

Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian) 101-102 On-line

Syllabus

Dear Student,

Welcome to the wonderful world of three cultures divided by the common language. Learning a foreign language is a demanding yet highly rewarding enterprise. You are asked to devote a considerable amount of time to this course. In return you will be able to join three very interesting cultures, Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian and be able to communicate with the people representing these cultures. As someone who has learned over a dozen of foreign languages, and who has lived in five different countries, I cannot emphasize enough how rewarding the command of a foreign language and culture can be. In this syllabus you will find more detailed information about this course, your and my role in it. Please read it in its entirety.

All the best,

[Danko Šipka](#) (click on my name to hear its pronunciation)

Basic Course Information

Where: <http://cli.la.asu.edu/scr101> use your ASU id as the password (chat and other resources linked from this web space)

Additional materials at <http://cli.la.asu.edu/vlado>, use vlado as userid and your ASU id as the password

When: Whenever you want, except for telephone and chat room conversations which should be arranged in e-mail correspondence with the instructor.

Instructor: Danko.Sipka@asu.edu (responds to e-mails within several hours 24/7)

Phone: 480 965 7705 (e-mail the instructor to arrange the conversation time)

About the Instructor

Education: Ph.D. Psychology, Institute of Psychology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Ph.D., Linguistics, University of Belgrade, M.A., Russian, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland

Affiliation: Research associate professor and acting director of the Arizona State University Critical Languages Institute. Šipka has taught Serbo-Croatian in the ASU CLI for several years and was appointed to the ASU faculty in 2002. Prior to his ASU appointment he served as associate professor of Slavic languages at the University of Poznan (Poland) and senior linguist at Multilingual Research and Management (MRM/McNeil Technologies), Rockville, MD. He has served as consultant to Translation Experts Ltd., London, Multilingual Solution, Microsoft Corporation, and the New Mexico State University Computing Research Laboratory.

Research and publications: Šipka's major fields of interest include Slavic morphology, cross-linguistic lexicology, lexical relations, political psychology, psycholinguistics, and Polish-Serbo-Croatian contrastive studies. He is a leading expert in machine translation, and the development of e-learning modules for LCTLs. His numerous publications include the recent volumes, *A*

Bibliography of Serbo-Croatian Dictionaries: Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian Muslim (2000), *Serbo-Croatian-English Colloquial Dictionary* (2000), *A Dictionary of New Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian Words* (2002). He has published over one hundred papers and reviews. Numerous e-learning resources are available at his Web page <<http://www.public.asu.edu/~dsipka>> .

Teaching: Dr. Šipka currently teaches Computational Linguistics of Slavic Languages and History of Slavic Languages at the ASU. He regularly teaches Serbo-Croatian at all levels, as well as general Slavic courses such as MA Seminar in contrastive Slavic studies, Psycholinguistics of Slavic languages, etc. Occasional teaching assignments include courses such as Russian Conversation and Composition, team-taught at the ASU in the fall of 2002.

Prerequisites

This is an introductory course and thus open to everybody. You need to be able to run several programs (see <http://cli.la.asu.edu/scr101/technical.htm> for more information).

Required Texts and Resources

All materials are supplied at the aforementioned Web sites (see "Basic course information above").

Background and Purpose of the Course

This course will empower you with the introductory-level command in Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian) and give you a first look into the three cultures of the West Balkans (Bosniac, Croatia, Serbian). This course, either on its own or in conjunction with the intermediate-level course will satisfy the foreign language graduation requirement at those universities and their respective colleges which enforce this requirement. Needless to say, knowledge of a less commonly taught foreign language brings about numerous other benefits, such as broadening one's horizons, adding an employable skill (especially in the government intelligence, diplomatic, and trade communities), etc.

Learning Outcomes - Course Goals and Objectives

Students are expected to acquire level 1+ in reading (limited working proficiency, with other skills exceeding level 1) language skills as defined by the US Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR). This level of proficiency corresponds to the high intermediate level as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). This assumes the following skills:

