

History of Slavic Languages:

Russian, Polish, and Serbo-Croatian in Comparison

SLV 440, 3 credit hours

Instructor

Danko Sipka, Ph.D.

Professor of Slavic Languages, E-mail: danko.sipka@asu.edu. Web: <http://www.public.asu.edu/~dsipka>

Course Web Page <http://www.asusilc.net/asugh>

Schedule & Location Fall Semester 2005, M-W 1:40-2:30pm, ED 212 (M-W), Coor 195 (T)

Prerequisites

Although primarily intended for those with previous knowledge of a Slavic language, there are no prerequisites for taking this course.

Objectives

This course has the following objectives: a) to familiarize its participants with the methodology and techniques of historical, comparative, and contrastive linguistics; b) to present the major lines of development (in both internal and external language history) from Proto Indo-European, through the Common Slavic language to present-day Slavic languages; c) to compare and contrast three Slavic languages (Russian, Polish, and Serbo-Croatian), each of them representing a different branch, and; d) to empower its participants with the mechanisms to draw upon their knowledge of one Slavic language to acquire the other two Slavic languages discussed here.

Description

This course represents a merger of a) traditional Slavic comparative and historical linguistics, b) a synchronic contrastive approach to three Slavic languages, and c) a survival course in these three Slavic languages. It is divided into the following topics:

Scope, Methodology and Techniques

Internal and external linguistic history; Synchrony and diachrony; Reconstruction techniques; Source and reflex; Change vs. alternation; Area and isogloss, Comparative vs. contrastive approaches; Research tradition

HW: *Selected readings and tasks listed on the Web page*

Proto Indo-European, Balto-Slavic, Common Slavic

Languages; Area; Centum and satem branch; The structure of Proto Indo-European; Common Balto-Slavic features; The Structure of Common Slavic

HW: *Selected readings and tasks listed on the Web page*

Quiz: *Map quiz and multiple choice quiz*

East, West, and South Slavic

Languages, their linguistic and sociolinguistic status; Common Eastern Slavic features; Common Western Slavic features; Common South Slavic Features; Further differentiation of the Western and Southern Slavic branches

HW: *Recognizing the language of the assigned lexical list and underlining the common Slavic features that are typical for the branch to which that text belongs*

History I: Phonology

Prosody; Vowels; De-nasalisation; Development of the Semi-Vowels; The Yat'; Consonants; Palatalizations; Reductions; Metatheses

HW: *Tracing the development of the phonemes from the assigned contrastive lexical lists*

Quiz: *Multiple choice quiz on phonological development*

History II: Morphosyntax

Declension patterns; Conjugation patterns; Simplification mechanisms in inflectional morphology (loss of the dual number, gender vs. inflectional ending, time vs. tense); Word order; Selected syntactic forms (the absolute dative, accusative with the infinitive, etc.)

HW: *Tracing the development of the endings from the assigned contrastive grammatical tables*

Quiz: *Multiple choice quiz on morphosyntactic development*

History II: The Lexicon

Common Indo-European and Slavic roots; Metaphorical mechanisms of semantic extensions; False cognates; Slavic etymological dictionaries

HW: *Analyzing selected entries of core vocabulary from Slavic monolingual dictionaries*

Russian, Polish, and Serbo-Croatian in Contrast

Sociolinguistic status; Phonology; Morphosyntax; the Lexicon

HW: *Writing formal contrastive rules for selected phonological and morphosyntactic features*

Quiz: *Multiple choice quiz on contrastive features*

Three Slavic Languages – a Survival Kit

Core vocabulary; Basic grammar; Basic intentional phrases; Sources and opportunities for further studying of Polish and Serbo-Croatian

Final exam

Course Materials

The principal books for this course will be *The Slavonic Languages* (edited by B. Comrie and G. G. Corbett), Routledge, London-New York, 1993 and C.E. Townsend and L.A Janda *Common and Comparative Slavic: Phonology and Inflection with special emphasis on Russian, Polish, Czech, Serbo-Croatian, and Bulgarian*, Slavica, Columbus, 1996. Students should choose one of these two books. The former book (\$ 39.95) is recommended for those aspiring more intimate involvement with historical and comparative linguistics of Slavic languages, while the latter (\$ 27.95) is to be used by those seeking practical easily digestible knowledge.

Selected texts from H. Leeming's *Historical and Comparative Lexicology of the Slavonic Languages*, PAN, Krakow, 2001 and E. Stankiewicz's *The Slavic Languages*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin-New York, 1986 will also be used. A substantial amount of other materials, such as charts, tables, fact sheets, etc., will be available on-line on the course Web page.

Grading Policy

Class work will contribute to the final grade in the following manner:

Quizzes: 30%, Homework: 20%, Final Exam: 30%, Class Participation: 20%

Schedule

Weeks 1-3: Scope, Methodology and Techniques, Indo-European, Balto-Slavic, Common Slavic, Eastern, Western, and Southern Slavic

Weeks 4-7: History I: Phonology

Weeks 8-9: History II: Morphosyntax

Week 10: History III: The Lexicon

Weeks 11-12: Russian, Polish, and Serbo-Croatian in Contrast

Weeks 13-16: Three Slavic Languages – a Survival Kit