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Message from the AATSEEL President

Over the past several years, we have watched as higher-education enrollments in several East and Central European languages have shown steady progress. The study of Russian, to choose the largest data set, has grown from 23,921 students in Autumn 2002 to 24,845 in Autumn 2006 and upward again to 26,883 in Autumn 2009. A similar story of rising enrollments could be told about the study of Czech, Slovak, and Serbian, according to the MLA Language Enrollment Database (http://www.mla.org/lslsurvey_search).

Optimism is an unfamiliar disposition in our field, however, and understandably so. No guarantees exist that these trends will continue; nor are they characteristic across the board for the other languages of this region. Enrollment figures for US higher-education classes in Polish and Ukrainian suggest, by contrast, that their language study is in recent decline. And as former second-world cultures become more intensely integrated into and alongside the European economic and political infrastructure, they are unpredictably re-situated—often to their disadvantage—within European Studies Centers in major US research universities. Where is the place for serious US academic attention to the region’s literatures, cinema, music, and art? Future US research in these fields cannot thrive without younger colleagues fluent in the target languages. Are we entering a time when scholarship on East Central European culture will be largely confined to the borders of their nation-states? If so, what is lost in this retraction to the local centers?

It may be that attendant gains, to which the US academy is not yet ready to respond, will offset these apparent vulnerabilities. We already see, for example, a shift away from nation-specific scholarship in favor of trans-European cultural research, as in recent work on cosmopolitanism by such scholars as Katerina Clark and others. The implications of this alternative approach are themselves embedded in an increasingly globalized academic environment, most visibly for undergraduates today, for whom a study-abroad component is a common experience, even for university students of modest financial backgrounds. As these students return home from East Central Europe, what are our local tasks in the emergent field of global competence?

As many know who have been following the Title VI reformulations of the past six months, those major research universities that had been awarded National Research Center status in the 2010 competition cycle have now been levied a 46.53% cut in their budgets, a reduction likely to affect graduate-student support, faculty research grants, curricular development opportunities, K-12 programs, and a wide range of other priorities in East Central European research. We are entering into lean times, when the survival (in any but the most vestigial way) of post-war area studies—a model, after all, that produced us as scholars and teachers—may be subject to question.

At the time of this writing, our legislators are negotiating further cuts with long-term consequences for students we have not yet met in the classroom. Within the US, where ethnic and racial diversity in the schools is now approaching fifty per cent, the complex challenges of that diversity require unprecedented competence in making sense of cultural difference, within diasporic communities and beyond US borders. What is the place in the US global literacy project for a study of this region? Our students’ competitive skills will depend in high measure on their ability to navigate a globally interdependent culture, including inside our own borders. What would Slavic studies be like in a rapidly globalizing, but post-Title VI universe?


Letter from the Editor

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back to fall semester with our first newsletter of the 2011-2012 academic year. I hope it will be a productive year for you.

As the year begins, I would like to put out a plea for column editor help. First, if you are editing a column and did not submit your articles in time for this issue of the newsletter, please note that the next deadline (October 15) is almost upon us. Second, we very much need column editors for a few columns that have lost their editors: Graduate Student Forum, Russian at Work and Ukrainian Issues. If you would like to edit one of these columns, please contact me at Leaver@AOL.com.

Finally, I hope to see everyone at the Annual Meeting, which is back on the West Coast (easy for me) this year!

BLL

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The Recent Publications column includes books published in 2010-2011. Authors and publishers are invited to submit information about their new publications. Please be sure to include the date of publication and the publisher.

Culture


Continued on page 5
Czech Literary Studies: The State of the Field

Jonathan Bolton, Harvard University

In 2010, the journal Česka literatura marked the passage of twenty years since the Velvet Revolution with a poll asking scholars to identify the “blank spots” (bilá místa) in Czech literary history and theory. What remained “uncovered,” even after twenty years of intensive scholarship devoted to rediscovering authors, texts, and methodologies that had been neglected or suppressed (whether for political or other reasons) under Communism? The poll responses were about evenly split between those who made pleas for under-studied areas, and those (like myself) who questioned the whole idea of “blank spots” and suggested that Czech literary studies faced other challenges – not an absence of coverage, but the failure to structure a lively, ongoing debate that would reach a wider audience and generate excitement among its own students. In this brief report on “the state of the field” of Czech literary studies, rather than offer a full review of recent work (and thus with apologies to the many authors who will go unmentioned here), I would like to think about some of the central challenges facing the field – as well as the opportunities it offers to current Ph.D. students in Slavic departments.

