

Janáček at 150
Geoffrey Chew
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The year 2004 marks the 150th anniversary of Janáček's birth—and it seems well worth taking stock of what the composer's image is a century and a half on. How have we come to understand him—if we have?

In fact, it may be doubtful that we have yet arrived at a satisfactory understanding of this extraordinary man, who was a full generation older than the composers of the first half of the 20th century, such as Bartók, Schoenberg or Stravinsky, who seem his contemporaries, in the light of the amazing sequence of works that began with *Jenůfa* just 100 years ago, once the composer had realized the patriotic necessity for producing operas for the Czech stage. And a brief survey may serve to show that this is nothing new: it has always been difficult to place Janáček in a historical narrative encompassing modern Czech music, or any modern Western music. There is a notorious footnote by Theodor Adorno in his *Philosophy of Modern Music*, which illustrates this quite well. It marginalizes Janáček and deliberately excludes him from the mainstream by making him a peripheral Oriental: "Janáček's art is extra-territorial, but nonetheless magnificent in its consequences. [...] In contrast to the blood-and-soil ideology—a party-line tenet of National Socialism—truly extra-territorial music (the material of which, even though it is familiar, is organized in a totally different way from that in the Occident) has a power of alienation which places it in the company of the avant-garde and not that of nationalistic reaction. [...] It is precisely the tradition of every official music, however, which is suspended by Janáček's diction—patterned after his language—in the midst of all triads." The language is turgid, but the sense clear: Janáček uses more traditional means than the avant-garde composers between the wars, but his music is as "alienating" as theirs—in other words, from his point of view as "authentic" as theirs—precisely because it is based on the strange, alien, "Oriental" speech-melody of Czech.

It is perfectly true, of course, that Janáček spent a good deal of effort studying the speech-rhythms and speech-melody, in terms of durations and rise and fall, of Czech phrases as uttered by native speakers. He carried notebooks around with him to do so. (And not only of Czech speakers: he noted down Russian and English speech-patterns in his trips abroad.) It is also true that these form the basis of his musical thought, indeed his musical "logic"—what the Czechs call his "hudební myšlení." In a chapter in *Janáček and his World*, a very recent overview of the composer's work, John Tyrrell describes how this works, taking the composer's point of view: Janáček typically started with his speech-melodies, treating them as raw thematic material, assembling them

in improvisatory fashion and then thinning them down and subjecting them to his typical form of variation. And

Janáček's melodic style is abrupt in a way that Romantic music is not: he is not afraid to start phrases without initial upbeats, and he is equally unafraid of ending phrases on short, weak notes, as it were, quite informally. These speech-melodies have, understandably, been the object of some academic interest; several American PhDs have dealt with them, and they have sometimes been studied from the point of view of linguistics, although it has to be said that research into Janáček in the Czech Republic has now moved away from this kind of approach.

The composer's use of speech-melodies has thus been taken, particularly in the English-speaking world, as a mark of what makes him distinctively Czech. The vocal lines in the mature operas bear witness to this, as do those in the song cycle to pseudo-folk poetry, *Zápisník zmizelého*, or indeed those in the Glagolitic Mass (an overwhelming setting of the Catholic Mass in an Old Slavonic text—treated by Janáček as if it were Czech). For Janáček himself, this may have been part of the purpose of using the speech-melodies, but he had the wider aim of guaranteeing artistic "truth" through them, by producing sung melodies that were faithful to actual utterance. For him, using speech-melodies was the equivalent of drawing from life for a painter.

But in his own country, a dim view was taken of them, right from the start, and they were tarred with the brush of Naturalism. For reasons that cannot be discussed here, critics since the beginning of the 20th century used "Naturalism" as a pejorative term, and "Realism" as a term of praise, often for the same things. Janáček's music was, through the entire 20th century, well after his death, generally attacked by being called Naturalist and defended by being called Realist. This began with a notorious review of the Prague premiere of *Jenůfa* by the critic (later Communist Minister of Education and chief Stalinist ideologue) Zdeněk Nejedlý, a lifelong opponent of Janáček's. He singled out the speech-melodies as proof that the composer took raw material from the outside world and did not subject it to any artistic transformation, which would have made it acceptable and in the tradition of his great idol, Smetana. This fatally made Janáček a Naturalist and disqualified him from a place in the great national tradition, which for Nejedlý ran from Smetana through the composer Zdeněk Fibich to his friend Otakar Ostrčil—a Prague line very different from the line through Dvořák to Janáček with which we are probably more familiar. (It is ironic, perhaps, that Nejedlý, the opponent of German influence, should have agreed so thoroughly with the later view of Adorno, the proponent

of the Schoenberg tradition in music, in pushing Janáček out of the mainstream.)

Throughout his life Janáček seems to have been bugged by this. In 1924, for the Smetana celebrations, he drafted an essay on Naturalism, still apparently looking over his shoulder at Nejedlý, proving to his own satisfaction that Smetana was a supreme Naturalist, proclaiming in ringing tones, “Nebát se naturalismu!”, and ending with a climax where he says that he could quote examples from all Smetana’s works of a “fresh, eternally youthful Naturalism”—the proof of Smetana’s greatness too.

But it was the work of Vladimír Helfert, once he had settled in Brno, that secured Janáček’s reputation; and he did so by insisting that the composer’s work was Realist and not Naturalist. And without the writing of Helfert, who dared to oppose Nejedlý in this respect, it might even have been doubtful that Janáček would have been regarded as acceptable once the communists took over in 1948.

