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Message from the President

This issue of *CLN* is the twentieth we have published, and marks the 10th anniversary of our organization. It's therefore a happy coincidence that the National Council of Teachers of Less Commonly Taught Languages, to which IATC belongs, has honored IATC member Laura Janda with its distinguished A. Ronald Walton Award for service to the field. Those of us in Czech studies, of course, have long known of Laura's prowess, and we have not forgotten that she is both a founding member and past president of IATC-NAATC, as well as the past executive officer and newsletter editor of this very publication. Congratulations, Laura!

Those of us who struggle onward at the helm of IATC have further news to report. An AATSEEL roundtable we sponsored on *Translating Czech Literature* has spawned a project to map the state of translatable literature and provide the results to the translating and publishing community. Anyone interested in participating in this project can get in touch with **Hana Píchová** (pichova@mail.utexas.edu) or **Michael Heim** (heim@humnet.ucla.edu) for more details. And a January 11 event in London, England, co-sponsored by IATC and the Embassy of the Czech Republic, brought noted literary critic Petr Bílek from Charles University and a cohort of British Bohemists, including professors Robert Pynsent and Robert Porter, together for a single-day conference on Czech studies. The conference was opened by His Excellency Dr. Pavel Seifter, the Czech Ambassador, and drew a crowd of approximately 50 scholars and interested members of the public.

In an effort to streamline our work on a number of projects, IATC has begun to delegate primary responsibilities to members and officers. **Jeff Holdeman** (jeffhold@indiana.edu) will be spearheading our drive to improve our membership services and increase membership. **Susan Kresin** (kresin@humnet.ucla.edu) will be working on newsletter development, and on recruitment of appropriate panels and workshops for our annual meeting at the AATSEEL conference. **David Danaher** (dsdanaher@wiscmail.wisc.edu) will be collaborating with Susan and colleagues at the Ústav jazykové a odborné přípravy PF UK on an international edited volume on Czech language teaching methodology.

I began this message with a happy piece of news about one of our colleagues, and will close it with a sad one. Many of you will already have heard of the death of Professor Alexandr Stich in Prague this February. He was one of the field's foremost scholars, uniting an interest in both Czech linguistics and Czech literature, and will be sorely missed by all. We extend our condolences to his family, his students, and his colleagues in Prague and elsewhere.

Neil Bermel
University of Sheffield

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Currently Spoken Czech Through the Eyes of a Foreign
Bohemist*
Charles E. Townsend
Princeton University, USA

*The paper is my own abridged and edited translation of a talk entitled “Otázka obecné češtiny očima cizince,” which I gave in Prague on June 17, 2002 under the auspices of the Prague Linguistic Society and the Czech Linguistic Society. The original Czech version, also somewhat edited and shortened, is scheduled for publication in the next issue of *Jazykovedné aktuality*. My translation is free and includes some minor rewritings, but preserves the informal and unsophisticated tone I used in the original lecture to make things clearer to a Czech audience (of about 40) which was not familiar with the problems and approaches of foreign students and teachers dealing with Czech. The translation is followed by some comments on the audience’s reaction to the lecture and on the question of Currently Spoken Czech in general.

Before a foreigner who is not a native speaker of Czech delves into the question of *Bezne mluvená čeština* (hereafter CSC), it is quite natural to ask why such a person should be involved with this structure in the first place. What can a foreigner possibly have to say about CSC? An answer could plead the massive obstacles Czech diglossia places in the way of teachers and learners of Czech, but then why should a codification of Czech take account of the wishes of foreign users? In her review of my 1981 book *Czech Through Russian* (revised and greatly expanded in 2000 with the help of Eric Komar), the late Russianist/Bohemist Vlasta Straková wrote (SaS 44, 1983, pp. 74-77): “Czech language norms are and remain within the competence of Czech Bohemists. On the other hand, experience shows that a view from outside can sometimes uncover an interesting relationship, refine our understanding, place a point in clearer focus. It can stimulate interest in new problems which have hitherto not occurred to native Bohemists.”

The review also opines that a Czech ought to speak Literary Czech (hereafter LC) to a foreigner speaking Czech, even though the Czechs in a group including the foreigner will not speak LC to each other. Straková also remarked that “Even linguists don’t speak LC, even when they’re talking about linguistics, their own profession.” Meanwhile, any foreigner can tell you that as soon as you display any knowledge of Czech, however modest, a Czech involuntarily switches to a more colloquial register. So, paradoxically, the better the foreigner speaks, the more the Czech abandons the LC norms the foreigner is trying to observe. And the foreigner, who has learned only LC, is often disconcerted to the point of non-comprehension.

Our LC-trained foreigner has encountered a new code, of whose existence he was hardly aware. He’s learned *zde* and *tedy* and gets to Prague and hears instead *tady* and the especially Prague *teda*. For “necktie” I was taught only *vázanka*, with its nice Slavic root, but eventually realized

that *kravata* is normal. My wife, three daughters and I were in Prague for eight months until we finally figured out what *že jo* was. A single surprise can cause one to miss a whole sentence, even if the difference is only phonetic. I remember misunderstanding the sentence *Jdu na vobed*, because I didn’t anticipate the prothetic *v-*.

Native Czech Bohemists are, understandably, little concerned with systematic reforms; they care about codification. For them LC is a given, and they seek to preserve LC words and forms. At the most, they would admit a small number of CSC elements into LC, which would then create doublets which might enrich the language. But foreign Bohemists and foreigners trying to learn and then speak Czech need a description of the real language; for them, CSC elements would be basic. They would call for elimination of words and forms that no one uses and could be replaced by equivalents which are used.