Listening:	Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about all survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility evident in understanding into a range of circumstances beyond immediate survival needs. Shows spontaneity in understanding by speed, although consistency of understanding uneven. Limited vocabulary range necessitates repetition for understanding. Understands more common time forms and most question forms, some word order patterns, but miscommunication still occurs with more complex patterns. Cannot sustain understanding of coherent structures in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations. Understanding of descriptions and the giving of precise information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features; e.g., pronouns, verb inflections, but many are unreliably understood, especially if less immediate in reference. Understanding is largely limited to a series of short, discrete utterances. Still has to ask for utterances to be repeated. Some ability to understand the facts.
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Reading:	Sufficient comprehension to understand simple discourse in printed form for informative social purposes. Can read material such as announcements of public events, simple prose containing biographical information or narration of events, and straightforward newspaper headlines. Can guess at unfamiliar vocabulary if highly contextualized, but with difficulty in unfamiliar contexts. Can get some main ideas and locate routine information of professional significance in more complex texts. Can follow essential points of written discussion at an elementary level on topics in his/her special professional field. In commonly taught languages, the individual may not control the structure well. For example, basic grammatical relations are often misinterpreted, and temporal reference may rely primarily on lexical items as time indicators. Has some difficulty with the cohesive factors in discourse, such as matching pronouns with referents. May have to read materials several times for understanding.
Speaking:	Can initiate and maintain predictable face-to-face conversations and satisfy limited social demands. He/she may, however, have little understanding of the social conventions of conversation. The interlocutor is generally required to strain and employ real-world knowledge to understand even some simple speech. The speaker at this level may hesitate and may have to change subjects due to lack of language resources. Range and control of the language are limited. Speech largely consists of a series of short, discrete utterances. Examples: The individual is able to satisfy most travel and accommodation needs and a limited range of social demands beyond exchange of skeletal biographic information. Speaking ability may extend beyond immediate survival needs. Accuracy in basic grammatical relations is evident, although not consistent. May exhibit the more common forms of verb tenses, for example, but may make frequent errors in formation and selection. While some structures are established, errors occur in more complex patterns. The individual typically cannot sustain coherent structures in longer utterances or unfamiliar situations. Ability to describe and give precise information is limited. Person, space, and time references are often used incorrectly. Pronunciation is understandable to natives used to dealing with foreigners. Can combine most significant sounds with reasonable comprehensibility, but has difficulty in producing certain sounds in certain positions or in certain combinations. Speech will usually be labored. Frequently has to repeat utterances to be understood by the general public.
Writing:	Sufficient control of writing system to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can create sentences and short paragraphs related to most survival needs (food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings and situations) and limited social demands. Can express fairly accurate present and future time. Can produce some past verb forms but not always accurately or with correct usage. Can relate personal history, discuss topics such as daily life, preferences, and very familiar material. Shows good control of elementary vocabulary and some control of basic syntactic patterns, but major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts. Dictionary usage may still yield incorrect vocabulary or forms, although the individual can use a dictionary to advantage to express simple ideas. Generally cannot use basic cohesive elements of discourse to advantage (such as relative constructions, object pronouns, connectors, etc.). Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics, and respond to personal questions using elementary vocabulary and common structures. Can write simple letters, summaries of biographical data and work experience with fair accuracy. Writing, though faulty, is comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners.

This level of proficiency, as defined for the purposes of this course, stipulates acquisition of all regular and frequent irregular grammatical patterns, the 1,500-unit lexical minimum (with at least 500 units used in speech production), and an array of common pragmatic patterns.

Take a look at the IRL scale, justification behind it and elaborate description of the levels:

Information available through the Summer Institute of Linguistics

<http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/mangngyrlngglrnngprgrm/theirfsiproficiencyscale.htm>

On the Defense Language Institute scale of foreign language complexity, which ranges from 1 (simplest) to 4 (most difficult), the value of Bosnia{c/n}/Serbian/Croatian is three, with only languages such as Arabic, Korean, Japanese and Chinese being more difficult. Ample individual work will be needed to reach the desired level during a nine-week course.

In addition, this course should empower its student to be able to recognize common knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral patterns of the region, and to behave (verbally and non-verbally) in compliance with such cultural norms. In other words, students should develop elementary cultural competence. This assumes the knowledge of a catalog of the most important facts in both high and everyday culture.

Finally, students will be given an opportunity to acquire certain basic facts relevant to their interests. It is expected that two principal groups of students at this course will be heritage learners and Slavists.

Course Description, Organization and Its Conceptual Framework

This course covers introductory Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian) language and culture material. Each lesson consists of the following nine distinct components.

