

FROM IDEAS TO STANDARDS: BORYS SHALAGINOV'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE FORMATION OF FOREIGN LITERATURE AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

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Summary

This article analyzes the significant contribution of the prominent Ukrainian scholar Borys Shalaginov to the development of normative documents for the school course of foreign literature in institutions of general secondary education in Ukraine. His key scientific positions regarding the course concept, principles of structuring educational information, and the role of the state standard and curricula are outlined. Particular attention is paid to Shalaginov's vision of the educational value of art as a means of affirming fundamental values that strengthen the human community. The article highlights his proposed principles for selecting works for school study, which include high artistic and aesthetic and pedagogical value, humanistic content, psychological appropriateness for specific age groups, scientific and theoretical representativeness, and a text volume suitable for classroom work. It is emphasized that these principles remain relevant today, especially with the deep penetration of digital technologies into schooling. The article also examines Professor Shalaginov's role in creating school curricula for foreign literature, which, unlike previous ones, fostered the formation of a personality rooted in national cultural heritage yet open to global ideas and values. It is proven that his programs created prerequisites for the synthesis of national and universal values. The conclusion is made that Borys Shalaginov's scientific and methodological ideas serve as a foundation for the further development of literary education in the New Ukrainian School.

Key words: Borys Shalaginov, state standard, literary education, teaching methodology, curricula, educational reforms, value-based approach.

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1. Introduction

Studying and analyzing the creative works of scholars whose contributions were foundational in a particular field of science is essential for its further development. Today, research that spurred changes in various spheres of independent Ukraine's life at the outset of its formation holds particular interest. Such changes also affected the secondary education system, which faced pressing questions about how the generation of young Ukrainians should enter the 21st century, how the state would ensure the successful integration of its citizens into the global cultural space, and what the markers of an educated individual would be. One way to address these issues was the introduction of a compulsory foreign literature course for schools with Ukrainian as the language of instruction. This innovation, in turn, presented a challenge for the academic and teaching communities: it was necessary to develop a concept for teaching the new

subject, define principles for the interconnected study of Ukrainian and foreign literature, form a literary canon for school study, and formulate state requirements for education as the basis for the sociocultural development of youth.

Borys Shalaginov's works played a significant role in addressing these tasks. He is a contemporary researcher of Western European literature, Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor at National University "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy," Honored Worker of Science and Technology of Ukraine, and author of numerous publications in philology and teaching methodology. His name is widely known among scholars, foreign literature teachers, philology students, publishers, and all readers interested in the art of words. Borys Shalaginov is an active participant in academic gatherings, a regular contributor to professional journals, and the author of textbooks on foreign literature and history for institutions of general secondary and higher education in Ukraine. For many years, he initiated numerous innovations that formed the basis of foreign literature teaching methodology. This marked a decisive stage in the formation of a new methodological discourse, as school theory and practice rapidly shed old ideological dogmas and stereotypes.

2. Analysis of Research and Publications

Borys Shalaginov's works have fueled scientific discourse in the field of literature teaching methodology for four decades, offering answers to a wide range of pressing questions. Scholars turn to his scientific and pedagogical experience when researching the potential of literature as an educational subject (U. Baran, N. Hrytsak, O. Isaieva, Zh. Klymenko, V. Papushyna, L. Udovychenko, L. Chumak, etc.), reading motivation as a methodological problem (U. Baran, M. Dorichenko, O. Isaieva, T. Kachak, Zh. Klymenko, H. Shvets, etc.), peculiarities of working with contemporary student readers (N. Hrytsak, N. Borysova, O. Isaieva, T. Kachak, Zh. Klymenko, O. Kuchai, N. Lohvynenko, V. Martynenko, L. Matsevko-Bekerska, V. Papushyna, etc.), problems of academic and school analysis of literary works (N. Hrychanyk, O. Isaieva, L. Klymenko, O. Polishchuk, O. Slyzhuk, V. Tymenko, L. Chumak, etc.), and issues of introducing elements of comparative literature into school education (T. Batrak, N. Hrytsak, L. Yevchina, Zh. Klymenko, Ye. Kremendiuk, I. Maranska, H. Minych, I. Nebelenchuk, M. Pyrys, O. Poliak, L. Chumak, etc.).