The Karel Hais *Anglicko-český slovník* (1991) defines “diglossia” by the Czech term *rozeklanost jazyka*. Ivan Poldauf’s *Cesko-anglický slovník* (1986) in turn, defines *rozeklanost* as “split” and, with reference to the human personality, as “schizophrenia.” Thus, a language with diglossia has a split personality. This wouldn’t seem to be a particularly healthy state either for a person or for his language, and linguists, presumably, should not promote this schizophrenia. It may present certain stylistic flexibilities, but a price is paid not only by foreigners learning Czech but also by Czech children, whose plight was discussed in a recent article by Petr Sgall, et al. “Umejí děti česky?” (*Ceský jazyk a literatura* 2001-2002, 237-243), which served as a stimulus for my talk. I can’t forget what our daughters, who went to Czech elementary schools in 1968 and 1971, used to tell us about the lack of interest of Czech children in their language, stemming from a skepticism with regard to the “affected norms” (*vyumelkované normy*) of the language their teachers were teaching. The children had a certain lack of confidence in their own language and often mentioned that they were not sure if a given form or word was “correct.” Czechs, whether adults or children, will rid themselves of this diffidence only when they recognize that LC is their Czech and their Czech (whether it is called CSC, *hovorová čeština* or *obecná čeština*) is a language in which they have confidence, in which they can feel “*suverénní*.”

What’s to be done then? I feel that one ought to accept into LC, into the neutral code, not only to the reduced status of “acceptable in the vernacular,” many if not all elements which are for the overwhelming majority of speakers absolutely normal. They need to be elevated into the language, given prestige. And that can happen only if the exclusively LC counterparts of these elements are either eliminated altogether, listed as archaic, or relegated to a marked high style status. They would be kicked upstairs, so to speak, something like what has happened to the old infinitives in *-ti*. A few very obvious examples: *mužu* and *pecu* will no longer be cited as acceptable CSC variants of LC *mohu* and *peku*, rather *mužu* and *pecu* will be listed as the normal forms, while *mohu* and *peku* will be

marked as high style, archaic, or, perhaps, eventually eliminated altogether. An example of the limited progress made in such reforms would be afforded by comparing the entries for “bake” in the four-volume Academy *Slovník spisovného jazyka českého* (1964), which lists only *péci*, with the one-volume *Slovník spisovné češtiny pro školu a veřejnost* (1994), which lists both: *péci, péct*.

The generalization in these two verbs of the “hushings” from the middle four forms (2/3sg and 1/2pl) to the peripheral forms (1sg and 3pl) is identical, so why should one accord *pecu* (*pecou*) but not *mužu* (*mužou*) first-class status? Our purists might object that a modal verb like *moci/moct* has its own development, but here the analogizations have already taken place, and there is no reason to retain them and frustrate this perfectly natural development. It is like continued efforts by English grammarians to foist on us *It's I*, *It's he* in place of normal *It's me*, *It's him*. Some languages which have basically lost their case systems seem to generalize the objective as the stressed form; for example, in French: *C'est moi*, *C'est lui*, rather than **C'est je*, **C'est il*. In German, where the case system seems slightly better preserved, the subject form is maintained: *Das bin ich*, *Das ist er*.

The most difficult task, obviously, would be to decide which elements should be admitted to the new “normal” LC. Last year (a case in point: *loni* or *vloni*?), among my reactions to his above article, I suggested to Petr Sgall an admittedly radical and naive solution, which in today's circumstances would hardly get off the ground. Why not compose a Committee whose members could hammer out the selection and admission of new features and also deal with more general policy matters. This Committee would be composed not only of linguists from the Czech Language Institute, but also Czech teachers from various levels, journalists, writers and assorted other persons. High school and elementary school teachers might play a particularly large role, since it is they who must work most directly with their students' Czech language. Sgall said he liked the idea in principle but doubted that it would ever be accepted in the Czech Republic.

Still, let's assume that the Committee could get off the ground. One might have rather severe doubts as to how many elements might prove acceptable to a majority of the committee. One clear solution, however, does suggest itself. The model for the standard to be chosen could be the language of Prague. Not, of course, the speech of boys and girls on streetcars, but that of well-educated and cultivated citizens, who are reasonably careful with their language but are not ashamed, for instance, to call each other CSC *Pražáci* instead of LC *Pražané*. The language of Prague and environs has already spread to substantial distances beyond Prague. Is this elitism? Of course it is. *Jasan!* But isn't it a more healthy and natural elitism than that now practiced in schools and institutes? And the

language would be much closer to the people from all strata of society.

A fantasy, perhaps. Yet before you reject the idea, consider the emergence of the standard languages in some other European countries. In France, and certainly in England, the languages of Paris and London from early on have been the models for standard French and English. These capitals have set the tone for centuries and not just in language, because they have been the undisputed cultural centers of their countries. Countries like Germany or Poland - or even the United States - may have competing cities, but Prague's population, particularly with its burgeoning metropolitan area, simply dwarfs all other cities. Prague reigns alone in the Czech Republic.