In one sense, the skepticism evinced by scholars in the poll is puzzling, given that Czech studies is thriving – notable recent books include David Cooper’s Creating the Nation: Identity and Aesthetics in Early Nineteenth-Century Russia and Bohemia (Northern Illinois University, 2010); Howard Louthan’s Russia and Bohemia (Northern Illinois University, 2010); Alfred Thomas’s The Mystifications of a Nation: “The Potato Bug” and Other Essays on Czech Culture, a representative selection from the engaging semiotician Vladimir Macura, edited and translated by Craig Cravens and Hana Píchová (University of Wisconsin, 2010). Bohemian and Czechoslovak history, in particular, now boasts a whole series of books by the generation of scholars who studied and researched in Czech Republic in the 1990s. This work has rewritten nineteenth-century Bohemian and Moravian history in the light of more sophisticated theories about the construction of national identity, has given us a more realistic reading of the once-idealized interwar First Republic, and is revisiting the “normalization” years of the 1970s and 1980s to break down older paradigms of collaboration and resistance. One of the most productive fields in recent Czech studies has been the interwar avant-garde, where a tide of interdisciplinary and comparative approaches has helped raise Czech topics as well, for example in Jindřich Toman’s The Magic of a Common Language: Jakobson, Mathesius, Trubetzkoy, and the Prague Linguistic Circle (MIT, 1995). Placing the Czech avant-garde in its international context, Toman casts new light on its influences and significance, showing, for example, how the co-operative spirit of the Prague Linguistic Circle tapped into larger discourses about collective activity and social commitment. Toman’s recent Foto/montáž tiskem/Photo/Montage in Print (Kant, 2009) considers the intersection of photography and book design in the interwar period, offering – among many other insights – an innovative understanding of the “soft power” of Soviet Communism in Central Europe. Rajendra Chitnis’s Vladislav Václav: Heart of the Czech Avant-Garde (Karolinum, 2007) does a fine job of both analyzing Václav’s work and introducing one of the most important interwar authors to a wider readership.

In the Czech Republic itself, lively debates about literary historiography have centered around two large-scale research projects – two “dueling” literary histories. One is the massive (four volumes totaling over 2500 pages) Dějiny české literatury 1945-1989 (History of Czech Literature 1945-1989), written by a large team of scholars led by Pavel Janoušek (Academia, 2007-2008). This work combines a broadly conceived works-and-authors history (including children’s literature) with attention to literary institutions and other media, including radio and television. Meanwhile, a smaller group led by Vladimir Papoušek, at the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, has drawn on several years of discussion about applications of, and revisions to, American New Historicism in the Czech context. The result is Dějiny nové moderny: Česká literatura v letech 1905-1923 (The History of the New Modern: Czech Literature 1905-1923, Academia, 2010), an impressive work that shuns narrative continuity in favor of a more open and fragmented approach, retelling the stories of Czech modernist literature with an essay written on each year.

Given all this activity, what accounts for the skepticism of many scholars in the above-mentioned poll? In considering some of the challenges facing Czech studies, I’ll focus my comments on the situation in Czech literary studies in the U.S., with particular attention to the opportunities for new work offered to graduate students in Slavic and other fields.

One puzzling issue is the stagnant and distorted view of the twentieth-century Czech literary canon in the perception of English-language studies. If we ask how this canon has changed
over the last twenty years – during which Czech literary history has been entirely reconstructed – the answer, amazingly, is very little. In the U.S., syllabi are still dominated by the pětka of Jaroslav Hašek, Karel Čapek, Milan Kundera, Bohumil Hrabal, and Václav Havel, with an occasional nod to Jaroslav Seifert. This impoverished canon may be both cause and result of national stereotypes that emphasize the Czechs’ anti-heroic irony, their appreciation of the virtues of the “little man,” the subversive parataxis of their pub stories, and so on, with an occasional admixture of dissident heroes – a version of Czech identity that freezes out myriad writers who simply don’t fit the model. Any overview of Czech literature based on the articles published in major American Slavic journals would reveal an alarmingly eclectic and incomplete mix of authors. To cite just one example: since 1989, Slavic and East European Journal has not published a single article devoted in whole or in part to Otokar Březina, F. X. Šalda, Vladislav Vančura, Ladislav Klíma, Jakub Deml, Jaroslav Durych, Jiří Weil, František Halas, Jiří Orten, Josef Topol, Ladislav Fuks, Jan Zábrana, Jiří Gruša, Jan Skácel, Oldřich Mikulášek, Ludvík Vaculík – the list could go on and on; indeed, many of these authors have never even received a single mention in SEEJ.

The canon question could lead us to broach the chicken-and-egg problem of whether America’s Russocentric Slavic Departments have neglected Czech literature, or whether American Bohemists have failed to engage the interest of their colleagues. The more interesting conclusion, however, may be that Czech studies has now definitively branched out into a wider range of departments – from History and Comparative Literature to Art, Architecture and even German – and that many Czech scholars are not really sure whether Russian-oriented Slavic departments in the U.S. constitute their primary audience. This helps explain a noticeable fragmentation of work in Czech literary studies – the dispersal of articles among conference proceedings, anthologies, journals in various disciplines and countries, and reference works such as the Dictionary of Literary Biography or The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe. Fascinating essays such as Charles Sabatos’s “The ‘Burning Body’ as an Icon of Resistance: Literary Representations of Jan Palach” (the only “Czech entry” in Lessie Jo Frazier and Deborah Cohen’s volume Gender and Sexuality in 1968 [Palgrave Macmillan, 2009]), Hana Pichová’s 2008 PMLA article “The Lineup for Meat: The Stalin Statue in Prague,” or Peter Zusi’s “The Style of the Present: Karel Teige on Constructivism and Poetism” in Representations (2004) can easily escape attention in the absence of a central “clearinghouse” for English-language Czech scholarship. This fragmentation of audiences suggests one of the challenges currently facing Czech literary studies – the need to re-connect with what could and should be one of its core scholarly constituencies, the larger world of Slavic literature scholars in the U.S.

