

## Jazyk české mládeže

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### Část 1: Jazyk české mládeže jako produkt globalizace

Český jazyk je pod vlivem globalizace. Integrovaní snahy, vyvolané mimo jiné hlavně otevřením hranic a celkovým zlepšením komunikace naší země s okolními státy, působí zejména na jazyk a celou jazykovou kulturu. Vzhledem k potřebě zlepšení jazykových kontaktů České republiky s ostatními státy Evropy i celého světa se stává nutností ovládat alespoň jeden světový jazyk (zejména angličtinu a francouzštinu).

Trend globalizace má však řadu kritiků, kteří hovoří o jeho záporných stránkách – homogenizaci a zplošťování národních kultur. Čeština by totiž ztrácela svou pozici národního jazyka ve prospěch kultury kosmopolitní, komerční. Tento trend je však, podle mého názoru, z hlediska dynamiky jazyka zcela přirozený, přejímání a včleňování cizích slov do jazyka je nutnou cestou obohacování slovní zásoby.

Na změny v jazyce reagují všechny společenské vrstvy obyvatel, ústřední úlohu tzv. „zprostředkovatele jazyka“ hrají zejména média a veřejní činitelé, ke kterým patří političtí představitelé či tiskoví mluvčí. Na jazyk velmi citlivě reaguje i česká mládež, zejména prostřednictvím zahraniční hudby (texty písní) či Internetu. Svou pozornost bych chtěl nyní směřovat na jazyk české mládeže (10–18 let).

Jak už jsem se zmínil, k hlavním zdrojům přejímání cizích slov patří média – televize, film, tisk, hudba, či Internet. Vlivy na jazykovou kulturu mládeže jsou obrovské. Mladí lidé chtějí být **in**, **cool**, **free**, **funny**. Oblibě se těší i další slova, jako např. **break** (lámat, zlomit), **smile** (úsměv), **retro** či **squat** či **image** (pověst). Pro snazší orientaci jsem se pokusil vybrat přejatá slova, používaná českou mládeží, rozčlenit do několika kategorií:

#### Slova, spjatá s moderní kulturou a životním stylem:

**Být In / Out** – moderní, akční / nmoderní  
**Cool** – být v pohodě, v klidu  
**Credit** – suma peněz na kontě, telefonní kartě, apod.  
**Go** – jít, ve spojeních *let's go*, *fun go tariff*,  
**Free** – být volný, svobodný, nezávislý

**Funny** – veselý  
**Happy** – šťastný, spokojený  
**Image** – pověst, renomé, chápáno v pejorativním zabarvení jako *maska*.  
**Psycho** – cokoli, co přivádí člověka v úžas  
**Dredy** – copánky, z anglického dreadlocks  
**Squat** – opuštěný dům, který se stává útočištěm pro bezdomovce, narkomany, apod.  
**Underground** – podzemí, ilegální undergroundová kultura, stejně jako hudba

Tato skupina slov proniká do jazyka prostřednictvím mediální, zejména TV reklamy (***Image je na nic. Go Ježíšku, go!***) a v podstatě nahradila stávající české ekvivalenty.

#### Slova, spjatá s moderní hudbou:

**Alternativní** – vše, co je v rozporu s oficiálním, tradičním proudem  
**Slap** – technika hry na kytaru, plácnutí o struny  
**Slide** – technika hry na kytaru, klouzavý zvuk  
**Underground** – výše

+ názvy moderních hudebních stylů (**House, Techno, Jungle, Trip/Hip Hop, Breakbeat, Drum and Bass, Hardcore, Punk ...**)

+ názvy hudebních skupin

Hovoříme-li o zahraniční hudební scéně, nesmíme zapomenout na kategorii písňových textů. Právě prostřednictvím textů totiž do jazyka proniká velké množství cizích frází, slangových výrazů či idiomů. Zmínil bych např. **Don't worry, be happy**. Většinou dochází k pouhému zapamatování textu (memorování) bez pochopení významu fráze. Typický teenager si zapamatuje fonetickou podobu slova či věty, intonaci, tempo, tedy suprasegmentální složky jazyka, obsah a význam mu však uniká.