Back now to the difficult question of selection of items. Without a doubt, the most important criterion for legitimization of CSC items would be their utter stylistic neutrality and absence of emotional coloration. For example, forms like *říct*, *mocť*, *dekuju*, *tisknul* (suggested in Sgall's article) are clear candidates for admission. But such lists often include phonetic and syntactic simplifications such as *zpomínat* (for *vzpomínat*) and *Me videl* (for *On me videl*). These should not be compared with the four above or with a case like *ženama* for LC *ženami*, where *ženama* is the only unmarked form. The former is a case of phonetic reduction characteristic of rapid speech in all languages, the latter is a clear case of ellipsis. These should not be admitted. A case like *Dej mne to* is different; dative *mne* here is a common variant of LC *mi* in *Dej mi to* and is neither stylistically marked nor a consequence of rapid speech (on the contrary, *me* has two sounds more than *mi*). For similar reasons, I would be against replacing *delaj*, *umej* with *delaj*, *umej*. On the other hand, the 3pl pres *prosejí* is a clearly unmarked CSC variant of

prosí (which itself can be both LC and CSC), resulting from analogy and unification of all present tenses of verbs with 1st sg in *-m* (hence, also *videjí* and irregular *vedejí* - 1st sg *vem*). The Committee would decide on whether *prosejí* is universal enough to replace *prosí*.

We foreign Bohemists have always been surprised at why prestigious Czech linguists, like, for instance, the founders of the Prague Linguistic Circle and its leading figures since it was founded, have not promoted the idea of moving away from LC and toward CSC structures. Their suggestions and principles could have exerted a substantial influence on schools. Nevertheless, in every new edition of Bohuslav Havránek and Alois Jedlicka's grammar (the former is, after all, one of the dominant figures in Czech language and linguistics) we note the same old conservative descriptions and approaches.

After last year, though, when I was able to follow the long history of Sgall's article, I came to understand the situation better. Over the course of long months the article, which advocated only modest reforms, was subjected at every stage to controls that verged on censorship, from which it was obvious that the

Why not compose a Committee whose members could hammer out the selection and admission of new features and also deal with more general policy matters.

“authorities” had no enthusiasm for the reforms. There are, after all, other organizations besides the Czech Language Institute and bodies subordinate to it that could contribute to a discussion, in particular, the Circle itself. Given the current state of affairs in the Czech language establishment, unfortunately, this is and is likely to remain an unfulfillable ideal.

I would also like to make another point here. The way out of the diglossia dilemma does not reside in the mere elevation of new CSC elements to the LC level. Things must not arrive at an even cloudier state where no one will know what is correct. Too great a stratification, in my view, is as dangerous as too little. We don't want norms to disappear. We merely want to bring things closer to the actual language, to identify those elements which the large majority of speakers consider natural language. That would mean that elements like *moci, peku, bychom, malá mesta, starého* and many others would be transferred to bookish or stylistically marked status, and gradually eliminated and their CSC counterparts, *moc, pecu, bysme, malý mesta, starýho* would become the only correct (or at least the only *unmarked* correct) forms. In the area of lexicon, *vázanka* would be discarded in favor of *kravata*, and the common, utterly neutral *moc* would be liberated from its “colloquial” or “*obecná čeština*” status and listed as the normal variant that it is to *mnoho, velmi, velice, hodne, příliš* (indeed *mnoho, velmi* and *průliš* could come to be regarded as high style, though a call for their elimination would certainly be going too far.

Certain people will undoubtedly object or even be offended by some of the Committee's choices, but compromise would be the price of successful reform. A

great deal of compromising and tolerance would be required, and purists would have to be ready to defer to the majority on various points, if the reforms were to work. At the same time, progress requires sacrifice. *Když se kácí les, lítají třísky*. A small country like the Czech Republic cannot afford to put up with linguistic schizophrenia. It should move to eliminate its diglossia and establish a new LC which will restore to the term *obecná čeština* its true meaning as the real language of the people.

Now I would like to add a few words about the dilemma of the foreigner who is faced with the task of teaching Czech. *Budeš se ucit jazyku českému, nebo češtinu?* First you have to learn LC yourself. Then, when you get to the Czech Republic, you run into another code of whose existence you are hardly aware. You feel cheated, indignant, out of the loop, depressed. You've learned *zde* and *tedy* here, then hear only *tady* and *teda* there. I can remember, for example, hearing *zadruhý* instead of *zadruhé*, and even *vemem* for *vezmeme* at lectures. You can't get your bearings and the language ceases to be fun.

The requirements and wishes of foreign students and teachers can, as we have said, hardly be decisive in the codification of Czech, yet many of the “liberalizing” codificational changes - suggested or not yet suggested - suit some native Czech linguists as well. The same Petr Sgall, in an article entitled “K některým otázkám naší jazykové kultury” (SaS 42, 1981), gave two important reasons for reforming the LC code: 1) “the necessity of spending a lot of time in school mastering unnatural elements in your native language,” and 2) “the fear that the demands of learning the code can lead to the emergence of new incorrect (hypercorrect) elements and



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their dissemination into LC utterances.” Native speakers of English can easily relate to the first point, since they have spent long years struggling with the caprices of our own needlessly complex orthography. The time wasted on learning our cumbersome system could be more profitably spent on more relevant aspects of English. Czech orthography, of course, is much simpler to learn than English spelling, but even so or, perhaps, all the more so, the English native speaker will welcome every Czech reform elsewhere in the grammar which will remove obstacles from his path.

What to do when teaching Czech, then? The answer isn't simple, but there is no question that the teaching of CSC elements should not be postponed. It must go hand in hand with the teaching of LC. Certainly, the three main phonetic differences (ý > ej, é > ý and o- > vo-) should be introduced right away, so that their inevitable occurrence later on will not disconcert the student. The same goes for the morphological differences; there are not, after all, so many that the student will be greatly burdened. Particularly in the beginning, when laboratory work is very important, teaching CSC elements is important, because the student's first contact should be with natural spoken Czech, which can then be easily contrasted on the tapes with LC. Once students are used to the major features, it is easy to keep them up to date as they progress through its more advanced stages.