This fragmentation also helps explain the relative lack of “grand-narrative” studies that would break down old paradigms of Czech culture, and propose new ones. As a result, much of Czech literary history remains enthralled to hoary stereotypes. One is still hard-pressed to find a modern, comprehensive account in English of, for example, the exact scope and nature of Habsburg “Germanization” after the Battle of White Mountain in 1620; the nineteenth-century controversy about forged manuscripts; the actual readership and influence of dissident literature under Communism; or the functioning of censorship under the First Republic, Nazi occupation, or Communism – all topics that are ripe for a modern treatment, informed by theorists from Foucault to Bourdieu and freed from nationalist and moralizing clichés. The last major works to attempt a large-scale re-imagination of the Czech literary landscape were Peter Demetz’s Prague in Black and Gold (Hill and Wang, 1998), impressive in its scope, elegance, and seemingly endless range of original readings; Derek Sayer’s The Coasts of Bohemia (Princeton, 2000), which helped project new understandings of the constructed nature of national identity onto the cultural and literary sphere (yet which has had a greater impact in history than in literary studies); and Peter Steiner’s The Deserts of Bohemia (Cornell, 2000), which creatively brings new political and theoretical contexts to bear on a series of twentieth-century classics. But there is still a dearth of widely-read books that could highlight new authors and propose provocative new paradigms for a younger generation of scholars to reckon with and, eventually, define themselves against.

These questions lead me to a few suggestions, directed particularly at Ph.D. students in Slavic who may be considering ways to incorporate Czech literature into their research and publication. First, it is necessary to turn outward and recognize the widest possible definition of the discipline; Czech literary studies should lead you naturally into encounters with historiography, visual studies, media studies, art, architecture, and so on, not to mention Slovak, German, Polish, Hungarian… One of the strengths of Czech studies is the opportunities it provides for collaboration with scholars from many other fields; here, the much-maligned “national paradigm” is not limiting, but rather provides a useful frame of reference in which scholars from many different disciplines can come together.

Second, it is necessary to throw away conceptions of the Czech canon built around a few writers like Hašek, Čapek, and Seifert, and look deeper into the vast range of authors who don’t fit American stereotypes about Czech culture – and, if you are not a particular fan of Hrabal or Havel, remember that there are quite a few counter-traditions waiting to be articulated for an English-speaking audience. Easily available works like Ivan Olbracht’s world-class Nikola the Outlaw (trans. Marie K. Holeček, Northwestern, 2001), the collected plays of Josef Topol (The Voices of Birds, trans. Vera Borkovec [SVU, 2007]), or Petra Hůlová’s All This Belongs to Me (trans. Alex Zucker, Northwestern, 2009) could re-paint the picture of Czech literature in the United States. But it would certainly help if they were
properly reflected in the academic discourse of Slavic studies.

Alongside the rigorous scholarly work that is the backbone of any field, it may be useful to cultivate a more flexible genre of academic article on Czech literature; in comparison to Russian literature, the relative absence of English-language scholarship on most Czech authors means that the rules of exposition and argument may be somewhat different. An academic wishing to write about, say, Jiří Orten’s bewitching and cryptic 1941 collection Elegies simply can’t draw on enough existing scholarship in English to dive right into an innovative and detailed interpretation; first, there must come an account that will discuss Orten’s life, describe his literary reception in Czech, and lay out some of the contexts necessary for understanding him. (Is Orten best seen as a Jewish writer? a Holocaust writer? an existentialist?) Cultivating a more flexible genre of academic article – one that combines introductory exposition with a rigorous argument about language, form, or social context – would help us, as a field, draw a broader circle around Czech literature. Graduate students who are wondering how to incorporate Czech into their academic profile may find this kind of article to be a worthwhile project; rather than looking for ways to incorporate a Czech topic or chapter into a dissertation, they might treat Czech as a self-standing field and, alongside their dissertation work (whatever it is on), develop a single article on an author who has not yet been presented to the audience of American Slavicists. SEEJ, Slavic Review, East European Politics and Societies, and Central Europe, to name just a few journals, would all be appropriate venues.

At present, Czech literary studies occupies a productive but unstructured space among an array of disciplines and potential audiences. As Slavic studies settles into a new world in which it is no longer defined by philological and linguistic models, the link between Czech and Russian literature, once taken for granted, often seems tenuous. Nevertheless, Slavic remains an excellent home for Czech, just as Czech studies is one of the dynamic forces pushing Slavic into creative co-operation with other disciplines. In Česká literatura’s 2010 poll, a number of Czech scholars suggested that literary studies in the Czech Republic were too inward-looking and needed to reach out to other disciplines; in the U.S., I would say, there is almost an opposite problem, in which the centrifugal forces directing Czech literary studies outward leave it looking for a “center,” an ongoing discussion that could steadily register developments in a changing but coherent field. The greatest challenge will be to structure this discussion even as Czech literary studies sustains its vital contacts with work in many other languages and disciplines.

**Publication of the Paperback Edition of Russian Literature and Its Demons by Pamela Davidson Announced**

A comprehensive analytical introduction by the editor is followed by a series of fourteen essays, written by eminent scholars in their fields. The first part explores the main shaping contexts of literary demonism: the Russian Orthodox and folk tradition, the demonization of historical figures, and views of art as intrinsically demonic. The second part traces the development of a literary tradition of demonism in the works of authors ranging from Pushkin and Lermontov, Gogol and Dostoevsky, through to the poets and prose writers of modernism (including Blok, Akhmatova, Bely, Sologub, Rozanov, Zamiatin), and through to the end of the 20th century.

Additional information about this title can be found at: http://www.berghahnbooks.com/title.php?rowtag=DavidsonRussian.