#### Slova, spjatá s moderními sporty:

**Bike, biking** – jízda na horském kole  
**In line skate** – jízda na kolečkových bruslích (kolečka v řadě – in-line)  
**Snowboard**  
**Skate, skateboard, skejťák** (příznivec skateboardu a vlastní skateboardové kultury)

#### Slova, spjatá s užíváním drog:

**Acid** – označení pro LSD, jiné významy kyselina, kousavým, šízravý

**Crack** – droga, kokain, upravený pro kouření, další významy kolísají od prasknout či puknout k adjektivní podobě slova vynikající, skvělý

**Dealer** – distributor drog

**Joint** – označení pro marihuanovou cigaretu, nabízí se i podoba s anglickým join (spojení)

**Psychedelic** – to, co je křiklavé, omamné, pestré, prostředek pro tvorbu halucinace

**Trip** – LSD, výlet i extáze

**Speed** – z angl. rychlost, označení pro drogu

Slang uživatelů drog je velmi pestrý, pro označení jednoho produktu – drogy lze užít až několik desítek ekvivalentů. (*Marihuana – tráva, travka, hulení, zelí, kytkta, joint, THC, téčko, emko, ganja, bhang...*).

### Slova, spjatá s užíváním Internetu a počítačovou terminologií:

**Cracker, hacker, phreaker** – počítačový kriminálník, pirát

**Burning** – pálení CD

**Download, Upload, links** – stahování souborů z Netu, odkazy

**Lamer** – Slangový termín označující beznadějně tupého uživatele; používaný v Internetu.

**Load, Save** – nahrát, uložit

**Net, Web** – označení pro Internet

**Nick, Callsign** – přezdívka

**Nuke** – atomová bomba, pirátský destrukční program

**Page, site** – stránka na Internetu

**Surfer, surfovat** – prohlížet internetové stránky

**Warez** – zboží, ilegální software

**MP3** – “empétrojky” – hudební soubory (formát MP3)

**AVI** – „avíčka“ – filmy (formát AVI)

Mezi další prostředky obohacování slovní zásoby patří Internet a počítačové programy, zejména hry. Již v první a druhé třídě základní školy si děti osvojují první slova z prostředí počítačů: **start a exit, yes a no**. S rozvojem základních počítačových dovedností si postupně osvojují základní termíny, nutné pro hraní her – **left, right, up, down, fire, load a save**. Na prvním stupni je však znalost těchto výrazů víceméně pasivní, děti slova znají, ale nepoužívají. Postupem času se slovní zásoba hráčů rozšiřuje, výrazových prostředků je více a více.

### **Část 2: Debil, blbec, kretén nebo hovado? Za tajemstvím žakovského slangu**

*Upozornění: Následující text obsahuje hrubé výrazy a vulgarismy, které mohou urazit estetické citění*

*čtenářů. Jedná se o věrný odraz reality žakovské expresivní mluvy. KK*

Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Palackého v Olomouci stejně jako další pedagogicky zaměřené fakulty usiluje o výchovu kvalitních učitelů, kteří budou pozitivně působit na rozvoj mladé generace. Mladí učitelé/učitelky však mnohdy pouze velmi mlhavě tuší, s jakým žakovským jazykem mohou být na (nejen) základních školách konfrontováni. Proto by měli mít alespoň částečně povědomí o tom, jaký jazyk (zejména na expresivní úrovni) jejich žáci používají. Následující text a zejména popsany výzkum jim umožní pootevřit dveře do tajemné komnaty žakovského slangu.

V průběhu roku 2005 a 2006 došlo k unikátnímu elektronickému průzkumu expresivní a nekonvenční mluvy české mládeže (věková hranice 12–16 let). Jak výzkumníci předpokládali, výsledky šetření potvrzují široké množství zajímavých výrazových prostředků. Respondenti výzkumu uváděli, jaké výrazy užívají v komunikaci se svými vrstevníky, jak říkají svým rodičům a učitelům, a také jaký je jejich postoj k nadávkám.