The composer’s fortunes in the English-speaking world have been interesting. From near incomprehension in his lifetime, he has become probably better appreciated in America and Western Europe than in his home country, even than in Brno, where performances are not always well attended or appreciated. This may be illustrated with a quotation from an early review in *The Times* (of London). A concert in the Queen’s Hall, London, in February 1928 featured the Sinfonietta, the great patriotic military fanfare essentially in honour of Brno and of the new First Czechoslovak Republic; the English reviewer wrote, “Janáček’s music sometimes gives one the sensation of listening to a humorous speech in a language that one only imperfectly understands. One misses points; on the other hand, one is afraid of finding humour where none is intended. Janáček is disconcerting because he appears so simple-minded. Can he really be as simple as all that? At any rate, he is a composer who cannot leave the hearer indifferent. His music is never vague; his brusque, disjointed phrases remain in the mind after a first hearing.” Other early performances of his works equally left the reviewers at a loss; and they sometimes sought to explain their puzzlement by casting the composer as some sort of child of Nature, of a kind no doubt Oriental and extra-territorial.

It was only in the 1950s and later that some sort of understanding began to develop, and that largely through the work of conductors such as Charles Mackerras, who has devoted much of his career to Janáček’s music. This has resulted in Janáček being regarded, quite justifiably, as by far the most significant figure in Czech 20th-century classical music. But his great stature has not helped to

position him satisfactorily in a historical narrative covering Czech music: he has simply removed his contemporaries from view.

Even today, large tracts of the composer’s work remain little known. What reader of this article has heard *Vlčí stopa*, *Potulný šílenec*—or even better-known pieces such as the settings of texts by Petr Bezruč, or the early operas? There is still a quantity of “archaeological” work that needs to be done, even in appreciating Janáček as composer. This does not exhaust his importance for Czech culture, for he was a significant folklorist as well, quite apart from his writings as journalist and as music theorist. Once this has been done, it may be easier to overcome the pressures to exclude him from the European and from the Czech mainstream that are represented, in their different ways, by Theodor Adorno and Zdeněk Nejedlý.

Dvořák in Spillville Iowa
Steven A. Klimesh
St. Wenceslaus Heritage Society
Spillville Iowa

In the fall of 1892 Joseph Kovarik, a Spillville, Iowa native, as well as a pupil, travel companion and “American secretary” to Antonín Dvořák, began suggesting to the composer that he and his family spend their 1893 summer vacation in Spillville. Dvořák took Kovarik up on his offer, and the Dvořák family spent the summer of 1893 in Spillville.

Dvořák arrived on June 5th, 1893, along with his wife Anna, his six children, Otilie, Anna, Magdalena, Antonín, Otakar and Aloisia, his sister-in-law Mrs. Koutecka, their housemaid Barouška Klerová and Joseph Kovarik. They took up residence on the upper floor of the Jacob Schmitt residence, which today houses both a Dvořák and the Bílý Clock Museum.

Here in Spilleville, Dvořák began the outline of Opus 96, a quartet in F Major, on June 8th, 1893, and on June 10th the outline of the first movement was complete. The entire first movement was completed on June 15th, 1893, and the last on June 19th, 1893. Upon completion, Dvořák instructed Joseph Kovarik to copy the parts and form a quartet. This he did, and the quartet met at the home of Joseph Kovarik’s parents, the “1870 Old School.” Dvořák played first violin, John J. Kovarik (Joseph’s father) played second violin, Joseph’s sister Cecelia viola, and Joseph cello. The Spillville Quartet, as Dvořák affectionately referred to it, was first performed publicly in Boston on January 1st, 1894. A newspaper article referred to Opus 96 as the American Quartet, and the name stuck.

Immediately upon completion of Opus 96, Dvořák began working on Opus 97, a quintet in E Flat Major, which was completed on August 1st, 1893. While

Opus 96 reflects Dvořák's euphoric joy and contentment on being in Spillville, Opus 97 reflects some of the Indian melodies experienced by the Master while in Spillville. Opus 97 was likewise first heard in the "Old School."

The quintet comprised the members of the earlier quartet along with John Kovarik, another of John J. Kovarik's children, on second viola.

While completing the transcriptions for Opus 95, the symphony "From The New World," Joseph Kovarik noted the trombone pieces had not been finished. This oversight was brought to Dvořák's attention and the work completed.

In an interview with the Evening Post upon his return, Dvořák said, "I grew very fond of the people in Spillville, and they seemed to like me. There was a little Bohemian school, and my pupil's father was the schoolmaster.¹ Here I played the organ for them every day, and on Sunday I played the organ in the church.² It was a lovely place, miles away from the railroad, and all the time I was there I fancied myself in Bohemia."

In the early 1850s, Czech immigrants came to Spillville primarily from the Jihočeský Region of Bohemia; the neighborhood of Písek, Tábor and Budějovice; communities such as Zvěrkovice, Protivín, Sepekov, Purkarec and Svetia. The Spillville of 2004 is little changed from the Spillville of 1893. By 1880 Spillville had grown to about 400 residents. The 2000 census records the population of Spillville to be 376. The ethnic makeup, however, has become slightly more German. Many of the early buildings, the 1870 Old School and the 1860 St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church are still prominent features of the community.

For a short time, Spillville, Iowa played a significant role in the life of Antonín Dvořák, and Antonín Dvořák played a significant part in the life of Spillville. It is only fitting that Spillville recognize and honor the Master on the centennial of his death.

Antonín Dvořák died on May 1st, 1904. Several efforts requesting the United States Postal Service to commemorate this centennial event by issuing a postage stamp honoring Dvořák failed. Realizing the importance of Dvořák to America, to Spillville, and to the Czech culture in general, the St. Wenceslaus Heritage Society took it upon themselves to honor the composer with a special Pictorial Cancellation and Cache.

For more information about the Special Pictorial Cancellation, the St. Wenceslaus Heritage Society, the 1870 "Old School," the Spillville-Iowa-Midwest Chapter of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences and the Spillville, Iowa area, log on to www.CzechoSlovaksMidwest.org

Related websites.

