i vidpovid” (“The Question and the Answer”) emphasized that the most successful form of teaching speaking is ‘a question and an answer’. Though, before asking a question, the teacher had to prepared it well, preferably in written form. The author considered the question to be an unfinished sentence with a stimulus to answer, giving certain information to form a sentence, i.e. the answer is an addition to the sentence¹⁶. S. Kaniuk believed that questions are very useful at the primary level of education as they help to develop the pupils’ thinking. He said that it was possible to ask questions to each member of the sentence with a relevant (logical) stress. The purpose of the question was to teach students to think, to formulate responses independently. All questions were divided into the following types: *disjunctive* (such question has a comparison within itself out of which one has to choose the negative answer) *complementary* (the answer to which the student has to supplement with the information from the sentence), this group also included *definitional* (explaining a certain concept), but it was desirable to use such questions at the higher level; *affirmative/qualitative* (they require a short “yes” or “no” answer), the author advised not to use those questions because they do not develop individual speaking abilities; *indirect/suggestive* (help to find a logical connection between the question and the subject of study), this type is used if a pupil does not understand the main questions, when he/she does not know what it is about; the teachers should not ask questions or leading questions, the answers to which pupils do not know; *examination questions* (used at the examinations to obtain information about the level of learning of studied material, such questions

¹⁶ С. Канюк, *Питання і відповідь* [The Question and the Answer], in “Bukowiner Schule. Zeitschrift für das Volksschulwesen“, Czernowitz, 1908, 4 Heft, V. Jahrgang, S. 220.

are not related to each other).

When posing the questions, the teacher paid attention to the following rules: each question has be addressed to the whole class, one should take a break to think of the possible answer, then the teacher asks one of the students to answer; the complicated questions are given to the more gifted students, the easier ones – to those who are less clever; the students were questioned on a random basis.

Questions were also detailed concerning the following aspects a) the content (sentences, text), b) the form (grammatical form) c) the object of studying; d) the course of studying e) the development of the pupil: *detailed concerning the content* (implies the presence of an interrogative word); *detailed concerning the form* (aimed at clarification of the correct use of grammatical material), should be short and clear, consider the rules of articulation (accentuation), *corresponding to the object of study* (does not contain any insignificant details), *corresponding to the course of study* (linked, i.e. one question entails the other one); *corresponding to the development of the pupil* (i.e. of moderate difficulty, because easy questions make classes boring and too difficult ones deprive pupils' of the chance to answer)¹⁷.

Detailed question content development makes it possible to assert that they stimulated the interest of students, helped the teacher to control the process of learning and contributed to the development of receptive (grammar) skills and reproductive skills (speaking and writing).

Teaching speaking also used learning the individual sentences, dialogues, entire conversational situations, that corresponded to the texts in the textbooks, by heart. Texts, which pupils learned by heart, were read in class in advance by the teacher so that pupils could imitate the correct pronunciation.

Teaching speaking took place on the basis of reproduction, which was based on imitation, which eventually had to transform into a relaxed conversation. Speech samples that were the subject of rendering were previously worked up: new vocabulary and grammar were explained; questions to the content were asked and answered in class. Making up dialogues and staging texts with learning the part by heart and discussing of the main characters played a significant role in the development of speaking skills.

Thus, teaching speaking in Galicia and Bukovina in the studied period occurred at the primary level based on the adapted texts, which reflected everyday language, which is typical for the direct method, and at the middle and the higher level based on *the passages from literature, information on history, art etc., which was not supported by the reformers*. The peculiarity of the direct method implementation in teaching speaking was also the *interaction of thought and speech*, which was manifested in the rendering of the content of a text in a modified form and reproduction of the text fragment using the actual material that was

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 221–222.

studied before. This type of exercise objected the principles of the proponents of the direct method that activity feelings rather than thinking, intuition, reason play the primary role in speaking, which led to the separation of language from thought, to the exaggeration of the role of mechanical memory and any kind of associations, to identification of the processes of language acquisition by children and adults.