**Museum of Russian Icons Announces The Scholar’s Forum**

The Museum of Russian Icons in Clinton, Massachusetts, houses the largest private collection of Russian icons in the United States. The Museum is pleased to announce the dedication of a section of its website for the publication of peer-reviewed research papers in its Scholars’ Forum. The publication process will be rapid—as soon as your submission is approved, it will be published on the site. There will be minimal delay between receipt and editing, and if accepted, publication. We are soliciting original papers in all areas of the study of icons, including inter-disciplinary studies.

The members of the Editorial Board are:

- David J. Birnbaum
- Robin Cormack
- Michael S. Flier
- Bettina Jungen
- Nancy P. Ševčenko
- Sarah Pratt
- Wendy Salmont
- Engelina Smirnova
- Oksana Smirnova
- Raoul N. Smith, Editor
- Oleg Tarasov

In addition to scholarly research papers, we are also soliciting book reviews, exhibition reviews, and conference announcements.

The Scholars’ Forum also has a Question & Answer section where a scholar who is struggling over some particular problem in his research on icon studies can have a question posted and have it answered by another researcher who has the answer. This section is moderated by the Editor of the Forum.

Directions for all submissions are on the website. All submissions should be sent to research@museumofrussianicons.org.
SSRC Eurasia Program Fellowships Competition

Eurasia Program Fellowships are intended for applicants who have completed their dissertation field research and/or data collection, who have made significant progress in outlining emergent, innovative contributions to scholarship, and who are willing to reach beyond the academic community to make their work known and accessible to a variety of publics.

The Eurasia Program offers three types of fellowship support in 2011, providing financial and academic support to graduate students in the early stages of dissertation development, PhD. candidates near completion of their doctoral programs in the social sciences and related humanities, and young scholars within five years of the completion of their PhD.

The funding for this fellowship program is provided by the Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Office of Outreach Title VIII Program for Research and Training on Eastern Europe and Eurasia (Independent States of the Former Soviet Union). One of the goals of the Title VIII program is to support and sustain American expertise on the countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. This program also works to support outreach; build relationships between the policy community and the academic community; help build national capability by engaging diverse experts in the exploration of new ideas and perspectives; and create new knowledge and research.

Applications available – August 15, 2011
Applications due – November 15, 2011

Pre-Dissertation Awards (PDAs)
Pre-Dissertation Awards (PDAs) enable early stage graduate students to perform initial field assessments of up to 4 weeks for archival exploration, preliminary interviews, and other forms of feasibility studies related to their dissertations. We anticipate awarding 4-6 young scholars the opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of their proposed field sites, establish contacts within local communities, meet with local scholars, and gain insight into how their dissertation topic resonates with regional intellectual, political and social currents. Proposals should reflect a clear plan for initial field assessment, require a budget of less than $4,000, and clearly articulate the policy relevance of the proposed project.

Dissertation Development Awards (DDAs)
Dissertation Development Awards (DDAs) are intended to provide one year of support to enable the prompt completion of a PhD dissertation. We anticipate offering approximately 10 DDAs (with stipends up to $18,000 and $4,000 of possible supplemental funding) to advanced graduate students who have completed their fieldwork. Fellows will participate in professionalization activities and a spring conference, and contribute to the Eurasia Program’s new working paper and policy brief series. Applicants should pay serious attention to the policy-relevant aspects of their research.

Post-Doctoral Research Awards (PDRAs)
Post-Doctoral Research Awards (PDRAs) provide research funds to early-career scholars who have been awarded their PhD within the last five years to support the furthering of the work initiated in their dissertations or the launching of their first post-dissertation research project. We anticipate awarding 2-3 of these awards (of up to $33,000 each over 24 months), which will provide unique and valuable resources for recent PhDs making the transition into professional research careers. Applicants will be expected to secure overhead agreements from their institution of employment (for no more than 10% of the total award amount). Research funds may be used for travel, data collection, software, research assistance, salary, or other forms of scholarly development. Applicants must present a clear research and writing plan, highlighting their publication strategy and discussing the policy relevance of the proposed work.

For additional details on how to apply as of August 15, and answers to Frequently Asked Questions, please see: http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/eurasia-fellowship/.

Questions can be addressed to: eurasia@ssrc.org

Recent Publications Continued

Continued from page 1

Economics

Literature & Literary Criticism

Language & Linguistics

Political Science
Using Speech Synthesis in Foreign Language Classes

Wouldn’t it be nice to type any text and then save it as a MP3 file to listen to it later? Well, thanks to the current developments in the text-to-speech technology, it is no longer impossible. Speech synthesis or text to speech technology (TTS), widely known as the speech generated by commercial software, can be used to create digital audio materials for listening comprehension in classes of English as a foreign language (Azuma, 2008; Godwin-Jones, 2000). It can be used as an alternative technology to the materials used on audio cassettes, CDs or DVDs. Originally, TTS applications were created for the visually impaired people to listen to the materials on their computer or the Internet. However, although this technology is not geared towards foreign language teaching, it can be beneficial to language learners.

The companies such as Acapela and AT&T provide voices to produce human-like digital voices, and these voices can be used with computer software such as NaturalReader 10, which can help convert any typed text such as PDF, Word files or emails into human-like voices. Software and the voices are not free. However, there are some applications on the Internet, provided as a demo such as the one offered by AT&T, free to use for non-commercial purposes.