The purpose of this article is to analyze one facet of the scholar's scientific creativity: namely, his contribution to the development of normative documents for organizing the educational process in foreign literature in Ukrainian schools.

3. Presentation of the Main Research Material

Borys Shalaginov's pedagogical views, rooted in the ideas of German classical philosophy, were highly valuable for the new methodological discourse.

The scholar believes that the educational value of outstanding works of art at all times lies in the affirmation of fundamental values that form and strengthen the human community and ensure its viability for millennia. High art is not merely a passive mirror; it forms and affirms values that penetrate human consciousness through science, philosophy, and religion, as well as through aesthetic experiences. This is precisely why studying literature is essential during school education. Such an understanding of literary development, freed from entrenched Soviet dogmas, formed the basis for teaching the art of words in Ukrainian schools, and Borys Shalaginov played a significant role in this.

At the beginning of the foreign literature course implementation in schools, there arose a need to create a comprehensive normative document – the State Standard of General Secondary Education. This standard would reflect the projected final outcome of school education while simultaneously taking into account the real capabilities of students and the education system itself to achieve it, effectively implementing state policy in education. The work of scholars on creating the state standard began in 1994, and in 1996, by a decision of the collegium of the Ministry of Education of Ukraine, the Concept of the State Standard of General Secondary Education of Ukraine was approved (*Kontseptsiiia*, 1996: 7). Borys Shalaginov contributed to the development of the educational field "Languages and Literatures," specifically its literary component. In collaboration with literary scholars and methodologists, including Lesya Miroshnychenko, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences and Professor in the field of literature methodology, who co-authored many of his later works, they formulated the core content of the document. Subsequently, the scholar repeatedly addressed academics and teachers, explaining the conceptual basis of the "Foreign Literature" subject, commenting on the standard's components, and clarifying the content of the basic and compulsory levels of teaching the subject. In his speeches and publications, Borys Borysovykh consistently advocated for democratic changes in literary education, creative approaches to developing alternative curricula and textbooks, and seeking new ways of structuring educational material. He also called for the development of new principles for conducting lessons, arguing that the educational standard is merely a general "concept of literary knowledge that has fundamental importance for student socialization." This concept serves as an "Ariadne's thread," without which "the course cannot exist" (*Shalahinov*, 2013: 12).

The authors of the document thoroughly considered the age-related psycho-pedagogical characteristics of students' perception of literature and focused on forming basic knowledge, skills, and abilities. They also addressed the problem of cultivating fundamental societal values, which would later form the basis of the value-based approach to organizing education in the New Ukrainian School (*Stepanenko*, 2023: 407). At the end of the 20th century, this problem was frequently discussed in professional publications and became an important component of the academic debate surrounding universal and national values in works of literary art (*Udovychenko*, 2022: 14).

It is important to acknowledge Professor Shalaginov's critical assessment of the Standard (*Svitova*, 1997: 16), which he helped prepare, and his sincerity and impartiality (according to numerous reviews from foreign literature methodologists) in its analysis. He himself initiated a number of changes to the Standard: he considered it necessary to add authors' biographies and information about their iconic texts to the learning objectives to create a holistic understanding of artists' works in students, as well as information about specific literary eras, movements, trends, and an optimal volume of theoretical and literary concepts that would help students perceive a literary work as a whole (*Shalahinov*, 2013: 97).

Borys Shalaginov's formulated principles for selecting works for the school literature course are important: high artistic and aesthetic value; humanistic content; psychological appropriateness for a specific age group; high pedagogical value; clearly expressed scientific and theoretical representativeness of the work; and a text volume convenient for classroom work (*Shalahinov*, 2013: 190). The implementation of these principles yields a significant educational effect and promotes students' spiritual growth.

To this day, these principles remain dominant in the selection of works for textual study by authors of model literature curricula and practicing teachers. Some of them, such as psychological appropriateness for a specific age group and a page volume convenient for classroom work, have gained particular relevance in recent decades due to the deep penetration of digital

age technical means into schooling. Borys Borysovykh's raised questions about children's own reading circles and the dosage of literary texts (*Shalahinov, 2008; Shalahinov, 2013*) have become the subject of extensive discussion (*Zarubizhna, 2003; Moklytsia, 2002*) and a catalyst for new research on schoolchildren's reading needs and interests (*Mykhalchuk, 2012: 21*).