Site devoted to the 100th anniversary celebration in the Czech Republic (Pocta Antonínu Dvořákovi)

<http://www.antonindvorak2004.cz/index.html>

Links to various sites relating to Dvořák

<http://www.czechmusic.com/directory1/People/Composers/Dvorak+Antonin/>

Biography in Czech, with list of works

<http://www.antonindvorak2004.cz/czech/antonin-dvorak.html>

Biographies in English

<http://www.antonindvorak2004.cz/english/antonin-dvorak.html>

(includes list of works)

<http://dvorak.musicabona.com/> (includes list of works; CDs and sheet music available)

<http://w3.rz-berlin.mpg.de/cmp/dvorak.html> (includes sound samples from symphonies)

MIDI files

<http://www.sciortino.net/music/ad.html>

Dvořák Museum in Prague

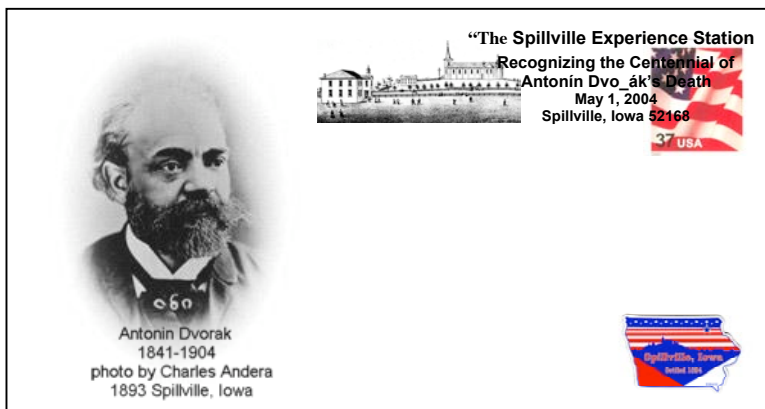
<http://www.nm.cz/mad/index.htm>

Dvořák Memorial in ve Vysoke u Pribrami

<http://www.antonindvorak.cz/index.html>

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra

www.czechphilharmonic.cz



¹ Built in 1870, the school is the oldest surviving Czech Parochial school in America.

² This is the oldest surviving Czech Catholic Church in America and was built in 1860.

The Catbird Speaks
Robert Wechsler
Catbird Press

Now that my publishing house, Catbird Press, is no longer publishing Czech, or any other language's literature, Craig Cravens has asked me to write a bit about my experiences publishing Czech literature in translation. Clearly, since I gave up doing this long before I reached the age of retirement, my overall experience has been negative. But this has only partly to do with my choice of Czech literature in translation as my principal specialty. Actually, many of the humor books I published sold fewer copies than some of the Czech literature.

With most books, the best part was working with the texts and the translators. All the Czech literature I published was both extremely well written and challenging to translate. It's no less difficult to find equivalent English for Jaroslav Seifert's "simple" poetry than it is for the difficult lingos in Jáchym Topol's *Sestra*. Many people said it was impossible to translate Karel Poláček, but Peter Kussi gave it a stab, and it was fun to go along for the ride.

How can anyone capture the ease with which Karel Čapek wrote his oddly colloquial and oddly avant-garde fiction? The first generation of his translators usually made him sound cozy and Victorian, unless they simply couldn't, as with *Hordubal* and *Povětron*. Norma Comrada and Ewald Osers made him sound more modern, which is how he should sound.

The text I most enjoyed working with was the one I translated myself, Alexandr Kliment's *Nuda v Cechách*. It is the most beautiful writing I'll ever do, and I feel very fortunate that other publishers showed no interest in Kliment's work.

I was also fortunate to start off working with experienced translators, such as William Harkins, Peter Kussi and, a bit later, Michael Heim. Soaking in their expertise allowed me to work with younger translators in the anthology *Daylight in Nightclub Inferno* and afterward. I feel bad that I will not be able to continue training a new generation of Czech-into-English translators, as I had hoped. I enjoyed working with the younger translators: Alex Zucker, Neil Bermel, and even the editor of this rag.

As for the authors, the living ones showed little more interest in the translation and publication process than did the dead ones. But this was not something negative: the authors were flexible and happy to answer questions. They just had better things to do than interfere (if only Milan Kundera were so mature). I found Alexandr Kliment and his daughter, who translates from English to Czech, extremely helpful with the many questions I had regarding his very difficult prose. Other Czech authors were also very good about providing blurbs for books. In fact, when I asked Ivan Klíma (before he

wrote his Čapek biography for Catbird) to write a blurb for Kliment's novel, he sent me an entire foreword. Some blurbs were pleasant surprises: Josef Škvorecký's praise for Páral's work, which he had loved back in the 60s (few Czechs have forgiven Páral enough to allow themselves to remember what a great writer he was); and Milan Kundera's praise for Karel Čapek, which he allowed me to take from a German edition. Kundera wrote me that he was only then (in 1989) beginning to appreciate Čapek.

How do I decide which works of Czech literature to publish? There are three principal factors: (i) knowledge; (ii) taste; and (iii) sales potential. Since there's no accounting for taste, I'll skip that factor.

If I don't know about a book, I can't very well publish it, and I read Czech too slowly and worked too much to have much time to read. Most of the books recommended to me by Czech-oriented academics were historical works by such writers as Vančura, Poláček, and Olbracht. Most of these books have almost no sales potential. A writer who is already known in the English-speaking world, such as Čapek or Hašek or Seifert (due to his Nobel), will sell better than most contemporary writers (and would sell much better if there were major English-language motion pictures; see Kundera). But unless their books are used in courses or have a serious hook (e.g., the Holocaust; see Weil), they won't be reviewed and bookstores won't carry them. This was certainly true for the Poláček novel I published.