**AT&T Natural Voices Text-to-Speech Demo**

AT&T Lab, Inc provides a demo page with 17 voices such as English, Spanish and French (http://www2.research.att.com/~ttsweb/tts/demo.php).

On the demo page, the first step is to choose the voice.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Voice</th>
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<td>Crystal</td>
<td>US English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>US English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>US English</td>
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<td>Lauren</td>
<td>US English</td>
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<td>Claire</td>
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<td>Charles</td>
<td>UK English</td>
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<td>Audrey</td>
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<td>Alberto</td>
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<td>Arnaud</td>
<td>CA French</td>
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Then, you can type or paste the text, which must match the chosen language. Please note the 300-character text limit while typing or pasting the text copied. The last step is to choose “SPEAK” or “DOWNLOAD” option.
When you click on “SPEAK” on the tab, you will hear your text spoken by the voice you have selected. When you click on “DOWNLOAD”, the following message will appear, providing the link to download the created audio.

Your audio can be found at http://tts/speech/d0ea4be070e4a5122b5350e230e80389.wav

Click this link to listen. This works in some cases when the PLAY button does not.

To download, right-click the link above. In most browsers this will show a menu. Select “Save Link Target As...” to save the audio clip.

Note: This link is good for about 5 minutes, after which the audio file on the web server will be deleted to conserve disk space.

The downloaded audio can be converted to MP3 file using the freely available audio editor and recorder, Audacity (http://audacity.sourceforge.net/).

How to use TSS with students

TTS can be used in various ways. The following are just some examples (Kılıckaya, 2011, 2006; González, 2007).

Language Learners can practice the pronunciation of vocabulary, especially frequently mispronounced items. They can also create their own list of words as well as the one provided by the teacher.

Language learners can produce short sentences and listen to them.

The audio files previously created by different voices can be turned into mini dialogues using Audacity.

References


TEXT-TO-SPEECH RESOURCES

Acapela Text-to-Speech Demo

Natural Readers
http://www.naturalreaders.com/index.htm

AT&T Natural Voices® Text-to-Speech Demo
http://www2.research.att.com/~ttsweb/tts/demo.php

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The Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program, a program of the U.S. Department of State, offers intensive summer language institutes overseas in 13 languages for U.S. undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines. The CLS Program provides fully funded group based intensive language instruction and structured cultural enrichment experiences for seven to ten weeks.

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Countries may include: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Russia, South Korea, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, or others where the target languages are spoken.

Deadline: Tuesday, November 15, 2011
To learn more, visit clscholarship.org
Member News

Editor: Molly Thomasy Blasing (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

The AATSEEL Newsletter likes to keep its members informed about important events and professional milestones! If you or an AATSEEL member you know has recently defended a dissertation, been hired, received a promotion or retired, please send the member’s name, accomplishment and affiliation to: Molly Thomasy Blasing, thomasy@wisc.edu

The AATSEEL Newsletter is pleased to share the following news items from our members:


Natalie Kononenko (University of Alberta) writes to report that she recently spent a month in Northeast Kazakhstan (Pavlodar region) recording ethnographic information in villages founded by Ukrainians approximately 100 years ago. The focus of her research was primarily recording weddings, baptisms, funerals and calendar holidays. A report on her trip will be published in the 2011 issue of Folklorica, the Journal of the Slavic and East European Folklore Association. Interested readers are encouraged to look for this material on Dr. Kononenko’s website (www.arts.ualberta.ca/ual/vp) in the not-too-distant future.

Svitlana Krys (University of Alberta) has completed the PhD program in Slavic Languages and Literatures in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies at the University of Alberta. Her dissertation is titled “The Gothic in Ukrainian Romanticism: An Uncharted Genre.” Congratulations, Dr. Krys!

Julia Titus (Yale University) has published an annotated reader of Dostoevsky’s The Meek One (Krotkaia). This fully annotated paperback learner’s edition of Dostoevsky’s short story is intended for intermediate and advanced Russian students. In addition to the Russian text, the book includes an introduction discussing the story’s historical context, literary significance, and critical response; an extensive glossary and a learner’s dictionary; discussion questions; and vocabulary quizzes, exercises, and self-tests. All of these components are also available online, accompanied by a complete soundtrack. More information is available at http://yalebooks.com/meek.

Ewa Thompson (Rice University; Editor, Sarmatian Review) writes to share the news that the Sarmatian Review and the Polish Institute of Houston have selected Professor Roman Mazurkiewicz of Krakow Pedagogical University as the recipient of their annual award for notable achievements in Polish Studies. The award acknowledges Dr. Mazurkiewicz’s work in creating and maintaining a website on Old Polish Literature (staropolska.pl).

Summer Intensive Language Study at SWSEEL

Summer 2012 Indiana University Bloomington 6 to 10 credits Funding Available

Summer Workshop in Slavic, East European, and Central Asian Languages www.indiana.edu/~swseel
Q. Can you say anything about the two-way use of imperfective verbs of motion (VOM) (unprefixed and prefixed) in narratives, i.e., can they be used when telling what was subsequently done at the destination? I’ve heard about this in colloquial Russian, but am curious as to how possible it is. Something along the lines of the following:

Вчера они приходили и показали нам ребенка.
Вчера мы ходили к ним и пили чай.

But what’s the difference between those and Вчера они пришли и показали …

I assume the latter is pure narrative, whereas the former is a one-sentence introductory summary? Anyway, it’s kind of odd that a language uses a form that basically asserts a round trip but can follow up with events that happened mid-trip.