Our conclusions on these issues align with B. Shalaginov's concept. They are highlighted in an interview for the "New Ukrainian School" editorial board (*Pasko, 2024*). and are confirmed by the results of the survey "What foreign literature works do students like most," conducted by I. Pas'ko (*Pasko, 2024*).

Professor Borys Shalaginov made a significant contribution to the development of another important normative document – the school curriculum for foreign literature. Along with scholars such as Ye. Voloshchuk, V. Hladyshev, T. Denysova, D. Zatonskyi, V. Zvyniatskovskyi, O. Isaieva, Z. Koryliuk, Zh. Klymenko, Yu. Kovbasenko, O. Kutsevol, I. Limborskyi, L. Miroshnychenko, L. Myronenko, I. Moiseiev, D. Nalyvaiko, I. Popova-Bondarenko, T. Potnitsieva, O. Pronkevych, T. Sverbilova, Yu. Sultanov, T. Cherednyk, and others, he actively participated in the academic discussion about educational content, which unfolded in professional publications ("Vidrodzhennia," "Slovo i Chas," etc.). This discussion revolved around informational oversaturation, bias, and subjectivity in the selection of works for study, an unmotivated significant number of Russian literature works, and so on. Constructive criticism also targeted the first approximate curriculum, prepared by an authorial team led by K. Shakhova, which was the main one until 1998 and "turned out to be, in essence, a mechanical transfer – with certain reductions and simplifications – of a university foreign literature curriculum to secondary school" (*Nalyvaiko, 2003: 7*).

One of the significant outcomes of this discussion was the creation of alternative school curricula (in chronological order) by M. Boretskyi, and by authorial teams led by I. Panchenko, Yu. Kovbasenko, and B. Shalaginov. The latter creative team included scholars O. Isaieva, Zh. Klymenko, L. Miroshnychenko, O. Korniienko, and teachers N. Dorofeieva and S. Rudakivska (*Zarubizhna, 2001; Prohramy, 2003*). The availability of a whole spectrum of curricula democratized the educational process: teachers gained the opportunity, depending on objective and subjective conditions (the level of students' academic achievement, their interests and needs, the provision of literary and educational materials, etc.), to choose the one that could be effectively implemented in each particular situation.

It is worth noting that before offering the curricula to teachers, the authorial team led by B. Shalaginov developed their scientific and methodological concepts (*Shalahinov, 2000; Shalahinov, 2001; Shalahinov, 2003; Shalahinov, Miroshnichenko, 2000*), practically tested them, and took into account substantial comments and suggestions (*Dumky, 2000; Sultanov, 2001*).

In his curricula, Borys Shalaginov implemented the principles he advocated (*Shalahinov, 2001: 6*) and embodied his strategic idea that the study of foreign literature, alongside fostering national and civic identity, should be based on a value-based approach and open up broad opportunities for engaging students through the art of words with the riches of world culture. The curricula developed with B. Shalaginov's participation fully created "prerequisites for the formation of a personality rooted in national cultural ground and at the same time open to other cultures, their ideas and values, capable of synthesizing national and universal values" (*Shalahinov, 2001: 7*). In our opinion, the strong points of these curricula, which distinguish them favorably, include reliance on the psycho-pedagogical characteristics of literature perception by students of different age groups; the study of literary works proven by school practice; textual study of small-volume literary works in their entirety; gradual deepening of reader interpretation through logically structured expansion of educational information; introduction

and use of terminological apparatus synchronously with the study of Ukrainian literature (when literary concepts are first worked on in the native literature course, and then deepened and expanded using materials from foreign authors' works); a thoughtful balance of time for textual and overview study of works; and stimulation of students' independent reading activity.

4. Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research

Borys Shalaginov's methodological ideas and developments are alive and well: they are both the subject of discussions around current topics and the foundation for new research into optimal ways for the further development of the New Ukrainian School. Undoubtedly, they will elevate literary education in Ukrainian schools to a new level and help shape a young generation worthy of both its thousand-year history and the 21st century. In this work, we did not touch upon the issue of implementing a value-based approach in literature teaching, which B. Shalaginov paid considerable attention to and which is on the agenda and widely discussed by scholars and teachers. We plan to dedicate a separate publication to this extensive topic.

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