It is non-academic translators who were most likely to recommend contemporary works to me. For example, Alex Zucker pushed Topol, and the mother-daughter team of Tatiana Firkušný and Veronique Firkušný-Callegari pushed the novels of Hodrová and Ajvaz. I first discovered Daniela Fischerová when I saw one of her plays (translated by Michael Heim) many years ago, but it was Elena Lappin, the editor of Catbird's *Daylight in Nightclub Inferno: Czech Fiction from the Post-Kundera Generation*, who let me in on Fischerová's wonderful stories. And Lappin also introduced me to the work of Alexandr Kliment, as well as other writers I chose not to publish or had not yet approached.

The partial exception was Bill Harkins, a professor-translator who introduced me to the work of Vladimír Páral. But that was accidental. I was visiting him to talk about doing something for the Karel Čapek centennial, and there was his translation of *Catapult* in a pile of papers on the floor of his office. Other publishers had turned it down years before, presumably as another not-quite-contemporary work by an unknown writer. Fortunately, I loved it, and I happened to publish it early in 1989, so that it was the only new Czech literature available when the Velvet Revolution came along. It still sold terribly (bookstores were doing well enough with Kundera paperbacks), but it was very widely reviewed and given the praise it deserves.

What about Čapek? One of the reasons I started Catbird Press was to revive his reputation in the U.S. I was moderately successful in doing this, but still, it seems, he is not very welcome in literary academia (except for scifi and utopia courses) nor is he considered a writer intellectuals should know. He dabbled in genres before it was fashionable (and so knowingly!), and the surface of his work is too damn accessible. His life story doesn't make it, either: an asexual workaholic chain-smoking newspaper man who couldn't make up his mind whether he was a playwright, a novelist, a travel writer, a children's writer, an artist, or a gardener. (Kafka traveling? Hašek for children?!). And he intended his masterpiece to get people to truly understand the value of pluralist democracy. Pluralist democracy? How naive! Better that he give us paranoid pictures of totalitarianism or hilarious anecdotes of anarchism.

In 1990, the year of Čapek's and Pasternak's centenary, two biographies of Pasternak appeared in English, but, as far as I know, only one substantial Čapek essay appeared from the pen of a Czech-oriented English-speaking academic, and that was Peter Kussi's introduction to his Čapek Reader.

People in the U.S. take it for granted that Čapek is at least available, but in the U.K. and the rest of the English-speaking world, the only books of his available from local publishers (Catbird's books are scarcely available) are new translations of *Letters from England* and *The Gardener's Year*, the ancient Oxford *R.U.R./Insect Play* edition, and a collection of new, mediocre play translations. British publishers have shown absolutely no interest in such obscure works as Čapek's trilogy (in a British translation), the first complete translation of the Pocket Tales, the Apocryphal Tales, the *Hovory*, the first English translation of *Boží muka*, or Klíma's biography of Čapek. As for *War with the Newts*, Catbird's best selling book, the Brits have given up on that, as well. But it is possible that Oxford will replace its *R.U.R./Insect Play* edition with Catbird's *Toward the Radical Center: A Karel Čapek Reader*.

Things haven't been any better for contemporary Czech writers. No British publisher, large or small, has taken a much smaller risk than Catbird (they don't have to pay the translator, edit the book, or even typeset it) on Topol or Fischerová or Páral or the Lappin anthology.

How have I done with them? Increasingly poorly. Topol's novel got an enormous amount of publicity, but nearly all of it was mixed ("too difficult") and most of it was late, so the bookstores had moved on to smaller and lesser things. Fischerová was practically ignored, and each Páral novel was reviewed less (although the reviews continued to be positive) and the bookstores took less interest. This is also true of the Čapek books. It just gets harder and harder to get books into bookstores, and no,

online bookstores do not make up for this at all. The one non-Čapek book that continues to sell is the Seifert collection. Surprisingly, the work of known poets consistently does better than the work of unknown literary novelists.

It still amazes me that, even though, in the postwar era, Czech literature has most likely been translated into English more than any other language's literature (on a per capita Czech-speaker basis), there are still so many excellent works and authors that have been passed over. But I no longer believe that I can find the readers.

I will continue to make most Catbird books available, but I will only reprint the ones that sell more than a handful a year (Čapek and Seifert). The Poláček novel and the *Daylight* anthology are sold out.

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Robots and Beer Pubs: A Proposition
Craig Cravens
The University of Texas at Austin

Have you ever begun talking about the Czech national poet in your third-year Czech class, only to be met with a resounding chorus of uncomprehending “Karel Hynek who?” Do you ever wonder what it would be like to offer a course on Czech culture and have more than five students enroll? Have you ever dreamed of the day when Czech studies would dominate Slavic departments across the country? If you answered yes to any of these (rather silly) questions, then perhaps you should consider contributing to the proposed textbook, *Robots and Beer Pubs: A History of Czech Culture*.

Robots and Beer Pubs is a unique collection of essays on Czech literature, history, drama, film, art, and language. It can be used as a supplement to a Czech language course, as a primary textbook for a Czech culture course, and as a *vade mecum* for all those ex-pats swarming Charles Bridge and the Old Town Square. The project envisioned is loosely based on the Russian culture textbook *The Russian Context: The Culture Behind the Language* published by Slavica, with less concentration, however, on language. Thus far, I am considering chapters on Czech prose, poetry, film, language, music, architecture, government, and Modern art, but would welcome suggestions for other areas, as well. I would also like to convene a workshop once the project gets underway.

I realize that a textbook alone is not enough to attract students. But a title is. Last semester, for the first time I taught a Czech culture course entitled “Robots and Beer Pubs: Czech Culture from 863 to 1945,” and the course garnered an enrollment of 62 students. Granted, many of those 62 were attracted to the culmination of the course, a tour of a local brewery. By the end of the class, however, I had sent out into the world 62 more young men and women who could locate the Czech Republic on a map, who could tell a pilsner from an ale, and who knew that Milan Kundera was not all he’s cracked up to be. Moreover, several of these students signed up for first-year Czech.