A. First of all, I would like to say that one should not look at imperfective VOMs as strictly meaning round-trip action. If we think of the main meanings of imperfective verbs — general-factual, repetitive, and process — imperfective VOMs exhibit all of them (although individual verbs may lack some of the meanings).

• General-factual:

Недавно Забелин подвозил двух банковских стажеров, толковых молодых ребят. [Семен Данилюк. Рублевая зона (2004)]

Вспомнила она Николая Ивановича, скромного, лысого, с палочкой, со скрюченной правой рукой и полуподвижной левой, как приходил он к ней чинить пылесос, как говорил вместо “видите ли”— “винтили”… [И. Грекова. «Скрипка Ротшильда» (1980)]

И все мысли о Юлии, о том, как когда-то приезжал он, молодой, начинающий жизнь, в Озерки… [И. А. Бунин. Дневники (1881-1953)]

To check for general-factual-edness, one could replace the verbs with читал, as in “Войну и мир” читал, or брал as Иван Грозный says in the film “Иван Васильевич меняет профессию”: “Казань брал, Астрахань брал, Шпака не брал.”[И. А. Архипова. Музыка жизни (1996)]

• Process:

На обратном пути Данелия меня подвозил и вдруг спросил: «Тебе не дует?» Виктория Токарева, Дмитрий Быков. «Человек без комплектсов мне неинтересен»: Интервью Виктории Токаревой (2003)]

• One-way repetitive:

Вообще-то в его словах не было ничего странного: он всегда подвозил ее домой, и прогулки их всегда были недолгими, потому что незавтра ей снова предстояла работа, и Андрей об этом помнил. [Анна Берсенева. Полет над разлукой (2003-2005)]

Мы шли на них [спектакли] с особым настроением: приходили заранее, чтобы было время распеться, старались быть в хорошей вокальной форме, даже одевались как-то по-особому нарядно. [И. А. Архипова. Музыка жизни (1996)]

В результате всех этих хлопот я смогла через какое-то время послать А. И. Ермакову телеграмму, чтобы он брал грузовик и приезжал в Москву. [И. А. Архипова. Музыка жизни (1996)]

• Round-trip:

А когда мы вернулись, мама посмотрела на меня и сказала — ну что ты с ним возишься? За тобой твои друзья приходили. Играла бы лучше с нормальными детьми. [Андрей Геласимов. Жанна (2001)]

Literal usage of приходить ‘to come’ with human agents does not lend itself to the process meaning, but metaphoric usage does:

• Round-trip:

А когда мы вернулись, мама посмотрела на меня и сказала — ну что ты с ним возишься? За тобой твои друзья приходили. Играла бы лучше с нормальными детьми. [Андрей Геласимов. Жанна (2001)]

Хлопнула входная дверь. Потом они обе обернулись, раскрасневшиеся, чужие какие-то, и разом заговорили. Оказывается, приезжал с Севера человек и привез известие, что умер дядя Костя— муж тёти Лели. Дядя Костя был учёным-филологом. [Алексей Зайцев. Братья // «Трамвай», № 9, 1990]
So of подвозить, приходить и приезжать, подвозить does not have a round-trip meaning, or at least not one easily available, while приходить and приезжать have difficulty with the process meaning.

It is true that in some instances it is not easy to say whether the meaning is general-factual or round-trip or repetitive or a combination of all of these, as in the following example:

Если же к папе приходили друзья и грибы становились “грибками”, за здоровье тёти Мани провозглашались тосты. [Анатолий Алексин. Раздел имущества (1979)]

The two examples identified above as “round-trip” could in fact be seen as general-factual as well as round-trip action. A close look at the examples under приходили in the Russian National Corpus immediately proves that pure round-trip action verbs are quite rare.

So consequently I do not think that приходили in Вчера они приходили и показали нам ребенка is a round-trip action per se. It is general-factual with the understanding that they are no longer at the speaker’s place. Compare it with пришли и... with the process meaning.

Вчера они читали учебник истории и узнали о сражении на Березине.

I did not have among my categories repetition of a round-trip action. On the one hand, the next example could qualify as repetitive round-trip motion since those who came obviously left:

— Действительно, Таня — Да мой [муж] вчера с рыбалки приходил.

On the other hand, the singular example multiplied in this example would be:

— Да мой [муж] вчера с рыбалки пришел с семьями делегациями и попала к нему на крючок совершенно случайно. — Ну, а ты?
— А я вот испугалась. Сама знаешь, что моему мужику рога [horns] пообломает.
— Почему?
— Так потом дядька какой-то весь зеленый отпал, что если ему русалку не вернут, то он моему мужику рога [horns] пообломает.
— Ну, а ты?
— А я вот испугалась. Сама знаешь, что моему есть что обламывать...

(She is referring to a русалка as in рогонесец = cuckold.)

The home base is not the only distinction. Let us compare similar examples, as close to minimal pairs as we can find. The next two examples both talk about death, except in the imperfective case it is rather imprecise as to who is dead, while in the perfective case there is a lot more precision in the information:

— А я вот испугалась. Сама знаешь, что моему есть что обламывать...

(She is referring to a русалка as in рогонесец = cuckold.)

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И вдруг пришли и сказали, что он убит, что его более нет… [А. Ф. Кони. Иван Александрович Гончаров (1911)]

Let us compare another set of very similar examples.