Obviously, a first order of business should be a systematic and comprehensive textbook of LC which would include all the essential elements of the CSC register. In the conclusion to an article I wrote in in *Promeny* (Vol 22, No.2, 1985) which bears the same title as the present one, I wrote “the task of preparing a new survey of CSC, a thorough listing of its most essential features, would probably have to be undertaken by a foreigner, (if only) because Czech Bohemists don't need such an aid. Still, I think that such a work, carried out with the aid of native Czech specialists, would be not without interest for native Czech linguists as well. Furthermore, I hope that the growing interest of foreign Bohemists in CSC; i.e., this “view from the other side”, would cause Czech Bohemists to devote greater attention to this “Cinderella of Czech Bohemistics.” I soon decided I better write one myself, and some five years later my *A Description of Spoken Prague Czech* appeared (Slavica 1990). This book has been quite well received in our country and England, too. It isn't very well known in the Czech Republic, which is understandable, since it's written in English and is aimed at foreign Bohemists (limiting it to Prague speech, of course, made it easier to write but begged a lot of questions). I would hope, however, that we will soon see the appearance of further surveys which can build on the work (as mine did) of valuable surveys from the past. I have in mind here primarily Jirí Hronek's excellent *Obecná čeština* (Praha, Univerzita Karlova, 1972). Another useful treatment of a number of points is found in Sgall and Hronek's *Ceština bez příkras* (Jinocany: H&H, 1992). It is quite another undertaking, of course, to write a

whole textbook dealing thoroughly with both codes, and it may never happen on either end of the Atlantic.

Of course, all this wouldn't be necessary if our Committee were to succeed in its task. And, as we've suggested, it ought to be able to agree on the essential phonetic and morphological elements. Syntactic points would be more difficult to pinpoint, and I confess to not having involved myself with this area very much. As mentioned above, the lexicon would probably present the greatest challenge, though reforms here might well help foreigners most of all. I know this from my own extensive visits and stays in Prague. Once in 1968, when we were trying to find the house of a friend in Praha-Suchbát, I asked a lady passing by for directions. She pointed across the square and said “Vidíte tydle baráky?” I didn't understand *tydle* at all, because I had learned only *tyto*, and the *d* in place of *h* caused further trouble. Nor had I heard *barák* so, naturally, we began looking for some military barracks. Only much later did it dawn on me that *barák*, which I had by then heard countless times without ever seeing a soldier, meant simply “building” or “house.” Its use, in my view, is certainly neutral, and the stylistic marking “expr.” should be discarded.

I will end with some 40-50 words stylistically marked in the various dictionaries but which, in my view, were just normal, basically neutral (unmarked) words or variants. In addition to *kravata*, *barák* and *moc*, they included *blbý*, *brecet*, *cucať*, *doktor (lékar)*, *flaška*, *foťbal*, *kafe*, *kluk*, *krám*, *policajt*, *prachy*, *pusa*, *sírka*, *sundat*, *taky* and *vyndat*.

The audience at my presentation was a mixed lot, and its reactions were mixed, too. I thought there was a lot of enthusiasm, but perhaps some of it was more for the idea that a foreigner would attempt something like this than it was actual agreement with the points and suggestions I made. Several persons pleaded the extreme difficulty of substantial reforms, citing the great differences among dialects (I disagree) and among idiolects (who couldn't agree?). Several people agreed that the phonetic and many of the morphological LC elements could be replaced or dispensed with, but worried about the vocabulary (I couldn't agree more). One person thought that the reforms might undermine the essence of Czech, what makes Czech Czech. Another agreed that many LC elements were indeed archaic or high style but argued that their banishment or lowering in status would impoverish the language. Still another maintained that the present diglossia is precisely the basis for the fine nuances and subtlety of Czech (I find it hard to disagree with this latter point). Still, I think the point is not to get rid of high-style words - I can think of many I would retain - but rather to admit commonly used and stylistically neutral elements which are presently marked as “colloquial,” “obecná,” “expressive,” etc. words to normal status. On balance, I feel that there was quite a bit of support for my suggestions. No one rebutted the idea of the Committee, but perhaps that was because no one took it seriously. As I said, Sgall thinks the idea would not be accepted, at least under present conditions.

How far could one practically go, then, given the circumstances? Some reforms, such as the morphological items suggested above (*mocť, dekuju, ženama*) would be easy to implement. The phonetic reforms *ý > ej* and *é > ý* (*starý > starej, starého > starýho*) are not troublesome for the morphology, and the lexical items (*být > bejt, mléko > mlíko*) are rather specific and relatively few in number, though some items might be more difficult than these two. The third phonetic reform, *o- > vo-*, (the fourth vowel shift, *u;- > ou-* is very limited and stylistically marked and need not be considered here) is much the most problematical. It is so omnipresent (and greatly expanded from Prague and Central Czech) and affects so many common words in normal speech that it cannot be ignored in teaching and learning Czech, yet its implementation is much more dependent on the idiolect than the other two shifts. Use of *vo-* also frequently depends on the word involved and the circumstances of the utterance. Unlike the first two shifts, the intensity of prothetic *v-* may vary widely. There is a three-page analysis of *o- > vo-* in *Spoken Prague Czech* (1990, pp. 36-39), but it only scratches the surface of this truly difficult and complex question.