The title of the course may seem a bit lowbrow, but considering our perilous marginalized position in the already marginalized field of Slavic studies, I believe that the ends justify the means. If each of us were to teach a Czech course once a year with an enrollment of 60 students, I daresay our deans would be set aquiver with delight and our colleagues with trepidation. Moreover, our textbook just might make the Oprah list.

If you are interested in participating in *Robots and Beer Pubs*—and being *paid* for it (when is the last time you were *paid* to write an article?)—please email me at svejik@mail.utexas.edu. The project is only in its

earliest stages—the “envisioning” stage, in fact—and I would like to solicit advice, comments, and *popř.* abuse from the members of IATC. I would also be more than happy to share with you my Robots and Beer Pubs course syllabus, lecture notes, power point presentations, *anything* (within reason) to facilitate the spread of Czech culture throughout the world and beyond.

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Lída Důtková-Cope
East Carolina University

Práci s písničkou můžeme rozdělit do čtyř fází:

1. Příprava na poslech
2. Aktivní poslech
 - a) čistě poslechové aktivity
 - b) aktivity s textem
 - c) aktivity s obrázky
3. Aktivity po poslechu
4. Zapamatování a interpretace písničky

1. PŘÍPRAVA NA POSLECH

- Učitel může vyzvat studenty, aby ke společnému poslechu přinesli písničku, která je zaujala. Studenti mohou vysvětlit, proč se jim líbí a jak souvisí s jejich vlastními zkušenostmi a zážitky.
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- Studenti sami složí jednoduchou píseň/báseň/příběh na dané téma. Podkladem může být titul písničky nebo její první verš/verše.
Např.:
*Až budu starý muž, nebudu muset pracovat.
Až budu starý muž, nebudu studovat češtinu,
protože si nic nebudu pamatovat
Až budu starý muž, nebudu starý muž, ale stará
žena.*
(Zde byla využita písnička Jarka Nohavici *Až budu starý muž*)
- Učitel vynechá určitá slova (např. slova na konci veršů, která se rýmují). Studenti hádají, jaká slova by zde mohla být, aby text dával smysl.
- Před poslechem lze písničku rozstříhat po jednotlivých verších. Studenti ji skládají podle smyslu nebo podle rýmů, aniž by ji znali.

2. AKTIVNÍ POSLECH

a) čistě poslechové aktivity

- Studenti poslouchají písničku a soustředí se na určitý výslovnostní/gramatický/stylistický jev (např. „ř“, minulý čas, deklinaci, obecnou češtinu). Vždycky, když tento jev uslyší, udělají si čárku. Na konci si porovnají výsledky.
- Studenti mají za úkol zapsat si maximum slov, kterým v textu porozuměli. Vyhrává jednotlivec/skupina, jenž zapíše nejvíce slov.

- (Tato aktivita je dobrá u obtížnějších, rychlejších písniček.)
- Studenti pracují ve dvojicích nebo ve skupinách. Učitel napíše slova z písničky na kartičky, které dá doprostřed. Jakmile student ulyší slovo v písni, uchopí kartičku. Vyhrává ten, kdo nasbírá nejvíce slov.
- Studenti si během poslechu poznamenají tři slovesa, tři substantiva a tři adjektiva, která v písni slyší. Pak sestaví krátký příběh s použitím těchto slov/použijí tato slova ve větách.
- Učitel odstraní (vynechá/vystřihá) určitá slova/gramatické jevy a vyzve studenty, aby je při poslechu doplňovali. Pokud je tato aktivita příliš obtížná, lze příslušná slova z textu vypsat/vystřihnout a předložit je předem studentům.
- Učitel si připraví na kazetě asi čtyři úryvky různých, žánrově odlišných písniček. Studenti se postaví tak, aby měli volný pohyb doprava i doleva (např. za lavice ve třídě). Učitel vysvětlí: „*Ti, kterým se písnička moc líbí, jdou k oknu. Ti, kterým se písnička vůbec nelíbí, jdou ke zdi. Ti, kteří nemají žádný vyhraněný názor, zůstávají uprostřed.*“ Pak učitel pustí první písničku. Když se studenti rozmístí, učitel je zastaví. Studenti mají na svém stanovišti diskutovat se svými spolužáky o tom, proč se jim písnička líbí/nelíbí. Podobně se postupuje u dalších písniček.

b) aktivity s textem

- Učitel opíše text, ale určitá slova napíše špatně. Studenti je při poslechu opravují. (Pozor – tato aktivita může být pro studenty velmi obtížná!)
- Učitel rozstříhá text po jednotlivých verších. Studenti při poslechu písničku skládají.
- Učitel připraví k textu otázky. Studenti během poslechu hledají na otázky odpovědi. Tato aktivita je vhodná zejména pro začátečníky a středně pokročilé, kterým umožňuje soustředit se na vyhledání určitých dílčích informací.
- Učitel studentům předloží výběr možností, které mají zaškrtnout. Např. K písničce *Šly panenky silnicí* předloží tento výběr:

Panenky šly

a) cestou b) lesem c) silnicí

Potkali je

a) dva myslivci b) tři myslivci c) deset myslivců atd.

Studenti mají během poslechu zaškrtnout správnou informaci.

Možnosti lze předkládat i ve formě obrázků.

c) aktivity s obrázky

- Učitel k textu připraví jednoduché obrázky. Studenti poslouchají písničku a přitom řadí obrázky v takovém pořadí, jak se v písničce objevují. (U písniček s příběhem lze řadit obrázky i před poslechem a odhadovat tak předem obsah textu).
- Studenti mohou vkládat obrázky do textu místo vynechaných slov.
- Studenti mají před sebou obrázky. Jakmile uslyší slovo, které je zachyceno na obrázku, příslušný obrázek si rychle vezmou. Ten, kdo má nejvíc obrázků, vyhrává.
- Studenti mohou k písničce sami malovat během poslechu obrázky ve stylu komiksu. Tato aktivita je vhodná pro písničky "s příběhem".