Component	Summary Description
Introduction	General overview of the lesson
Cultural competence	Both <i>Landeskunde</i> summary of basic cultural facts and contrastive account of socio-cultural differences in relation to American culture
Grammar	Phonology with prosody, basic morphosyntactic patterns
Vocabulary	Subject-matter oriented review of the vocabulary covered in the lesson
Intentional competence	Account of strategies in “doing things with words”, e.g., introducing oneself, taking leave of somebody, etc.
Norms	Spelling and pronunciation conventions
Interactive drills	Drills other problem-solving tasks with open-ended completion time
Interactive lesson texts	Multimedia lesson texts with glossary entries, full inflections, and other comments attached to every word form in the text.
Quizzes	Drills and problem-solving tasks with limited completion time and results stored on the server

The selected components are standard constituents of introductory language courses. Their choice and order is dictated by the general principles of foreign language learning.

Course Requirements and Assignments

You are required to cover the resources offered at the course web site in their entirety. Each lesson indicates the number of hours required to complete it. Please make sure to complete all graded drills, activities, and quizzes. You are also required to respond to the instructor's e-mails within several days as well as to schedule and participate in eight telephone conversations and eight chat room meetings throughout the course.

Instructional Strategy and Approach

The dominating methodological framework in the introductory course delivery falls under the rubric of the cognitive code approach, interspersed with occasional utilization of communicative approaches

The approach is at the same time congruent with basic didactic principles. This is of particular importance with regards to the progression of the materials. More complex items are always preceded by less complex ones, known materials always precede less known content.

Finally, the project greatly relies on contrastive, cross-cultural, and quantitative linguistics. Being designed for speakers of American English, the course contains frequent contrastive remarks addressing the differences between American English on the one hand and Serbo-Croatian along with its three ethnic cultures on the other. The course operates on the lists of lexical minimum, grammatical forms, and intentional phrases derived from longitudinal quantitative studies of linguistic corpora and instructional process.

Options

You are absolutely free to choose the time and place to cover the contents of this course. It is however absolutely crucial that you devote at least forty hours for each lesson, that you engage in all required activities, and that you cover the content of the course in the order suggested at each web page. In addition to general course activities, there are tasks and materials targeted at special-interest groups (see, for example, the grammar section of Lesson 2, with optional links for Serbian heritage speakers and linguists respectively).

Grading and General Policy and Procedures

Your grade will be determined by the following parameters:

Graded drills 30%

Text-related activities 20%

Quizzes 30%

Telephone conversations and chat room sessions 20%

The grades will be assigned as follows:

Graded drills, text-related activities, and quizzes:

80-100% correct – A

70-79% correct – B

60-69% correct – C

50-59% correct – D

less than 49% correct – F

Telephone conversations and chat room sessions

Fully prepared, fully active – A

Fully prepared, less active – B

Less prepared, less active – C

Not prepared, active – D

Not prepared, not active - F

Learning Tips

Learning a foreign language is just like hypnosis. It will be effective only if the learner cooperates. This truism is even more obvious in an on-line course, the principal limitations of which are sparse human-to-human interaction and limited exposure to interactive real-life situations. The course thus remains skewed toward reading and writing skills with moderate coverage of listening comprehension and in particular speaking skills. In addition, there are general obstacles in learning foreign languages that you as a learner have to overcome.

The following strategies will help you increase the speed and depth of your language acquisition.

1. Find a native speaker of Serbo-Croatian in your environment and try to communicate with him/her as much as possible
2. E-mail the instructor whenever you have problems of any kind
3. Make sure to have full command of one item in progression before you move on to another
4. Use mnemonics. Make abstract grammatical content sensefull. For example, the Cyrillic letter Б looks like a person with a beer belly. If you think about that letter as a person with a belly, you will remember it faster and firmer
5. Put your vocabulary items on index cards, record them as audio clips, put them on post-its on the items at your place, etc. Make sure you are constantly bombarded with the vocabulary in different forms of presentation
6. Link the content of the course with your own experience. For example, when learning adjectives describing appearance and personality imagine a concrete person you know and remember the adjectives as the description of that very person
7. Use your imagination. Imagine yourself in various situation (e.g., shopping in a store in the region, being a local rock star, etc.) and think about the most appropriate linguistic means to express yourself

Overview of the Units, Materials, and the Timetable

The following nine units are supposed to be covered in succession and by devoting twenty hours to the first lesson and forty to all others. In addition, there will be additional materials and activities (such as telephone conversations, chat room sessions, additional readings, etc.) which will be announced by the instructor throughout the course. See <http://cli.la.asu.edu/scr101/orijent.htm> for more information about technical and structural organization of this course.