The presentation yielded lively and productive exchange of views, suggesting issues for future discussions on Commonly Spoken Czech.

Czech Studies in Berlin
Milan Hrdlička
Institute of Czech Studies, Philosophy Faculty Charles
University, CR

The city of Berlin is unquestionably among the places where the Czech language is greatly appreciated. Czech instruction in Berlin can boast a confirmed and successful tradition and a very creditable institutional foundation. Czech has been taught at Humboldt University since 1921, and Bohemian studies originated in the 1950s.

In recent years, or, rather, since the political occurrences of the Velvet Revolution, there has been an increasing movement in Germany towards the dissemination and improvement of instruction of our mother language, and Slovak as well. There is a biweekly September course *Berliner Bohemicum/Slovacicum*, which is offered by the *Insitut für Slawistik* at the Humboldt University of Berlin, in collaboration with the local Czech center, which itself is associated with the Faculty of Arts at Charles University (FF UK).

Bohemicum (already in its 12th year in 2002) is intended for students of Czech and Slavic studies, as well as for the public at large. The first meeting of this important seminar took place in the year 1990 (with 85 participants) and offered—as has already become tradition—not only intensive language instruction, but also myriad cultural activities—screenings of Czech films, concerts, exhibitions, meetings with distinguished figures (not the least of which were E. Goldstücker and P. Kohout)—technical lectures, and workshops of various types. In some years, interested parties could take classes in translation and interpretation. Course participants, who

number in the hundreds, can even in addition take part in weekly trips to Prague, and continue their study of Czech at the Prague Faculty of Arts.

Bohemicum has gained considerable reception and acknowledgement in the field of Czech studies during its very successful existence. Moreover, these meetings can be said to have truly international impact, since more and more of the participants are now coming from abroad. Nothing remains but to wish the “Berlin Bohemians” success in their future endeavors and even more satisfied alumni.

Translated by Andrew Malcovsky, Brown University

Using the Film *Loves of a Blonde* in Intermediate Czech
David Dahaner,
University of Wisconsin—Madison, USA

In the film *Loves of a Blonde*, the mother says of her husband: „Podívejte se, jak je udrenej, chudák“. Teachers of Czech — especially at levels beyond introductory — understand all too well how the father feels. We can easily exhaust ourselves in trying to provide students with interactive instructional materials that challenge their developing Czech abilities without at the same time overwhelming them (or at least some of them) with too many of the daunting complexities of the language. Most of us also have to worry about keeping students excited about learning the language (motivation cannot always be assumed), and we naturally seek out culturally authentic materials that are highly entertaining, which means that not just any newspaper article or historical text will do. Add to that the considerable difficulties involved in teaching to a class with three or more distinct levels (undergraduate students with no prior knowledge of any Slavic language, graduate students with solid knowledge of another Slavic, and often heritage speakers of Czech of varying abilities) as well as the challenges presented by teaching Spoken Czech — and it is no wonder that we, like the father in the film, can be just plain worn out by all our work. We seek to develop materials that are flexible enough for all of our various needs, but which materials work best and how can we use them to maximize their pedagogical effect?

In my own third- and fourth- semester classes, I have tried to address this issue through the systematic use of film to supplement work with a textbook. The film materials that I have developed have proven to be flexible enough to deal with many of the concerns mentioned above, and they also generally hold student interest — even as the students work through the film scene-by-scene over the course of a semester. Here I will discuss exactly how I use the film *Lásky jedné plavovlásky* in Third-Semester Czech and some of its advantages in the class. The material for the film — along with many other valuable resources for teaching Czech — can be downloaded at www.seelrc.org (click on Language Resources, then Czech, then Resources for Teachers).

Third-Semester Czech at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is typically a mixed class: four or five

undergraduates with no previous Slavic language experience, several undergraduates who are heritage speakers of Czech, and several graduate students who already have a strong command of Russian. We meet four hours per week with an additional hour per week for Czech Conversation Table (optional for the undergraduates but required for the graduate students). I use the film throughout the semester, and students are encouraged to buy their own DVD's (easily purchased over the internet) to facilitate their work, although we do have a few copies available for borrowing in our language laboratory.

The film material includes an exact transcript divided into thirteen parts of roughly equal length; some parts represent just one scene in the film, others comprise two somewhat shorter scenes. Each part of the film also includes: blanks in the transcript which students are meant to fill in as they listen, an extensive glossary for difficult words with contexts to illustrate word meaning and usage (although students may still need to bring a dictionary for words not glossed), a brief summary of the Spoken Czech forms in each scene (based on Townsend's 1990 *A Description of Spoken Prague Czech*), and a number of questions aimed at developing students' narrative ability (written and oral). I have also developed grammatical and lexical exercises to go with each part, but these change from year to year depending on where we generally are in the main textbook for the course and on student need.

We discuss one part of the film each week over the course of the semester during our fourth hour of instruction. Students are expected to thoroughly prepare the part to be discussed prior to our class meeting. Preparation includes: reviewing the part of the film which has been most recently discussed in class; working through the transcript, glossary, and commentary to the part to be discussed before viewing it; viewing and listening to the new part more than once; filling in the blanks in the transcript; answering the questions and completing any additional exercises that I have assigned. In class discussion of the film, we usually complete the following activities: a brief oral summary (in Czech) of the narrative; reading through the scene with students adopting the various roles; supplemental questions and commentary on the content and form as the scene is acted out; additional lexical and grammatical work on the given part (for example, searching the scene for all uses of the genitive case and analyzing the contexts or taking selected syntactic frames from the scene and having students complete their own sentences using them).