3. AKTIVITY PO POSLECHU.

- Studenti dostanou text s mezerami. Jejich úkolem je doplnit vynechaná slova/gramatické jevy tak, jak si je zapamatovali.
- Studenti mají převyprávět obsah textu vlastními slovy a vytvořit k textu příběh. Podle vlastní fantazie se snaží doplnit maximum konkrétních podrobností (např. jak starý je hrdina/hrdinka z písně, v jaké je životní situaci, jak se cítí, kde je, co předcházelo jeho/jejím zážitkům, jak se bude jeho/její situace dále vyvíjet apod.)
- Studenti mohou převyprávět obsah písně v odlišném žánru (jako horor, detektivku, pohádku, sci-fi apod.).
- Reklama. Studenti vymýšlejí na základě určité písničky reklamu. Např. při poslechu písně *Na*

- *okně seděla kočka* můžou vymyslet reklamu na konzervy s jídlem pro kočky (např. Whiskas). Reklamu můžou doprovodit obrázkem, sloganem apod.
- Vyjadřování emocí. Studenti poslouchají písničku/klasickou hudbu a mají za úkol napsat maximum adjektiv popisujících emoce, které v nich hudba vzbuzuje. (Pokud je to nutné, nezapomeneme předučit slovní zásobu!)
- Hitparáda: studenti poslouchají úryvky pěti písní a bodují 1 – 5 body, popř. Hlasují o jejich umístění na žebříčku popularity. (Je dobré připravit slovní zásobu). Totéž lze dělat i s písněmi, které jsme už v lekcích poslouchali.
- Hitparáda je dobrou příležitostí k procvičení komparativů a superlativů (studenti vysvětlují, proč je nějaká píseň lepší/horší než ostatní atd.).

4. ZAPAMATOVÁNÍ A INTERPRETACE

- Pro zapamatování písničky je velmi vhodné, aby si ji studenti po čase vyslechli ještě jednou. Výše uvedené aktivity lze při opakování střídat a kombinovat.
- Studenti mohou zpívat současně s poslechem kazety.
- Učitel hraje na hudební nástroj, zpívá text písně, studenti se přidávají s refrémem.
- Studenti se rozdělí na skupiny. Každá skupina dostane za úkol naučit se nazpaměť část písně/jeden verš. Poté ji zpívají po částech/verších.
- Studenti píseň zdramatizují. Lze pracovat i v týmech, přičemž každý tým si připravuje část písně.
- Studenti složí nová slova na nějakou známou melodii (vhodné jsou jednoduché lidové písně).
- „Tichá pošta.“ Studenti si po řadě šeptají verše písničky (první v řadě čte, poslední zapisuje). Pak konfrontují výsledné znění s původním textem. Je lepší vybrat písničku, kterou už studenti znají - jinak by to mohlo být příliš obtížné.
- Hudba obecně (i klasická či meditační) může vytvořit vhodné pozadí k jiným aktivitám (např.

- k samostatné práci s textem, doplňování cvičení apod.) Velmi se mi například osvědčilo pouštět při testech písňě zpěvačky Enya - ale záleží samozřejmě na osobním vkusu.
- Učitel ukáže studentům čtyři libovolné obrazy od různých malířů. Pak pustí ukázky čtyř různých typů hudby. Studenti spojují hudbu a obrazy a diskutují o tom, jaký obraz/hudba se jim nejvíce líbí (vhodné k procvičení konstrukcí *líbí se mi/hodí se k*).
- Pokud studenti jeví o text zájem, učitel je může vyzvat, aby jej přeložili/přebásnili do svého jazyka. Nepodceňujme studenty – často dokážou úžasné věci!

Summer Courses in the Czech Republic

Summer courses outside of Prague

Brno
Department of Czech for Foreigners, Masaryk University
For information, contact
<<mailto:bohem@phil.muni.cz>>bohem@phil.muni.cz

České Budějovice
Summer School of Slavonic Studies, South Bohemia University
August 23 – September 10, 2004
<<http://www.pf.jcu.cz/stru/katedry/cj/lsss04.phtml>>
<http://www.pf.jcu.cz/stru/katedry/cj/lsss04.phtml>

Olomouc
Summer School of Slavic Languages, Palácký University
July 25 – August 20, 2004
<http://lsss.upol.cz/>

Introductory Czech program run by the Ohio State University
Summer School of Slavic Languages, Palácký University
July 25 – August 20, 2004
Contact person: Jeff McKibben at
mckibben.1@osu.edu

Plzeň
University of West Bohemia, International Summer Language School
July 11 - 31, 2004
<http://www.people.memphis.edu/~cehall/summer.html>

Summer courses in Prague

Caledonian School
<<http://www.caledonianschool.com/intensive/intensive.en.html>><http://www.caledonianschool.com/intensive/intensive.en.html>

Charles University, Ústav jazykové a odborné přípravy.
Various types of language courses both in Prague and elsewhere in the Czech Republic
<<http://www.ujop.cuni.cz/>><http://www.ujop.cuni.cz/>

Charles University, Summer School of Slavonic Studies
Contact person:
<<mailto:dagmar.sykorova@ff.cuni.cz>>dagmar.sykorova@ff.cuni.cz

Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE)
Study Center in Prague
<http://www.ciee.org>

Jerome of Prague College (Collegium Hieronymi Pragensis)
Courses in Czech language, film, history and politics
June 21 – August 6, 2004
<<http://www.chp.cz>><http://www.chp.cz>

Summer Prague University
Courses in Czech language and culture
July 5-30 and August 2-27, 2004
<http://www.sfservis.com/en/spuinfo.html>

