



## IN MEMORY OF JOSEF HLADKÝ

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Josef Hladký, Professor of English Language at the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education of Masaryk University, died on 5 January 2008, at the age of 76.

He was a versatile scholar, excellent teacher and outstanding organizer.

In his linguistic research, Professor Josef Hladký paid attention to functional syntax, especially in his papers on complex condensation (1961), the communicative value of the verb (1968, 1969) and modality (1976, 1983), but his primary focus was on lexicology, in works such as 'On the functions of some deverbative nouns in -er' (1979), *Zrádná slova v angličtině* ('False Friends' in English) (1990) and his extensive terminological book *The Czech and the English Names of Mushrooms* (1996). All his works, including his more general book *Nebojme se angličtiny* (Let's Not Fear English) (1991), are contrastive in nature, based on consistent comparisons of English and Czech, and thus make a useful contribution to the linguistic characterology of present-day English. Professor Vachek, Josef Hladký's teacher, inspired him to investigate the historical development of English; Professor Hladký's crowning achievement in this field is *A Guide to Pre-Modern English* (2003). Lexicography was another discipline Josef Hladký loved (see e.g. his two studies on new English dictionaries in *Časopis pro moderní filologii* (1998 and

2002), and his own forthcoming *Slovník americké a britské angličtiny* (Dictionary of American and British English)). When the editors of *European English Studies* (London 2000) needed a report about English studies in this country, they decided the most qualified person was Professor Hladký; he contributed 'The History and the Present State of English Studies in the Czech Republic'.

Many students attended his *Introduction to the English Language* course, where he lectured on the beginnings of English studies in this country. Former students remember that he did this in a most interesting manner and managed to make attractive even such 'boring' subjects as the historical development of English. His wit and sense of humour were appreciated by students and colleagues alike.

Professor Hladký's editorial activities included the editorship of the series *Brno Studies in English* and the volume *Language and Function*, published in Amsterdam in 2003 with the subtitle *To the Memory of Jan Firbas*.

The organizational skills of Josef Hladký were recognized by all the Czech and Slovak Anglicists who took part in the Conferences of English, American and Canadian Studies held in Brno between 1986 and 1996. It was Hladký's idea to invite people working in the fields of English linguistics, English literature and the methodology of English teaching so as to enable them to meet and discuss problems of common interest.

Josef Hladký was always one of the personalities who determined the character and atmosphere of the Department of English and American Studies of the Faculty of Arts in Brno. For seven years (1973-1980) he worked as 'temporary head' of the Department and for another quite long period (1984-1989) as its deputy head, virtually leading the Department and devoting a great deal of his time and energy to all the duties involved. He was the official Head of the Department of the English Language and Literature of the Faculty of Education from 2000 to 2003, but before that, immediately after November 1989, he was elected Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno. He held this important position for more than four years, tackling all the problems that the revolutionary period brought with it, and managing to open a new era for the Faculty.

Professor Hladký's departure is a painful loss for all who loved and respected him. His contribution to the development of English studies in this country will not be forgotten.

## References

- 'Bibliography of Josef Hladký's works.' (2006) In: Povolná, R., Dontcheva-Navratilova, O. (eds): *Discourse and Interaction 2. Sborník prací Pedagogické fakulty Masarykovy univerzity*. Vol. 198. Brno: Masaryk University. 19-26.