

PROFESSOR RASTISLAV ŠUŠTARŠIČ (24 October 1953–2 March 2014)

Rastislav Šuštaršič, Professor of English language at the English Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, passed away in the early hours of the first Sunday in March 2014 after a short but severe illness. We lost a specialist in general phonetics and phonology, an expert in English pronunciation and prosody, respected colleague and very dear friend.

Rastislav Šuštaršič was born in Ljubljana, where he attended the elementary and secondary school as well as the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. In 1978 he graduated in English language and literature and French language and literature. Nine years afterwards he joined his former professors at the English department and continued his post-graduate studies in linguistics. In 1989 he defended his M.A. thesis entitled *Borrowing of English Dictionary Entries into Slovene – Phonological Adaptation*. In 1993 he defended his doctoral dissertation, entitled *Contrastive Analysis of English and Slovene Sentence Intonation*, which was dedicated to the elusive phenomenon of prosody and was the first contrastive study of its kind in Slovenia. In 2006 he became a Professor of the English language.

The research work of Professor Šuštaršič was ground-breaking in the field of contrastive analysis of English and Slovene phonology and phonetics. In his doctoral dissertation he tried the seemingly impossible and compared two prosodic systems which have little in common. In his later studies he preferred less elusive and more tangible topics, which included research in acoustic phonetics and general phonology. A large amount of his research was dedicated to finding the most efficient and effective ways of transmitting research findings in teaching practice. Years of intensive and varied research culminated in his monograph entitled *English-Slovene Contrastive Phonetic and Phonemic Analysis and Its Application in Teaching English Phonetics and Phonology*. This is a meaningful and carefully written work which focuses on general, acoustic, perceptive and articulatory phonetics and phonology. Its added value is the application of theoretical and empirical findings to the teaching of English pronunciation at all levels of the education system.

As a teacher, Professor Šuštaršič was highly professional and exacting, yet was able to spice up his classes on English pronunciation with humour and wit. He often found examples whose pronunciation-based puns remained in the memory for a long time. He was very popular with his students due to his honest, impartial and fair attitude.

Rastko was a reliable and trust-worthy colleague, with a noble and deeply humane attitude to all. He was a caring advisor, who always tried to find the best possible solution to our problems and concerns. My close working relation with Rastko very soon developed into a sincere friendship. Although we both worked in the same field, we were not rivals. On the contrary, we studied together and shared experiences. Our co-operation was pleasant, educational and creative.

Those who deserve to stay forever, depart too soon. Rastko was loved by his colleagues and admired by his students. We miss him at work and in free time. Those

of us who knew him well were enriched by him. Personally, I remain grateful to Rastko for his friendship and professional support, which lasted nearly a quarter of a century.

Smiljana Komar