Do výzkumného projektu Žakovský slang se zapojilo 461 škol z celé České republiky a elektronický dotazník vyplnilo téměř 27 000 žáků. Do souboru k vyhodnocení bylo zahrnuto 22 193 úplně vyplněných dotazníků. Průzkumem se podařilo získat rozsáhlou lexikální databázi čítající na 600 000 výrazů pro další vědecké zpracování.

Výzkumné šetření bylo zaměřeno na různé komunikační situace, ve kterých žáci komunikují s vrstevníky, s rodiči, případně vyjadřují své pozitivní či negativní stanovisko (např. na učitele...). V následujícím textu se zaměříme zejména do oblastí pozitivní a negativní exprese.

### **Pozitivní výrazy pro kamarády**

K pozitivním výrazům českých žáků ke kamarádům patří „**seš hustej**“, „**seš borec**“ případně „**seš borka**“, „**seš machr**“, „**seš týpek**“, dívky používají o něco méně expresivní slova než chlapci – omezují se na výrazy „**super**“, „**skvělý**“ či „**dobrý**“.

Velmi zajímavou kategorií pozitivních výrazů pro kamarády představují výrazy vytvářené pod vlivem angličtiny, médií apod. Např. pod vlivem angličtiny nalezneme v mluvě žáků výrazy: **seš player, kinger, mega good, good týpek, seš killer** či **si mastr**. Pod vlivem médií se v mluvě žáků objevují výrazy **seš jedí, vyvolený, milášek, úžasňák**. Mezi dalšími nekonvenčními obraty výzkum zachytil např. **tak to je mazec, to je špica, ty jsi boryš, huston, bomber, stylař, machros, párkos, ty krabel, to je pěkná roštěnka, ta je ale suprová**, dokonce i mírně archaický výraz **štramanda**.

### Negativní výrazy pro kamarády

Jak bylo očekáváno, skutečnou úrodu pepných výrazů zachytilo výzkumné šetření v oblasti negativních výrazů pro kamarády. Přední místa žebříčku frekvence zaznamenaly vulgarismy **debil, blbec, kráva, kretén, vole, magor, hovado, idiot, nesnáším tě** a velmi hrubé vulgarismy z oblasti lidské anatomie. Výraz „**ty vole**“ využívá 43 % chlapců (mnohdy jako nezáměrně vytvářený parazitující výraz), dívky pak využívají především spojení „**ty krávo**“.

Mezi negativní výrazy pro kamarády patří spojení **seš looser, socka, socan, mentos, defoun, je to cyp, kretoš, trapka, kravajzna, vřed, lemplovník, výmaz, tupman, blbka, tragédka**. Pokud pak chtějí žáci někoho urazit, využívají pestrou paletu expresivních výrazů: **subatomární kvartový neutrino, blbej jak dlabaný necky, nestojíš ani za faju tabáku, větší lama než ty neexistuje, bed'arová opice, blbej jak pumpa na saně, smrdíš a nejde to umejt, horníku**.

Slangová sonda mimo jiné zkoumala, jaké prostředky využívají žáci pro označení svých učitelů. Záleží přitom na tom, zda žáci učitele „pouze nemají rádi“, či zda „učitele nesnášejí“. Výchozí výraz pro tato hodnocení představuje slovo „**úča**“ s různými přívlastky dle intenzity negativního vztahu (např. pitomá úča, blbá úča). Jak dále komentují autoři šetření – poměr mezi početním stavem učitelů a učitelek v našem školství se odráží v nejčastěji užívané nadávce „**kráva**“.