The perfective one describes events in sequence: came, showed documents, and then there was immediately an outcome that followed. The imperfective describes events as happening more or less at the same time, and the outcome is still pending:

И только когда я после ночной смены пришел и показал документы, о том, что я из “бывших”, протокол аннулировали. (www.lovehate.ru/opinions/52687/14)

delo все в том, что продажа состоялась, покупатель уже приходил и показал мне документы, и сказал по-хорошему не съедете, будем по...
(http://www.urist.in.ua/archive/index.php/t-89644.html)

Next we have an interesting description of one and the same event; first it is described as it was witnessed, step-by-step, and then in retrospect:


One could also assume that the first description of the visit was viewed as consequential: the contract was supposed to be cancelled after the visit. The second description is viewed as non-consequential: the contract was supposed to be cancelled after the visit. The second description is viewed as non-consequential as far as the contract is concerned since it was not cancelled.

And finally here are a couple of examples related to serious remodeling. The perfective one explains why the door is gone, while the imperfective describes the state of seriousness. The perfective one explains why the contract was supposed to be cancelled after the visit. The second description is viewed as consequential: the contract was supposed to be cancelled after the visit.

To summarize, we should note that perfective in similar phrases is more concrete, describes events sequentially and is usually consequential. Imperfective is more general, less specific and typically inconsequential.

As we have seen, as far as prefixed verbs are concerned, imperfective VOM may be used in introductory and non-introductory sentences. Unprefixed VOM are more likely to appear in introductory sentences. In the first case below, the imperfective VOM introduces a pluperfect situation: what had happened before the speaker read the article. The second example is pure introductory: new topic, new paragraph in a letter (chapter 98).

Я прочитал вашу статью [“Банк не спросит прописку”] и побежал в отделение Сбер [Сбербанк]. На днях я туда ходил и попросил потребительский кредит, но так как регистрация в СПб у меня до декабря, мне сказали что давать только на 6 месяцев. (http://slon.ru/blogs/zubovaea/post/596549/)

Игорь ходил и узнал на счет курсов водителей категории «С» (профессионал). Обучение в Надыме стоит 44 тыс. руб. (При мой зарплате в 25.000). (Л. Маслов. 183 письма с Севера. 1992 год)

I must add that unprefixed VOM in this situation are rather rare.

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Please send questions to: Prof. Alina Israeli, LFS, American University, 4400 Massachusetts Ave. NW., Washington DC 20016-8045; or via e-mail to: aisrael@american.edu

Recent Publications Continued

Continued from page 5


Science

Russia is a very attractive market and many foreign companies have been working there successfully for many years. But regardless of what language is used in business communication, it is interesting to observe how both parties deal with names – one of the most important aspects of personal interaction.

First name and patronymic vs. «госпожа»/«господин»:

In the Russian language, a traditional and polite form of address is to call a person by his/her first name and patronymic. Western forms of address like «госпожа» + last name or «господин» + last name are gradually entering the business culture of conversation, but this is very seldom used in communication between Russians.

Use of academic titles:

In general, academic titles are rarely applied in Russian culture. Western colleagues often use academic titles like “doctor” or “professor”, both in written and verbal forms, to address their Russian partners with «кандидат наук» or «доктор наук» degrees. Russian colleagues seem to enjoy it.

Proper pronunciation:

As a rule, Russian professionals try to pronounce the names of their Western colleagues correctly and usually call their Western partners by their first names. Pronunciation of the Russian colleagues’ last names can create a particular problem for Westerners – one that they try to avoid by addressing a Russian either by a first name or a remembered status or position.

Also, the syllabic stresses in proper names that exist in both Russian and in Western languages – e.g. Boris, Roman, Victor, Elena – do not coincide. Western partners often pronounce these names “incorrectly” and Russian colleagues seldom correct them.

Some Russian partners might introduce themselves in a Western manner: e.g., «Евгений» might say that his name is Eugene, «Георгий» can become George, «Эдуард» – Edward and «Матвей» – Matthew.

An additional challenge that some westerners might face in Russia is the fact that not all members of a Russian team will be introduced. Sometimes the less ‘important’ people like interpreters might be forgotten. After many hours of negotiations through the interpreter, some western businesspeople might have to ask “what is your name?” And this could be really very difficult.

AATSEEL is seeking nominations for the position of Webmaster

(to begin January 2012)

AATSEEL Webmaster (Volunteer)

The Webmaster works closely with and reports to the Executive Director and the President to maintain and develop the AATSEEL website by:

- overseeing the volunteer editors who maintain the majority of the site’s content; training and assisting new volunteers and using contacts within the profession to locate replacement editors as needed,
- cooperating with the Editors of SEEJ and the newsletter, as well as the Conference Program Committee Chair, to ensure that all web materials are accurate and serve the mission of AATSEEL publications and the annual conference,
- solving needs for new web pages or website functions by working with the President, Executive Director, and our web service provider,
- fielding queries from outside AATSEEL about the organization’s web presence and responding appropriately to requests (consulting with the Executive Council as appropriate).

Scripting, programming, extensive HTML knowledge is not required since AATSEEL contracts with a full-time agency for support.

