

CHACKELIS LEMCHENAS, A CONTRASTIVE LINGUIST BEFORE CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTICS

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Abstract. The article explores the views of Chackelis Lemchenas (1904–2001) on teaching Lithuanian to speakers of other languages. As a prominent linguist, experienced practitioner, and a multilingual person, he proposed ideas that are compatible with the principles of contrastive linguistics already in the 1920s. He favoured explicit grammar explanations in the subsystems that differ in Lithuanian and the students' L1 and explained that what he called “formal logic” was necessary in order to teach the students how the grammar of Lithuanian works in comparison with their L1. The article demonstrates that exploration of language teaching approaches in non-Western contexts and from historical perspectives provides a better understanding of the history of ideas.

Keywords: Lithuanian, language teaching, language learning, Chackelis Lemchenas, historical sociolinguistics

1. Introduction

The objective of this article is to describe and analyse the views of Chackelis Lemchenas (1904–2001) concerning the teaching of Lithuanian as L2 to ethnolinguistic minorities in interwar Lithuania (1918–1940). More specifically, the ideas expressed in the mid-1920s–1930s are to be discussed from today's perspective, given what we know now about language acquisition and language teaching. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) as a scholarly discipline started developing after WWII, at the same time with related fields such as L1 acquisition, contact linguistics and bi- and multilingualism

research. The understanding that what language learners produce is not chaotic but actually has connection to features of their L1 is reflected by Uriel Weinreich (1953), Robert Lado (1957) and later works by Pit Corder (1967) and Larry Selinker (1972). The underlying idea of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, expressed by Lado (1957), suggests that for a learner it is easier to acquire features that are similar in L1 and L2 and more difficult to acquire grammatical features that differ across these languages.

However, empirical evidence (especially from the point of view of the neighbouring discipline of contact linguistics) demonstrates that Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis has a limited predictive power and not all speakers of L1 transfer features of that language onto target language (L2). Moreover, the learners' version may become a new norm under certain sociolinguistic circumstances (for instance, in Latvian, the fixed stress on the first syllable is a "mistake" characteristic of speakers of Finnic languages that have the feature; eventually, their variety of a Baltic language became the mainstream). Still, the idea of a contrastive approach and comparison of L1 and L2 (L3, Lx) structures was innovative and fundamental for the formation of SLA (see more on the history of the field in Ellis 2020).

What is less known is how understanding of L2 learning and teaching developed in the non-Western context. Additionally, there is a diachronic dimension here, and research on language teaching and learning discourse in a historical perspective can be qualified as a historical sociolinguistic inquiry (see the programmatic article by Nevalainen 2015).¹ It may be argued that in macro-perspective, Lithuania and other countries of Eastern Europe are culturally a part of the West, but at a closer look, one discovers remarkable differences compared to the prototypical West. Teaching of such languages as Lithuanian or other languages of the so-called peoples

¹ The homepage of Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics mentions language ideologies among the topics; a historic (reconstructionist) approach to discourse on language teaching, views on language learners and teachers profiles etc. can be considered as a subtopic: <https://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/jhsl/html>

with late modernization occurred in a strikingly different sociolinguistic situation than teaching of English, French, German, Russian and other “big” languages with long-established standards and traditions. Unlike the West, the Baltic states that emerged in 1919, after the collapse of the Russian Empire, acknowledged ethnic minorities and, with a different degree of success, guaranteed primary and secondary education through the medium of minority languages. In the Baltic states, the general understanding was that everyone should study foreign languages, minorities and majorities alike (the usual practice was to teach two foreign languages and, in the minority school, the official language as well). Thus, an analysis of considerations of how Lithuanian as L2 should be taught and by whom would provide a better understanding of SLA/L2 teaching history. Another point is the availability of the relevant writings and a potential researcher’s ability to read Lithuanian or any other lesser used language. It will be demonstrated that Chackelis Lemchenas, a renowned teacher of Lithuanian, translator, editor and lexicographer, expressed ideas that remained unknown to the larger scholarly community.

The paper is organised as follows. First, the sociolinguistic context of interwar Lithuania and the linguistic situation will be discussed. Then the papers where Lemchenas expressed his views (Lemchenas 1924a, 1924b, 1928) will be analysed. This will be followed by discussion and conclusions.