Somewhat to my surprise, I have found that students truly enjoy acting out the scenes, and some prove to be talented mimics of the accents and intonations of the actors. The class time devoted to detailed discussion of each of the film's part is well worth it, although much of the work on the film could also simply be turned in by students as homework in courses that meet fewer hours per week. I also *always* include the film on unit tests as well as on midterms and finals. It makes excellent material for oral testing (narration and, for more advanced

students, argumentation) as well as for written essays.

The advantages of integrating film into the Czech classroom are many and they include:

- (1) Films represent culturally authentic material that simultaneously entertains. Surprisingly, students do not seem to tire of *Lásky* even though we spend the whole semester analyzing it. Instead, systematic and meticulous work on it provides students with a tremendous sense of accomplishment: by the end of the semester, they are thoroughly familiar with the linguistic aspects of a great work of Czech cinema.
- (2) Film material can be easily adapted to meet the challenge of teaching students with different backgrounds and abilities in one classroom. In the case of *Lásky*, I vary specific assignments depending on the level of the students: undergraduates with no Slavic experience are not required to write out answers to the questions on each part of the film, but graduate students and heritage speakers are. If they have a DVD, students can also choose to view each part with or without (or first without, then with) English subtitles: some may need the subtitles to understand the big picture while more advanced students can challenge themselves from the start.
- (3) Work on the film can be readily integrated into work on a given unit in a textbook because the film script further contextualizes — and often in a vivid way — the words and grammatical structures that the students are already studying.
- (4) Films are an excellent medium for acquainting students with Spoken Czech usage.

The success I have had with *Lásky* has inspired me to develop similar materials for other courses. We are currently testing material for the film *Musíme si pomáhat* in our fourth-semester class, and our future project will be developing material for the film *Tmavomodrý svět* to be used in Second-Semester Czech (although obviously with somewhat lower expectations regarding the students' ability to interact with it). When they are complete, these materials will also be available for download on the SEELRC site.

CZECH LANGUAGE NEWS HEADS WEST

After four years at Brown University, Czech Language News and the executive officership of IATC is moving westward this spring to the University of Texas at Austin, where Hana Píchová will be taking up the reins.

As you'll all be aware, Texas is one of the strongest programs in the States, with two full-time faculty members (Hana Píchová and Craig Cravens) and active undergraduate and postgraduate programs. It's an excellent location for CLN and we're looking forward to working under Hana's leadership.

We would like to add thanks to Masako Fidler for her years of service to CLN and IATC-NAATC. She and her assistants have always published a quality product. Fortunately we will not be letting go of Mako entirely just yet, as she will remain as our webmaster for the time being.

Jan Balhar: *Czech Linguistic Atlas IV*. Praha: Academia, 2002, 626 pp, ISBN 80-200-0921-3
 Reviewed by Zdenka Hladká, Masaryk University, CR

In 2002 the fourth of the five planned volumes of the Czech Linguistic Atlas (CLA) appeared. It is the most complex work published in the one hundred year history of Czech dialectology. After the volumes dedicated to lexicology, the dialectologists from the Czech Language Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences have here switched their attention to morphology.

The aim of the Atlas is to show the linguistic sub-divisions within the Czech Republic, and in pockets across the Polish frontier, where Czech is spoken. The volumes cover phonology, morphology, word-formation, lexicon and syntax. Like most other dialect atlases, CLA concentrates on the oldest recorded dialects as spoken by the rural population born at the turn of the 20th century as well as on the speech of two generations in towns and of the youngest generation in the newly settled areas along the frontier. Contrasting the speech situation in towns with the more traditional speech patterns of rural areas aptly illustrates the continuous processes of linguistic leveling. In this way the Atlas describes not only dialectal varieties but also the various strata of the Czech language in terms of interference and the dynamism of recent evolutionary change. CLA also considers the relationships between regional varieties and corresponding codified forms. The maps as well as socio-linguistic evaluation of these relations greatly contribute to the quality of the book.

Each map is accompanied by a detailed commentary which provides a summary of the findings in seven systematically arranged sub-categories. These consider, among other things, the relationships between regional varieties and the standard language, historical development of Czech and other West-European languages, aspects of motivation, and generational differences. There are references to other atlases of west-Slavic dialects and to more general atlases such as *Obshch斯拉vјanskiј Lingvisticheskiј Atlas* and *Atlas Linguarum Europaeae*, with which the research programme underlying CLA was coordinated.

Work on CLA has been continuing for several decades. The project outline evolved during the early 1960s. The research was then carried out between 1964 and 1976 by a team of trained dialectologists, who used a 2649-item questionnaire. The localities investigated included 420 historically documented Czech settlements, 37 inland towns and cities, and 20 towns and cities along the frontier, which were newly settled after WWII. Parallel investigations were carried out in several Polish, Rumanian and Yugoslav places with a historically documented Czech population.

Mapping and linguistic analyses were carried out in the 1980s, and in the following decade the first volumes of CLA were published. The atlas of Czech regional varieties is the last to be published in the group of west-Slavic languages. Numerous reviews rank it among the best of its kind (the first volume met with so much interest that it was sold out shortly after it had been published; a reprint is currently in preparation).