To send your CV or if you have any questions please contact

Elizabeth Durst
Executive Director, AATSEEL
3501 Trousdale PKY., THH 255L
Los Angeles, CA 90089-4353 USA
E-mail: aatseel@usc.edu
Listening to REAL second language

Anne Cutler,
Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics http://www.mpi.nl
Anne.Cutler@mpi.nl

Never forget: L2 speech is someone else’s L1 speech. That means that real L2 speech is like real L1 speech: often unlike how it’s written. English-speakers say I’ll post my letter to Grandpa, and 99 times out of 100 it comes out with post pronounced pos’, and Grandpa pronounced Grampa. The deletion of the sound /t/ in post my, or the assimilation of one sound to the following one, are “casual-speech processes”. Some such processes, including these two, are very common across languages including Slavic languages, of course.

Casual-speech processes are supposed to make life easier for talkers. But ease of articulation is not the whole story, because some of these processes appear in only a few languages, though they involve sound sequences found in many languages. Consider /l/ followed by /r/, as in Kilroy or berringer. English-speakers don’t say Kirroy or berringer as an easier way of saying those words. But in Hungarian that is exactly what happens – /l/ becomes /rl/ (e.g., barrol ‘from the left’ becomes barrol). Even in two varieties of the same language, adjustments that happen in one dialect may be unknown in the other. English is a case in point. Phrases like idea of or saw a can be said with an /r/ separating the two vowels at the word boundary. This happens in most forms of British English; in most forms of American English it never happens. (Tip: The Beatles’ A Day in the Life – “I saw a film today, oh boy” – provides a nice clear example of this phenomenon!).

So what happens when L2 listeners are confronted with casual speech processes? Annelie Tuinman’s PhD thesis answered this question (Tuinman, 2011; Tuinman & Cutler, 2011; Tuinman, Mitterer & Cutler, 2011). There is both good and bad news. The good news is that insertions, deletions and reductions in L2 speech are no problem at all – as long as the native language has the same process. In fact L2 listeners are very sensitive to exactly how the process works in the L2 and quickly pick up on any differences with the L1. The case study here was German learners of Dutch. These languages both have the /t/-deletion process, as in English, but there is a slight difference – German speakers don’t usually reduce a /t/ that is a verb ending, but Dutch speakers do (so do English speakers! The verb ending in I passed my exam is just as readily reduced as I post my letters). The German Dutch-learners picked up on this small difference immediately and if anything were even more ready than the native Dutch to expect such a /t/ to disappear.

And the bad news? That’s when the L2 process is quite unfamiliar to the L1 ear. This case study involved Dutch listeners to their L2, English – the British kind of English, with the intrusive /r/ in contexts such as idea of. Such intrusions never ever happen in Dutch, though in Dutch too there can be word boundaries with vowels on each side (e.g., Papa en Mama – en means and). An interesting property of this process is that it can cause ambiguity. Take a sentence like Canada aided the small African country. A word recognition study showed that when Dutch listeners heard this, spoken by a true Brit, the word RAID sprang to their mind. Native British listeners didn’t do this. They never mixed up intended utterances of Canada aided and Canada raided (because the intrusive /r/ was significantly shorter than an intended word-initial /r/ like in raided). For Dutch listeners, though, any hint of /r/ made them hear raid instead of aid.

So understanding real second language is possible, as long as it gets real in the same way as the L1. If it doesn’t, though, there are serious traps for the unwary (imagine a Dutch reporter passing on a British news story about Canada aiding… it doesn’t bear thinking about!).

Literature


DOMESTIC SUMMER LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

AATSEEL compiles information on U.S.-based summer programs in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian languages and cultures. The information below was provided in late 2010 and is subject to change. Please contact programs directly for details and updates.

These listings include only Slavic, East European, and Eurasian offerings. Many of the programs listed offer additional languages, e.g. Chinese or Arabic. See individual program sites for details.

These listings include only programs where instruction is offered either wholly or primarily in the United States. Many institutes have multiple programs, with different dates, locations, etc. The information below shows broadest range possible. Individual courses and levels may have different dates, prices, etc. Be sure to check the program site for details.

Program directors; send updates for future Newsletters to cli@asu.edu.

– Kathleen Evans-Romaine, Arizona State University

The Summer Language Program information will be in the December issue of the newsletter. Please contact Kathleen Evans-Romaine; cli@asu.edu with info on domestic programs. Contact Betty Lou Leaver; leaver@aol.com with international program info.
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AATSEEL NEWSLETTER
Vol. 54, Issue 3
October 2011
AATSEEL Newsletter Information

The AATSEEL Newsletter is published in October, December, February, and April. Advertising and copy are due six weeks prior to issue date.

PUBLICITY AND ADVERTISING POLICY

Free of Charge: Full scholarship study tours and stateside study programs, meetings, job information, new classroom materials, and similar announcements are published free of charge.

Advertising Rates: Commercial ads of interest to the profession are accepted at the following rates and sizes: (Other sizes, such as vertical half-pages and quarter pages, can sometimes be accepted; please query first.)

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Questions on advertising fees and determination of whether an announcement is an advertisement should be addressed to the Executive Director.

Format: Preferred format for advertisements is PDF or eps with embedded fonts. Either Macintosh or PC format is acceptable. Advertisements without graphics may be sent as word files; rtf is preferable if using programs other than Word or WordPerfect. Files may be e-mailed to the editor (Leaver@aol.com). Detailed instructions for advertisers on how to prepare advertisements for the AATSEEL Newsletter can be found on the AATSEEL website: http://www.aatseel.org. Questions not answered there and requests for exceptions should be addressed to the Editor.

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