2. The sociolinguistic situation and teaching of Lithuanian from 1918 to 1940

Lithuanian has a long literary tradition, yet due to socio-political circumstances, such as the Polonization of the elites since the emergence of Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth and then the subjugated position of Lithuanians and Russification policies under the Russian imperial rule, a gradual emergence of modern standard Lithuanian took place as late as the middle of the 19th century. The inhabitants of

larger cities and towns spoke mostly the languages of the elites, that is, Russian, Polish and, to some extent, German, while Lithuanian-speakers dwelled mostly in the countryside (this started gradually changing during the national awakening in the second part of the 19th century). The proficiency in Lithuanian was not required from the ruling imperial elites, and as for ethnolinguistic minorities, such as the Poles, Jews, Tatars, Karaims, Belarusians, their command of Lithuanian varied depending on their place of residence, occupation and the need to interact with their Lithuanian neighbours.

After the establishment of the independent Republic of Lithuania in 1918, the sociopolitical situation changed radically: now Lithuanian was the official language that functioned in all public domains, and a mere working knowledge of the language and/or its regional variety was not sufficient anymore. Ethnolinguistic minorities had to be taught modern standard Lithuanian in schools and vocational training institutions.

Compared to other Baltic countries, Lithuania had a larger share of minorities. According to the 1924 census, the share of other ethnic groups was as follows: Russians constituted 2.7 %, Germans 1.4 %, Poles 3.2 % and Jews 7.6 % of the population (Kasekamp 2010: 117). Like in Latvia and Estonia, linguistic minorities had a right for secondary education in their languages, so Lithuania had a developed system of minority schools. In all three Baltic countries, the policy was that minorities should attend either their own schools or majority schools and not the schools of other minorities, especially the German and Russian ones, as the former elite languages still held some prestige.

According to Kaubrys (1991: 25), who retrieved data from the Ministry of Education, the State Archive of Lithuania (*Lietuvos valstybinis archyvas*) and from various official reports (written records of the parliament meetings, the government news publication *Vyriausybės žinios*) there were Jewish, Polish, German, Latvian, Russian, Belarusian and mixed schools (the latter had several languages of instruction). The number of Jewish schools (here Yiddish

and Hebrew medium schools are viewed together) grew from 55 in 1920 to 109 in 1939, while the number of Polish and German schools diminished (from 21 and 25 in 1920 to 10 and 10 in 1938, respectively), the number of Russian and Latvian schools remained relatively stable (2 and 10 in 1920, and 4 and 13 in 1928, respectively). The number of Belarusian schools was low (1–2), eventually, they disappeared altogether (Kaubrys 1991: 25).

Jews, mostly Yiddish-speakers, constituted the largest minority, and formed a sizable group in absolute numbers as well (about 150,000 in 1939, (Mendelsohn 1983: 226)). The question of how proficient Jews were in Lithuanian and whether they were mostly Russian-speakers (a popular stereotype) was widely debated in both Lithuanian and Jewish press (see more in Verschik 2010, Verschik 2013). Šetkus (2017) provides a historical overview of teaching of the Lithuanian language in Jewish schools, both Yiddish and Hebrew medium (the former were all secular, while the latter were subdivided into secular and traditional) but, understandably, as a historian, he does not address linguistic aspects. Whether and how teaching of and proficiency in Lithuanian among other ethnic groups was separately discussed in the media remains to be investigated.

In sum, the new task to teach Lithuanian to minorities, dictated by the new reality of Lithuanian being the official language was quite serious and, as it appears, in the beginning, a lack of everything (qualified teachers of Lithuanian as L2, textbooks, grammars, dictionaries etc.) was clearly evident. From the description provided by Lemchenas (see Section 3), it appears that the main problem was the lack of understanding how teaching of Lithuanian to speakers of other languages is different from teaching Lithuanian as L1, and, in more general terms, what teaching/learning of foreign languages requires (at that point, there was no concept of L2 different from foreign language, but in today's terms, Lithuanian would be considered as L2 for the local minorities).

3. Chackelis Lemchenas' views: what is required for successful teaching of Lithuanian

Chackelis Lemchenas was a Lithuanian linguist of Jewish origin. He was born in a small town of Papilė. In 1915, during WWI, his family was exiled into Russia, since the Tsarist government considered Jews disloyal and feared their collaboration with the enemy. He returned to Lithuania in 1921, completed his gymnasium education in Kaunas, and in 1923 entered Kaunas University where he studied Lithuanian linguistics with Jonas Jablonskis (1880–1930), a renowned linguist and significant language planner. Lemchenas graduated as late as 1936 because he had to combine working and studying. He worked as a Lithuanian language teacher in various educational institutions: from 1924 to 1927, at the Jewish Real Gymnasium of Ukmergė (with Yiddish as the language of instruction), from 1927 to 1928 in the Jewish Teachers' Seminary (Hebrew–medium) and the Jewish College of Commerce (Yiddish–medium) in Kaunas; from 1928 to 1940, at the Šiaulai Hebrew Gymnasium. During WWII, he was a prisoner in the Kaunas ghetto and later in Dachau concentration camp. He survived and after the war, returned to the Soviet-occupied Lithuania and worked as a lexicographer, translator and editor.