### Postoj k nadávkám

Polovina žáků zastává názor, že nadávky tvoří přirozenou součást mluveného jazyka, třetina pak tvrdí, že **bez nadávek to prostě nejde**. Pouhá třetina žáků věří, že slušní lidé nepoužívají nadávky. Žáci jsou ve velké míře ovlivňováni v užívání nadávek kamarády a spolužáky. Častěji je využívají proto, aby se „neztrapnili“, případně proto, že je užívají všichni jejich kamarádi. Dále věří, že užívání nadávek je moderní. Zajímavý výsledek přinesla otázka, kde jsi se naučil/a nejvíce nadávek – více než 52 % respondentů uvedla „ve škole“.

Nadávky patří ke generacím školou povinných odnepaměti. Mění se pouze arzenál expresivního materiálu (jistě si vzpomenete, jaké nadávky se používaly v době vaší vlastní povinné školní docházky) a jeho intenzita. Pro nastupující učitele není špatné, aby se již před vlastním pedagogickým působením seznámili s jazykovým materiálem, se kterým mohou být v praxi konfrontováni. Proto doporučujeme navštívit internetový odkaz

<http://www.zakovskyslang.cz>, kde se o výsledcích výzkumu dozvíte více.

Výzkum realizovala „Veselá kráva“, ve spolupráci s agenturou *Factum Invenio a Ústavem pro jazyk český AV ČR v roli odborného garanta*.

### Použitá literatura:

#### Články:

Pejša, S. „Přežije čeština éru globalizace?“ *Lidové noviny*, 3.7.1999

#### Internetové zdroje:

<a href="http://coolers.freeyellow.com/">http://coolers.freeyellow.com/</a>	cooleři a hoteři
<a href="http://www.lidovky.cz/">http://www.lidovky.cz/</a>	Lidové Noviny
<a href="http://slovník.atlas.cz/">http://slovník.atlas.cz/</a>	šestijazyčný slovník
<a href="http://www.sidliste.cz">http://www.sidliste.cz</a>	drogy na Internetu
<a href="http://www.rave.cz">http://www.rave.cz</a>	hudba
<a href="http://www.moda.cz">http://www.moda.cz</a>	moderní trendy v módě
<a href="http://www.zakovskyslang.cz">http://www.zakovskyslang.cz</a>	výzkum žakovského slangu

#### Literatura:

Martincová, O. *Nová slova v češtině – slovník neologismů*. Academia, Praha. 1998.  
Sochová, Z. Poštolková, B. *Co v slovnících nenajdete – novinky v současné slovní zásobě*. Portál, 1994.

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### The Czech word *pohoda*\*

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\* A version of this has appeared among ‘untranslatable words’ on the <http://www.opendemocracy.net> website.

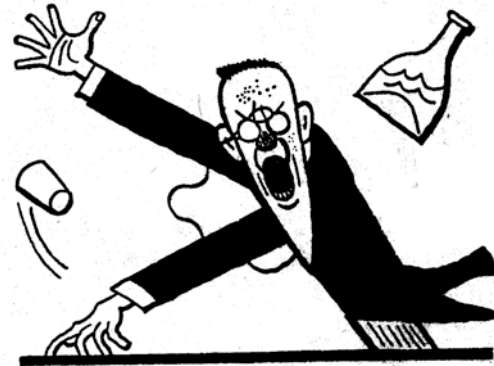
### Zprávy bleskem

Václav Havel is in the midst of a seven-week residency at Columbia University in New York featuring lectures, interviews, conversations, classes, performances, and panels centered on his life and ideas. The visit is organized by the Arts Initiative at Columbia University. For more information see the website:

<http://havel.columbia.edu/>

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This word, along with its adjectival and adverbial derivatives *pohodový* and *pohodově*, has irritated me for about twenty years. It is not that it is in the strictest terms ‘untranslatable,’ more a question of its rapid expansion in recent years to cover a range of shades of meanings, requiring different translations in English, while evidently remaining one and the same word to the Czechs themselves.