Semester and academic year only: New York University in Prague
<<http://www.nyu.edu/global/prague/>><http://www.nyu.edu/global/prague/>
For language schools in the Czech Republic, see also the listings at
<http://www.caramba.cz/page.php?PgID=249>

Summer courses in the United States

Beloit College
Introductory Czech, taught at Beloit College
June 26 - August 6, 2004
<<http://www.beloit.edu/~cls>><http://www.beloit.edu/~cls>

Indiana University Summer Workshop in Slavic and East European Languages (SWSEEL)
Introductory Czech, taught at Indiana University
June 18- August 13, 2004
<<http://www.indiana.edu/~iuslavic/swseel/>><http://www.indiana.edu/~iuslavic/swseel/>

University of Washington, Seattle
 Introductory Czech, taught at University of Washington
 June 21st - August 20th, 2004
 Contact person: Jaroslava Soldanova at
jsoldan@hotmail.com

Funding opportunities

American Councils for International Education
 (ACTR/ACCELS)
 Includes a Central Europe Language program and a
 Central Europe
 Research program.
www.americancouncils.org

This is a preliminary listing, based mostly on responses from a query to the Czech listserve at CZECH@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu. If you know of other programs, please contact Susan Kresin at kresin@humnet.ucla.edu so that we can list them on the IATC website.

Thanks to Dominik Lukes of Bohemica.com for help with the listing of programs in the Czech Republic.

The Language Advice Service in Prague

Ludmila Uhlřřová

**The Czech Language Institute, Academy of Sciences
 Prague, Czech Republic**

(Translated by Tara Becker, Justin McNeillie, and William Scott-Gall, final-year Czech students at the University of Sheffield, England)

The Language Advice Service has been operating uninterrupted for six decades as part of the Czech Language Institute of the ASCR (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, www.cas.cz). It provides advice for anyone who has a question or problem relating to the practical use of Czech. Lay and professional users alike can make enquiries by post or telephone, to which experienced language specialists at the Advice Service then provide specialized answers. Several years ago an electronic service (poradna@ujc.cas.cz) was added to the traditional formats for discussing language. The simplicity and casual nature of email has brought about both a huge surge of interest in the Language Advice Service and a wider scope of inquiries. There are now more clients, both from home and especially from abroad. Amongst them, for example, are Czechs who have been living outside the country for many years, and are interested in how Czech has changed and continues to

develop at the turn of the millennium. There are also members of the Czech diplomatic corps stationed abroad, students on study programmes or Czechs working on assignment in a foreign country, and, not least of all, teachers, lecturers and professors who teach Czech at various institutions around the world.

What kind of questions does the advice service answer? Not long ago, a wise linguist aptly wrote that “the origin of all language-related problems is in microphenomena at the level of speech.” The entire spectrum of language queries reflects this as well. As wide and varied a spectrum as it is, in practice, any query is invariably about a concrete language-related difficulty, one that has been inspired directly by a professional scenario: a proof-reader needs to correct a possible mistake in some word, or an editor wants to edit a sentence in a text appropriately. A translator may be looking for the most eloquent synonym for something, a teacher wishes to be sure that she is correcting her students’ homework precisely, or an expert is interested in the spelling and declension of a specialist term—and so forth.

The majority of inquiries concern either orthography or lexicon. Orthographical inquiries are frequent for several reasons. First, Czech orthography maintains many historical features, for example, the differences between *y* and *i* are not heard in today’s standard Czech pronunciation. Second, a good knowledge of spelling conventions is considered to be prestigious in society, and school children are thoroughly inculcated with the language’s orthographical principles (and absurdities). Regarding lexicon, at present it is growing fast, perhaps too fast. As a consequence of both globalization and the influence of the Internet as well as the immense technological advances that have occurred, there has been an influx of varied expressions into the language, primarily from English. These expressions subsequently either become incorporated into the Czech lexicon or—after a short-lived heyday—fall out of use.

Many other inquiries are connected to the specifically Czech variety of diglossia. The majority of Czechs in their non-official day-to-day conversations do not speak the standard literary language; they do not use the standard official forms appropriate for formal situations, such as the administrative and educational spheres. This fact greatly distresses and puzzles foreigners who, having learned standard literary Czech at home, arrive in the Czech Republic and are shocked to find that the majority of Czechs cannot in effect “speak their language!”

The activities of the Language Advice Service have their limitations too: there simply is not time to edit long texts or to offer consultation regarding Czech literature.

By nature there are a series of questions put to our consultants, which are often repeated and thus many

answers which prove routine. For the most common of these, a special website has been constructed (<http://www.ujc.cas.cz/poradna/porfaq.htm>). This site is quite extensive and continuously updated. The staff of the Service are happy that its users have taken to it and have visited the site in great numbers.

This is proof that people care about their language, and that they treat the knowledge and observation of linguistic norms on an equal footing with knowledge of norms of social behaviour (incidentally, this is natural – after all, people are by nature social beings). The high usage of the Advice Service's website is, however, connected to the fact that there are as of yet no basic manuals of Czech grammar or spelling available online. Currently, there is no access to any Czech monolingual dictionary, nor to the rules of Czech orthography (although discussions are underway as to the possibilities of making these materials accessible). However, at the same time, in today's society (as we often find) there are many who are happier to "surf the net" for information than to look in an old-fashioned book. On the other hand, the room where the Advice Service is located is stacked up to the rafters with grammars, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and various other specialist books. The oldest and rarest is the original 1834-9 edition of Josef Jungmann's five-volume Czech-German dictionary; even it gets a look-in every now and then.

Advice Services exist in many other European countries and quite a few of them have a tradition equally as long as the Prague service. These authorities are found

in all the Scandinavian countries: Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland and on the Faroe Islands, as well as for example Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Bulgaria.