As a multilingual person who was proficient in Yiddish, Lithuanian, German and Russian, and an experienced teacher of Lithuanian, Lemchenas made some important observations concerning L2 acquisition and pedagogy already in the mid-1920s. In the rest of this section, I will discuss his writings on the subject. The translations from Lithuanian into English are mine.

For the analysis, three articles have been retrieved which best disclose his pedagogic views; two of them are rather notes on the subject (Lemchenas 1924a, 1924b) and the third one is a full-fledged programmatic paper (Lemchenas 1928).

The first note with the title “Lietuvių kalbos vadovėlių reikalu” (On the subject of Lithuanian language textbooks) was published on October 24, 1924, in the first Lithuanian-language Jewish periodical

Mūsų garsas (Our voice), which appeared from 1924 to 1925 (Lemchenas 1924a). The periodical often provided space for opinions on language policy and language problems (see more details in Verschik 2013). Here, Lemchenas discusses the general situation of teaching Lithuanian to speakers of other languages, in particular, Lithuanian Jews, and formulates the key idea that speakers of other languages need a different kind of Lithuanian grammar and textbooks than Lithuanian-speakers. Leaving aside the question of Russification of Jews during the late imperial era, one may ask how one should learn Lithuanian in the given circumstances without appropriate books and teaching methods.

Lemchenas maintained that the materials intended for Lithuanian as L1 speakers are being used in minority schools and found this unsatisfactory². He called for the development of different teaching methods and textbooks, dictionaries and readers. Several textbooks for speakers of other languages existed already in the 1920s (Žukaitė 2010), of which Lemchenas (1924a) mentioned one by Pranas Vikonis and another one by Abraomas Šulmanas (intended for Yiddish speakers). However, he criticised the existing books for a number of reasons: there were numerous mistakes, typos, erroneous explanations, illogical order of vocabulary teaching, the way of presenting grammar was unsatisfactory (in the case of Vikonis' book, overly complicated grammar explanations). Lemchenas found the existing (Russian–Lithuanian) dictionaries not satisfactory either because they were not useful for learners of Lithuanian or contained mistakes. The article ends with a rhetorical question: an educated person will find a way to learn Lithuanian but what about simple folk? This was a significant question because the new sociolinguistic situation required proficiency in Lithuanian but it was unclear how schools and language courses could assist achieving it.

² During my conversations in the 2010s with those who either graduated or studied in various Kaunas Jewish (Yiddish–medium) schools, it came out that in the 1930s textbooks for Lithuanian as L1 speakers were still in use.

The second article (Lemchenas 1924b) was published in the newspaper *Lietuva* (Lithuania) on October 30, 1924. It was a critical review of a textbook authored by Liudas Gira (1884–1946), a Lithuanian poet, writer and literary critic. Although the author was neither a language teacher, nor a linguist, he was still a distinguished man of letters, and, consequently, one would expect a decent textbook. According to the title, the book was intended for Russian-speakers and served as a “Russian–Lithuanian grammar”, textbook and self-instruction book. Lemchenas (1924a) criticised its grammar explanations and the choice of grammatical forms and categories. The explanations were insufficient, too short and often erroneous (for instance, wrong Russian equivalents for Lithuanian so-called half-participles, a type of gerundive). Lemchenas concluded that rather than improve the cited book, a whole new textbook should be written.

Both notes appeared in October 1924 but were addressed to different audiences: the first one mostly to the Jewish readership and the second, a critical assessment of a particular textbook, to the general public.