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The CLA volumes on lexicon (1993, 1997, 1999) displayed the wealth and variation in Czech lexicon, revealing the specifics in naming procedures and highlighting interesting etymological and interlingual relationships. For the first time in history we have at our disposal a near-complete picture of the geography of dialect lexical items, which has rectified certain previous inaccurate assumptions (based primarily on phonemic differences) about the formation of the dialects and the boundaries between them.

The fourth, 626-page volume of CLA deals with the grammatical forms of inflecting words. Abiding by the standards of the earlier volumes, it describes the geography of Czech dialects with more accuracy than, for example, the previously widely used *Nástin české dialektologie* by Jaromír Belic (1972). Pronouns and numerals, in particular, are treated with great care.

The fourth volume of CLA discusses the parts of speech in the usual order: nouns, adjectives, pronouns, numerals and verbs. The nouns are further categorized by the number, gender, case and declensional type; the discussion on verbs starts with simple forms derived from the present stem (indicative present and imperative), followed by those derived from the past stem (infinitive, active participle, passive participle) and the complex verbal forms.

The close connection between phonology and morphology was a major problem when the compilers had to decide what should be put in the volume on morphology and what should be left for the phonology volume (preference was given to the former in most cases). The authors also considered the suitability of methods used in the volumes on lexicon for application to other phenomena, which would mean not including regular phonic alternations in all maps but referring to special maps depicting the regions of their occurrence (called PRO). The fact that most suffix variations are due to regular phonic changes and due to grammaticalization which sometimes impairs the regularity leads to an only limited application of PRO.

The authors offer a complex interpretation of the different forms recorded. At no cost to scholarship, the explanations are delivered in a way accessible to all readers irrespective of their knowledge of the field. The systematic classification, manner and clarity of definitions, along with the procedure which goes from generally known data to marked phenomena, enables readers to find the information they need with ease. The maps and commentaries help the average reader understand the regional differences s/he comes across in their idiolects (such as *ji/jí; tichých/tiší; Olomouc m./Olomouc f.; nos/noš; zagal/zacnul*, etc.) The dialect equivalents and their regional distribution may account for the changes in codification of the standard language (e.g. the recent recognition of gen.sg. *nej* as a standard variant of *neho* due to its frequent usage in Bohemia, cf. pp. 348-351).

Readers of the fourth volume of CLA will certainly be taken by the variety of regional equivalents of grammatical devices. For example, the ending of instr. plural in nouns - the form of which has almost completely been unified

(having adopted the dual form of the *a*-stem: *-ama*) - has often retained older forms in the dialects (cf. the survey of forms p.272): *-ama, -ami, -ámi, -amy, -ema, -emi, -i, -í, -ima, -ími, -ma, -ama, -mi, -oma, -y, -ý*. General curiosity will be satisfied with the list of rare dialect forms, such as those neuter nouns that adapt to the paradigm of *kure*, e.g. gen.sg. *deckete* (standard: *decka*), or relational adjectives that adapt to the form of the possessive adjective: *makuv kolác; jetelovo semeno* and a wide range of 1st-person sg. verb forms, as in the case of *císt: ctu, cetu, ctnu, cnu, císnu, cícu, cítám, ctem*.

Dialectologists in Brno and Prague are currently working on the last, the fifth, volume of the Czech Language Atlas, which will be devoted to phonology and syntax. A national dictionary of dialects is anticipated as the group's next task. If it is of the same quality as CLA, then Czech scholars everywhere have something to look forward to.

Sociolingvistika a sociologie jazyka (Czech Sociological Review) Vol. 38 (2002): 4 Ed. Jirí Nekvapil
Reviewed by Masako Fidler, Brown University, USA

The *Czech Sociological Review (Sociologický časopis)*, published by the Sociology Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, appears 6 times annually (4 issues in Czech and 2 issues in English). While it normally deals with topics in sociology, such as the transformation of Central Europe or politics, this is a special monothematic issue dedicated to sociolinguistics and the sociology of language.

The introduction by guest editor Jirí Nekvapil explains the close interplay between language and socio-political structure, discourse and interaction and describes the theoretical approaches used in each contribution. The volume contains five feature articles followed by reviews of recently published books on sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, and anthropological linguistics.

The article 'Hungarian in Slovakia – A Study in Variational Sociolinguistics' by István Lanstyák discusses the state of Hungarian as spoken by the Hungarian minority community in Slovakia in contrast to the Hungarian spoken by the monolingual community. Striking differences are elucidated by means of a Labovian approach to language variation that examines correlation between social factors and linguistics forms.

Jirí V. Neustupný's paper, 'Sociolinguistics and Language Management,' defines language management (LM) as a theory that enables both the micro- and macro analysis of language use and social interaction. The author illustrates the differences between this theory and language planning (LP), a theory originally motivated in part by international politics. Unlike LP, LM does not consider grammatical competence the only language problem; its scope encompasses communication as a whole. LM deals with problems relevant not only to state-level institutions, but also to other economic, social and cultural organizations and communities. It also differs from LP in that it is committed to acknowledging the solvability of language-related problems. The author describes LM as being more procedural than LP. This process involves investigating deviations from the

norm (especially how they are evaluated), and appropriate strategies to address them. The following article, 'Language Services in the Light of Recent Communication Changes in the Czech Republic', by Ludmila Uhlířová, examines the audience, and the inquiries on the Czech language sent by them, to the Language Service, a question-and-answer service offered by the Czech Language Institute between 1992 and 2001. The data reveal a correlation between profession and the type of inquiries.