They function in various ethno-linguistic and socio-political circumstances. Their institutional bodies, status in society and range of services offered also differ, which is related to their public or (partially) commercial background. However for all intents and purposes, they have several things in common: they all advise, recommend, and in doing so, educate. But they do not either dictate or forbid language use. In this same process they also learn much valuable information about the language itself from their clients, for example, where the "weak areas" are in the language system and about public opinions on these areas. This they may use this to achieve greater success with their work in the future.

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Cimrman Corner

Jára Cimrman and the MP3
 By Jan Graas

Translated by Craig Cravens

Like Antonín Dvořák and his *Slavonic Dances* and Bedřich Smetana and his violin quartet *From My Life*, Jára Cimrman, too, sought to contribute to the treasure house of national Czech music culture with a similarly conceived work, which would express both his relationship to music and his patriotic fervor. Thus, inspired by the two aforementioned compositions, Cimrman set to music various Czech nursery rhymes from the Pojizeří region, and composed a musical poetic cycle, upon which he imposed the form of a symphony. He called his symphony “My Songs” or “*Mé písně*,” whereby he sought to express the propinquity of the songs to his heart, emerging as they did from the region of the Czech lands in which the Master had lived and worked for several years.

Cimrman completed the manuscript of his symphonic work in 1896, whereupon he gave it to the Viennese publisher Günther Landsknecht with the request that he publish a small promotional edition of ten copies. Cimrman then sent these ten copies to the foremost European and world symphony orchestras and their conductors, suggesting that they perform his work. He also sent a copy to the Metropolitan Opera in New York with the hope that his work would be performed overseas.

Cimrman marked the packages containing the manuscript with the initials **MP1**, which stood for “*Mé písně—First Edition*.” And after sending out his manuscript, he no longer occupied himself with the work, since he wanted to give each of the addressees time to consider his composition and see who would answer first. In the meantime, Cimrman devoted his creative energies to other areas of art and science.

After approximately five years, Cimrman returned to his symphony and with disappointment discovered that there was absolutely no interest in his composition „*Mé písně*.” Not a single addressee of the package marked **MP1** reacted to his suggestion to perform the work.

Cimrman therefore altered his work and shortened it considerably since he assumed that it was precisely its extensive size—the manuscript was over 300 printed pages—that discouraged its performance. He then decided to issue his new version „*Mé písně 2*” or **MP2** on his most recent invention, the Cimrman Disk, or CD.

But despite the considerable reduction, only the first two movements of the five-movement symphony fit on his first CD (which was of course different from the CD as we know it today). It was Cimrman’s desire,

however, to issue his entire symphony on a single CD. Thus he began to intensively occupy himself with the problematics of audio signal compression. Cimrman calculated the compression algorithm on his automatic abacus, and the compression instrument he used was an ordinary printing press, whereby he succeeded in reducing the thickness of his wax CD by one millimeter and thus widening the recording area of the Cimrman Disk, so that his symphony „ *Mé písně*” now fit on the disk in its entirety. Cimrman designated this third version „ *Mé písně 3*” or **MP3**.

This abbreviation then became standard usage for audio compression technology in general and is still used today.

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“The Prague Summer Seminars” is an educational program for students and adults, sponsored by the University of New Orleans. Entering its 10th year in 2004, this program offers courses in **Literature, Linguistics, Writing, History, Political Science, Music, Art, Architecture, Photography, Film, Philosophy, Education, and Czech Language**. Students can earn up to six college credits, which are transferable to home institutions, or enroll for non-credit. In addition to the workshops, participants attend weekly film and lecture series, walking tours, excursions in and around Prague, informal dinners, and weekend field trips to **Vienna, Austria and Brno, Southern Moravia**. For more information, please visit our web site at <http://inst.uno.edu/prague> or contact the program coordinator, Irene Ziegler, at iziegler@uno.edu or at (504) 280-7318.

Oznámení o založení Asociace učitelů češtiny jako cizího jazyka - AUČČJ

Vážené kolegyně, vážení kolegové,

chtěli bychom vás informovat o založení Asociace učitelů češtiny jako cizího jazyka - AUČČJ. V České republice po roce 1989 v nebyvalé míře vzrostl zájem o studium češtiny jako cizího jazyka. Z této skutečnosti vyrostla i potřeba založit odbornou zájmovou organizaci učitelů češtiny jako cizího jazyka. Asociace byla zaregistrována jako odborná zájmová organizace na sklonku roku 2002 a její první valná hromada se konala 4. června 2003. Na této valné hromadě byly přijaty stanovy asociace, zvolen její výbor a nastíněny oblasti činnosti asociace. Asociace si klade za cíl organizovat semináře s přednáškami a workshopy věnovanými konkrétním tématům, otvírat prostor diskusí o metodách výuky, napomáhat vzniku nových učebních materiálů a pomůcek a podporovat výměnu informací a zkušeností mezi učiteli různých typů

škol v ČR i v zahraničí. 29. listopadu 2003 se konala druhá valná hromada asociace. V současné době se plánuje cyklus seminářů k problematice našeho oboru (např. nové materiály ve výuce čej, čeština pro děti, testování).

Více informací o AUČČJ včetně zápisů z jednání, programu činnosti a přihlášky najdete na www.auccj.org, kde zároveň můžete zveřejnit i informace o vámi publikovaných či připravovaných materiálech k výuce češtiny. Členy AUČČJ se mohou stát i zahraniční bohemisté.

Těšíme se na vaše informace, návrhy a podněty i na naši vzájemnou spolupráci.

Výbor AUČČJ

In the next issue of Czech Language News, we would like to focus on mixed-level classes. If you would like to contribute a brief article on your experiences teaching students with many different backgrounds and interests, please contact Susan Kresin at kresin@humnet.ucla.edu.



One of the 136 total reconstructed images of Jára Cimrman