The most detailed and systematic treatment of the state of Lithuanian language teaching is provided in Lemchenas (1928), as it outlines in good detail the differences between what we would today call teaching L1 and L2 (Lx). The article is based on his paper delivered at the Lithuanian language and literature teaching conference, held on April 11–13, 1928 in Kaunas. Not only is the language described in detail but also the teaching of Lithuanian culture and literature is discussed. The somewhat lengthy title “Kuo skiriasi lietuvių kalbos ir literatūros mokymas nelietuvių mokykloje nuo to paties dalyko mokymo lietuvių mokykloje” (How teaching of the Lithuanian language and literature in non-Lithuanian school differs from the teaching of the same subject in Lithuanian schools) renders the spirit of the article quite precisely. At the time of writing the article, Lemchenas had already had several years’ experience of teaching Lithuanian in various Jewish schools and, as he pointed out, had

held many conversations with teachers as well as consulted “the newest literature on language teaching methods” (Lemchenas 1928: 1211). He suggested that Lithuanian language education would gain immensely from the ideas in language pedagogy developed since the 1880s in Western Europe, especially in Germany (Lemchenas 1928: 1211).

He stresses that, as far as the methods are concerned, the teaching of Lithuanian should be treated as that of any new language, i.e., German or English (the languages most frequently taught as foreign languages at both Lithuanian and non-Lithuanian medium schools). This remarkable observation may be interpreted as follows: even if L2 is a majority language and is widely used in all domains, its acquisition will not take care of itself.

The article describes not only the differences between the teaching methods of L1 and those of other languages but, on a more general note, the different functions of the mother tongue and the foreign language from the perspective of didactics. According to Lemchenas (1928: 1211), teaching of the Lithuanian language as a subject in the majority schools has the following tasks: to teach understanding of Lithuanian speech and writing, to teach how to speak and write correctly, to make students familiar with Lithuanian literature and culture. All these functions are valid in minority schools as well, but the quantity and “the ways that lead to the fulfilment of the tasks are sometimes rather different”. In Lithuanian medium schools, Lithuanian has the educational function because it is the means for teaching other subjects, while this is not entirely so in minority schools. At the same time, Lemchenas stresses that it would be erroneous to think that everything should be taught through the medium of the mother tongue: he maintains, however, that the teachers of science would strongly object to this opinion. This is another important observation that will be discussed in the next section.

As for the teaching methods, Lemchenas (1928: 1215) explains that the grammar–translation method has its assets (one can learn independently without an instructor) but it is less useful for

conversation and practical usage. The natural method is more flexible and links language to real life, but it would be a mistake to equate the natural method with the teaching of Lithuanian as the mother tongue (Lemchenas 1928: 1215).

The most relevant point brought up in the article concerns grammar and language teaching/learning per se. Language learning has an additional function: to teach formal logical thinking, and mother tongue is not suitable for the task of teaching the formal aspects of language. This goal can be achieved through foreign language and not mother tongue teaching. A teacher of Lithuanian as a foreign language should not only pay attention to language practice but also to general education, broadening the horizon of the students and formal logic is a part thereof (Lemchenas 1928: 1213). It is apparent that “formal logic” refers to the comparison of items and grammatical features of Lithuanian and the students’ mother tongue and drawing their attention to the difference in the underlying logic in both languages. That is, although too detailed explanations of grammar are not needed, some focus on form is necessary.

Features of Lithuanian (today we would say, typological characteristics, grammatical categories, functions of various grammatical forms) that are absent in the language of the students (the medium of instruction) are more suitable for “teaching of formal linguistic thinking” (Lemchenas 1928: 1212). Here Lemchenas (1928: 1213) mentions some grammatical categories and forms of Lithuanian grammar that need special attention: composite tenses, participles, different functions of various cases. While translation tasks should be used sparingly, the language of instruction can, nevertheless, be an important means of explanations of grammar and vocabulary of a foreign language.

While teaching grammar, the teacher has to remember that a child already knows one language. Thus, it is not sufficient to merely teach grammatical forms that exist in Lithuanian but to explain things that do not exist in the mother tongue: “it is necessary to provide rules and laws that have to prevent mistakes driven from

the differences with mother tongue” (Lemchenas 1928: 1220). For example, Yiddish has more analytical forms than Lithuanian and where Lithuanian uses inflections (i.e., case markers), Yiddish has prepositions (Lemchenas 1928: 1222). As Lemchenas (1928: 1222) expressively renders it:

“A teacher in Jewish schools is in the worst position: at present, all cases except genitive are formed analytically by the means of auxiliary words [i.e., prepositions]; additionally, in Lithuanian Yiddish, there is no difference between dative and accusative, locative and accusative with [the preposition] *i*, pure instrumental *rašau pieštuku* [I am writing with a pencil] from comitative *rašau su draugu* [I am writing with a friend]”.