Lesson 1

Culture General information about the language and the region; **Grammar** Pronunciation and spelling rules ; Verb *to be* in the present tense ; Demonstrative adverbs ; Gender of the nouns; **Skills** Greetings ;

Introducing oneself and others ; Taking leave of somebody ; Pointing ; **Vocabulary** ; common objects; professions ; pronouns ; spatial designations; **Norms** Correspondence between characters and sounds; Spelling of personal pronouns ;

Lesson 2

Culture Regions, major centers; Ethnic and religious affiliation; Differences in attitudinal and behavioral patterns **Grammar** Gender of the Nouns and Adjectives; Matching the Gender of the Adjectives with the Gender of the Nouns; Number of the Nouns and Adjectives; Matching the Number and the Gender the Adjectives with the Number and the Gender of the Nouns; Adjectives and Adjectival Pronouns Patterns and Exceptions in Noun and Adjective forms Verb to be in the negative and interrogative form **Skills** Expressing features and qualities Expressing possession Asking about professions, ethnic and religious background Asking general questions Affirming and negating Contrasting **Vocabulary** common objects, professions, ethnic and religious designation names, possessives, features, colors, intensifiers **Norms** Spelling of ethnic and religious designations Ekavian vs. ijekavian form

Lesson 3

Culture; School system; Popular sports and teams; Flora and fauna of the region; Climate and Weather; **Grammar**; Verbs, Present Tense - affirmative, interrogative, negative; Cases, General; The Accusative; Wh-pronouns and adverbs; Quantitative and qualitative adverbs; Prepositions with the Accusative; **Skills**; Relating about actions and states; Expressing relations; Expressing time; Quantifying; **Vocabulary**; School subjects and coursework; Sports and hobbies; Kinship terms; Plants and animals; Basic actions; Directions; Numerals; Days of the week; Months; **Norms**; Spelling of school subjects, days of the week, months; Spelling of the negation; Spelling of the particle li

Lesson 4

Culture; Social and health care system; Further attitudinal and behavioral differences; Conceptualizing differences; **Grammar**; Genitive; Basic sentence patterns; Agreement of the numerals; Prepositions with the Genitive; Existential constructions; Verbal aspect - preliminaries; **Skills**; Expressing liking and disliking - part one; Maintaining the stream of conversation; Asking more complex questions; **Vocabulary**; Cognitive and affective processes; Home and furniture; Garments; Basic medical terms; Body parts; **Norms**; Word stress; Sentence prosody

Lesson 5

Culture; Transportation infrastructure; Major cities; Major companies; Conditions of work; **Grammar**; Verbs, the Past Tense; The Dative/Locative; Relative Pronouns; **Skills**; Inviting; Thanking; Expressing liking and disliking 2; Relating about past events; **Vocabulary**; Transportation; City; Landscape; Social life; Work; **Norms**; Word order; Spelling of the enclitics;

Lesson 6

Culture; Forms of shopping; Culture of shopping; Banks; Telecommunications; TV and Radio Stations; **Grammar**; The Imperative; The Vocative; Reflexive pronouns; Impersonal se-constructions; Accusative and Dative Logical Subjects; **Skills**; Requesting; Issuing commands; Asking for and indicating directions; Expressing satisfaction and dissatisfaction; **Vocabulary**; Shopping; Groceries; Banking, monetary units; Post office, Internet; TV and radio; **Norms**; Punctuation;

Lesson 7

Culture; Ethnic foods and beverages; Major tourist points of interest; Popular music; **Grammar**; The Future Tense; The Instrumental Case; Adverbs; **Skills**; Promising, giving assurances; Proposing, accepting, and declining; Indicating mood; **Vocabulary**; Sightseeing; Restaurants, bars, etc.; Cuisine; **Norms**; Spelling of the Future Tense

Lesson 8

Culture; Major artists and work of art; Literary traditions; Ethnic crafts; Major religious holidays and practices; **Grammar;** The Comparative; The Conditional Mood; Numerical Nouns and Adjectives; **Skills;** Comparing; Indicating possibility; Indicating causes and consequences; **Vocabulary;** Culture; Holidays; Religions and religious life; **Norms;** Pronunciation and spelling of ć,c,dź,đ

Lesson 9

This lesson reviews all major points covered in this course in its cultural, grammatical, skills, vocabulary, and norms component

Take a look at a light version of Lesson one (with only limited number of activities) @ <http://www.asu.edu/clas/reesc/scr101/scr1.htm> (use scr1 as your password) as an example of the materials offered in this course.