In 'Diglossia from the Point of View of Gender', Jirina Van Leeuwen-Turnovcová characterizes the Czech linguistic situation as diglossia in contrast to those in Germany and Russia. The article challenges the prevailing view that the significant structural distance between Standard Czech (*spisovná čeština*) and the spoken Czech of the time hampered the spread of the former. This situation, according to the author, should be attributed to the underdeveloped elite speech culture comparable to those nurtured by educated female speakers elsewhere in Europe; the Czech linguistic situation is thus largely viewed as a gender-related problem.

The last article, 'Sequential Structures in Media Dialogical Networks', by Nekvapil and Ivan Leudar proposes dialogical networks, an extended model of conversational analysis to describe media communications. The model reveals sequential structures in the media that are similar to adjacency pairs and repair, that is, processes that occur in everyday conversations. Simultaneously the authors reveal the distinct properties of dialogical networks: speech participants are not necessarily located in the identical time and space, and participant contributions are distributed in multiple copies and texts.

The volume contains informative observations on Central and East European socio-linguistic situations. Often written from a comparative linguistic angle, the articles deal with theoretical issues relevant to specialists in sociolinguistics, pragmatics and discourse analysis.

Vera Borkovec ed., *Chut' ztraceného domova; The Taste of Lost Homeland*. Prague: Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, 2002, ISBN 0-9716710-0-1
Reviewed by Alice Klima, Brown University, USA

The collection of poems by Czech and Slovak emigrants, *Chut' ztraceného domova*, explores the nostalgia that was a living part of my childhood as a Czech emigrant. The anthology's poets are from two generations, one, the emigrants from 1948, and the second, emigrants from 1968 and later. Although the poets are from different generations, virtually all of the thought-provoking poems express an intense sense of nostalgia for the homeland. Some, like Blanka Jiráková's *Domu* 'Home' are softly melancholic, cherishing and nurturing the memory of their homeland as long as they can. *Kytici vresu si vezu z vlasti/a vuni pasek, osamení cest-/blouzním - jen srdce těžké/s mlčením hvězd.* 'A heather bouquet from my homeland I bring,/the scent of forest clearings and lonely paths -/I'm daydreaming - just my heart is heavy with the silence of the stars.' Others, like Jirina Fuchsová's *Je to má zeme* 'It Is My Country,' declare

the unbreakable bond emigrants feel with their homeland in a direct and defiant manner: *Je tam místo/kde se kdysi rozpadly krvavé porodní/plený mého zrození* 'There is a place there where long time ago/bloodied gossamer shawls of my birth/disintegrated with time.' Images of the ever-present homeland surface in the poems to describe emotions and experiences, as when Pavel Javor writes, *Co všechno táhne mojí hlavou,/jak hejno racku nad Vltavou/a v dálce ztrácí se* 'Through my mind, thoughts migrate/like seagulls, as over the river Vltava they pass,/to vanish into the far away.'

This anthology of poems, presented in Czech or Slovak with English translations has the potential to communicate the loss of the homeland experience not just between fellow immigrants and Czechs, but also between the emigrant's English speaking children and all those interested in the Czech Republic and emigration. Yet, in *Od dětí rozvedeni* 'Separated from Your Children' Josef Martínek writes about the complicated relationship between emigrant parents and their children. *Ta kláda, co padla mezi nás,/z našeho lesa není. /A neodvalíš ji rukama,/neodtáhneš ji strojem/ a nezapudíš a nezazeneš/ sebekouzelnějším slovem* 'the felled tree which lies between us/is not of our forest./And your hands can't roll it away/ and it can't be towed off/ and you can't banish or ward it off-/not even with the most magical of words.' It is for the anthology's multi-lingual readers to decide whether these magical words can remove some of this barrier.

In the anthology's titular opening poem *Chut' ztraceného domova*, Libuše Cacalová writes *Odcházím, abych se přiblížila* 'I'm leaving to come closer.' Absence stimulates the need to write, to create a second homeland in the form of prose, art, or poetry. We have to wonder if the image drawn by these poems is partially fictional. The poems describe common themes like a sense of loneliness and isolation, the love of the homeland, the pain of exile, and greetings or messages to the homeland. These themes and above all nostalgia all express common Romantic themes that look back to the nineteenth-century understanding of the Slavic homeland. Writing poetry fuels the fire. The nostalgia becomes a living being that is part of a shared experience and affects even those of us who have few real memories of *naše vlast*.

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The Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU) is announcing a competition for the 2001 Dr. Joseph Hasek student awards. The names of the winners will be announced in the Society's newsletters.

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Czech Language News is a newsletter published by the International Association of Teachers of Czech/North American Association of Teachers of Czech. This newsletter is currently housed at the Department of Slavic Languages, Brown University, and serves the diverse and growing Czech language community as a forum for information on research, teaching and organization of Czech language instruction. It is intended to contribute to the promotion of interdisciplinary and international cooperation as well as the integration of theoretical and applied aspects of language study.

CzLN is an open exchange of information and ideas, and the editors welcome ideas and submissions for inclusion in the next issue. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of IATC.

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Submissions

Czech Language News welcomes submissions of articles, comments, letters to the editor, advertisements, etc. Contributions may be written either in English or in Czech, and should include the name of the author and his/her affiliation. Please include a diskette with your submission to save us time with retyping. The size of the diskette should be 3.5"; both IBM and Macintosh format are accepted, although Macintosh is preferred. Please indicate on the diskette label the type of the operating system and word processor you are using. You can contact the editor at the address shown on the previous page or send an e-mail message to:

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