The points argued in the article in question can be interpreted as a contrastive principle in a nutshell. The rest of Lemchenas’ article is dedicated to the teaching of stress and accents, literature, culture, spelling, the order of grammar teaching and other language teaching aspects that remain outside of the scope of the present article.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The writings by Chackeli Lemchenas demonstrate that he had clear ideas concerning the teaching of Lithuanian and what was needed for that purpose. The underlying understanding, although not explicitly expressed, is that language acquisition/learning are connected to teaching. Lemchenas proposed what we would call today the development of metalinguistic awareness, as he mentioned broadening students’ horizons through teaching of “formal logic”. This is also in accordance with the modern ideas of language learning as a self-formation process (Hennig 2010), second language identities (Block 2007) as well as self-formation of language teachers (Miller et al. 2017).

He rejects the grammar-translation method because it is not useful for teaching active language use. He does not entirely rely on

the natural (direct) method and language environment. Attention to form should be given where there are differences between Lithuanian as L2 and the students' L1. This is the essence of the contrastive approach. As the term "contrastive" was not yet coined at that time, Lemchenas uses "formal logic" or "formal linguistic thinking" to convey the idea of drawing parallels between the grammars of L1 and L2. This is illustrated with the quotation provided in Section 3 where differences between case markers and functions in Yiddish and Lithuanian are discussed.

In the Lithuanian (and the Baltic) context of that era, educators were trying to find a balance between education in mother tongue and successful teaching of the official language to minorities. This is quite different from the so-called old Western nations where everyone was supposed to study at the majority schools without any L1 language support ("sink or swim"). At the same time, in Lithuania, there were suggestions to teach subjects such as Lithuanian literature, history, geography and sports in Lithuanian (this was introduced in 1936). This created mixed feelings among some Jewish educators (see discussion in the periodical *Mūsų garsas*, described in Verschik 2013). It appears that Lemchenas (1924a) held a middle-ground position when he mentioned that some subjects like science could be taught in the majority language because language is not a goal in itself but an instrument to learn other things, which is close to the modern concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

From various accounts (Lemchenas 1924a, Žukaitė 2010), it appears that textbooks and readers of Lithuanian for speakers of Lithuanian as L1 were used to some extent in non-Lithuanian medium schools. If in the 1920s, few Lithuanian textbooks for speakers of other languages existed and those were not suitable for schools ((Lemchenas 1924b, Verschik 2005 on Yiddish-medium textbook by Avrom Šulman (Abraomas Šulmanas), more textbooks appeared in the 1930s. Veronika Žukaitė (2010) provides a list of Lithuanian as L2 textbooks, which can be divided into two

categories: for “non-Lithuanians” (that is, speakers of other languages) and for Jewish students, speakers of Yiddish (with a couple of Hebrew–medium textbooks). In some textbooks, grammar explanations were absent and they look like conversation books where Lithuanian sentences appear with Yiddish translation; yet others do have explicit discussion of various grammar points (Žukaitė 2010: 323–326). Since Žukaitė (2010) as well as Šetkus (2017) are historians, their studies have a different purpose and, understandably, they do not concentrate on how grammar was presented in the books. In future, it would be instructive to examine the textbooks for a particular group of learners, that is, Yiddish-speakers, in order to establish whether there are elements of the contrastive approach.³

Discussions concerning the teaching of Lithuanian to speakers of other languages continued in the 1930s. For instance, Simonas Vainbergas (1934) published a book on teaching of Lithuanian,⁴ and it would be useful to analyse it and establish whether his views and recommendations were similar to those of Lemchenas. In an anonymous article in the Lithuanian–language Jewish weekly, *Apžvalga* (17.07.1938), an author argues against the view that Lithuanian should be taught by native speakers of Lithuanian only (*Lietuvių kalba* 1938). The author states that it is quite the opposite, as non-monolingual teachers have already mastered at least one foreign language and thus understand better what kind of explanation their students need. This resonates with Lemchenas’ (1928) idea that the teaching of Lithuanian is similar to the teaching of foreign languages and teachers of Lithuanian should relate to this experience. It is noteworthy that until recently the atmosphere in the West has been rather different; in the framework of monolingual ideology, it was not required from teachers to know the languages of their students. It is true that immigrant students attending the same language class

³ It may still be problematic to find all existing textbooks. For instance, Žukaitė (2010: 315) mentions that she was unable to find the textbook by Pranas Viknonis.

⁴ I was unable to find the book so far; I became aware of its existence from Žukaitė (2010: 319.)

are of diverse backgrounds and do not share a common language. Yet, in general, bilingual teachers in the past were considered less valuable than monolingual native speakers. Nowadays, attitudes are changing, and the advantages of multilingual teachers are acknowledged and appreciated by scholars (see Pavlenko 2003, Higgins and Ponte 2017).

Although the contrastive approach has its limitations, as structural approaches often do, because they do not consider the learners' personality and extra-linguistic factors, it is still useful for pedagogical purposes (see Kupferberg and Olshtain 1996 on explicit contrastive instructions of difficult L2 forms). By arguing that teaching Lithuanian as L2 is a special kind of teaching, and claiming that explicit focusing on differences between grammars of L1 and L2 is necessary, Lemchenas expressed ideas that were ahead of his time and became mainstream only later. Namely, he suggested that the students' first language has relevance for the teaching and learning of Lithuanian, and that the languages should be compared and the differences in grammar explained.

On a more general note, this particular case demonstrates that some central ideas expressed by scholars working in major Western languages had actually been "there" much earlier, but due to the peripheral position of small countries and/or lesser used languages, like Lithuanian, they remained unknown in the wider scholarly communities. The years of Soviet domination that led to a complete isolation from the rest of the world, the censorship, the ban of all positive references to the period of independence, and inevitable marginalisation of everything written in languages other than Russian have increased this gap even more. The current paper highlights the fact that studies on language teaching discourses in small countries/communities of lesser used languages could contribute to the history of ideas and a better understanding of the development of the discipline.

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RESÜMEE

CHACKELIS LEMCHENAS,
KONTRASTIIVNE LINGVIST
ENNE KONTRASTIIVSET LINGVISTIKAT

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Artiklis analüüsitakse Leedu keeleteadlase, toimetaja, tõlkija ja leedu keele õpetaja Chackelis Lemchenase (1904–2001) vaateid leedu kui teise võõrkeele õpetamise kohta vähemusrahvuste koolides. Chackelis Lemchenas, mitmekeelne inimene, kes õppis leedu filoloogiat kuulsal Jonas Jablonskise (1880–1930) juures Vytautas Magnuse ülikoolis, oli mitmeid aastaid leedu keele õpetaja jidiši- ja heebreakeelsetes koolides. Pärast iseisva Leedu Vabariigi sündi 1918. aastal kasvas järsult vajadus õpetada leedu keelt teiste keelte kõnelejatele, samas ei olnud koolid selleks valmis, õppevahendid, meetodid ja õpetajad puudusid ning tihtilugu õpetati vähemuste koolides leedulastele mõeldud leedu keele õpikute järgi. Chackelis Lemchenasel oli selge ettekujutus, et keelekeskkond iseenesest ei garanteeri keeleomandamist ja et leedu keele õpetamine on sarnane võõrkeele õpetamisega. Artiklis analüüsitakse kolme Lemchenase selleteemalist kirjutist. Leides, et tõlke-grammatika meetod ei sobi suhtluse õpetamiseks, rõhutas ta siiski, et eksplitsiitne grammatika õpetamine on vajalik seal, kus kahe keele struktuurid erinevad. Õpilased on omandanud vähemalt ühe keele ja sellele keelele tulebki toetuda. Seda võib pidada algeliseks kontrastiivseks lähenemiseks. Kontrastiivse lingvistika mõiste, uurimisala ja sellel põhinev keelepedagoogika tekkis Läänes pärast II maailmasõda. Seetõttu on oluline märgata, et Ida-Euroopa ja eriti hilise moderniseerumisega väikerahvaste sotsiolingvistiline olukord ja seega ka riigikeele õpetamise kontekst erineb läänemaailma omast, kus on üsna kaua valitsenud ükskeelne ideoloogia ja on arvatud, et muukeelsed peaksid oma keelest võimalikult ruttu loobuma enamuskeele kasuks. Leedu on väikeriik, leedu keelt oskavad vähesed uurijad ning vanad allikad on raskesti tuvastatavad

ja kättesaadavad. Seetõttu on Chackelis Lemchenase mõtted jäänud laiemale uurijate ringile tundmata. Ometi on lingvistiliste ideede ajaloo mõistmise jaoks oluline vaadata ka olukorda väljaspool Lääne konteksti ja otsida informatsiooni vähem kasutatud keeltes.

Võtmesõnad: leedu keel, keeleõpetamine, keeleõppimine, Chackelis Lemchenas, ajalooline sotsiolingvistika

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