Until that time twenty years ago I had barely heard it, though I knew it from literature, and it was in standard monolingual dictionaries. Over this short time it has evolved from being a bookish expression

denoting primarily pleasant weather (even more anciently weather generally, like its Russian cousin *погода* [pogoda]) or a pleasant atmosphere in a particular milieu, and metaphorically, an agreeable state of mind and/or body, well-being, to a colloquialism conveying all manner of pleasant, desirable, suitable, or simply good or satisfactory states of affairs.

Even in the primary twentieth-century sense of 'pleasant weather' or 'pleasant atmosphere,' it has generally carried pleonastically the automatic epithet *příjemná* 'pleasant' or, often, *krásná* 'beautiful' unless qualified by some other adjective, such as *jarní* 'spring'. Bilingual dictionaries generally attempt one-to-one equivalents, but in reality English would barely use such nominal equivalents in the same way. In other words, when context-bound it is likely to demand translation in quite different ways. Thus a simple scene-setting *Byla jarní pohoda* would, according to context, be best translated as 'It was a lovely Spring day' or 'It was a lovely Spring', similarly *Byla večerní pohoda* 'It was a pleasant evening' or 'It was that pleasant time in the evening'. (I do not claim these to be the only possibilities.)

In the common metaphorical sense the word indicates a range of possible English translations (see the dictionary entries reproduced below), many of which might suggest that the addition of the adjective *duševní* 'mental, of the soul' might also be pleonastic, though the phrase *duševní pohoda* does have an ideal equivalent in 'peace of mind' (already, then, miles away from pleasant weather).

The utterance *To je pohoda* once equated to (crudely) 'What lovely weather' or 'What a lovely day,' but today it may be used of almost any situation or place that evokes in one the same sense of pleasure that such a day or weather might, and in its most up-to-date sense it conveys an assurance or the re-assurance that things are either ideal or couldn't be better, i.e., 'That's fine,' 'That's great,' 'Everything's fine.' Similar things apply to the locative use of the expression as *To je v pohodě*, which actually comes closer to 'It's okay,' 'Don't worry,' 'No problem,' not to mention – for its truncated form *V pohodě* – my least favorite English responses, 'Sorted!'<sup>1</sup> (where has the weather gone now?).

<sup>1</sup> In fact, *V pohodě*, in its ultimate degradation as used by media folk (and those who would imitate them), may mean little more than 'yes,' 'good,' 'great,' 'excellent,' 'obviously,' 'you're welcome' etc.; its 'glorious blossoming' (along with *pohoda* itself and *pohodový*) since 1989 has not escaped

Such uses of the word in whole utterances, which show more than anything the deficiency of attempts at one-to-one equivalences, extend to its diminutive, *pohodička*. In the standard multi-volume Czech dictionary (now forty-odd years old)<sup>2</sup> this is exemplified by the sentence *To je pohodička*, being an expression of satisfaction after a good meal. As with the basic *pohoda* it has expanded to the degree that the best of the modern bilingual dictionaries<sup>3</sup> offers (quite adequately for most purposes) 'Everything is hunky-dory.'

The expansiveness of the word's meaning is further reflected in its productiveness. Neither the adjective *pohodový* nor the adverb *pohodově* figure in *SSJČ*, but they do appear in a younger dictionary that focuses on recent Czech neologisms.<sup>4</sup> For the former, it offers two ranges of meanings, translatable as: 'evoking a sense of well-being, pleasant, peaceful, calm' and '(of a person) easy-going, unruffled.' In the former sense, it offers collocations with music, reading, day, morning and atmosphere. Fronek has made an admirable attempt to capture the range of meanings of the adjective; his entry offers in the first sense: 'pleasant, lovely, enjoyable, slang swell, super', and in the second: '(of a person) level-headed, calm, unruffled, coll[ocual] unflappable, cool'. At which point it becomes clear that perhaps 'cool', in its modern sense, covering a wide range of things, persons and situations is the nearest one-to-one equivalent for this adjective.<sup>5</sup> For

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the murderously aquiline eye of Vladimír Just who devotes two whole pages to these three items in his *Slovník floskulí* (Prague, 2003, pp.188-90), in which he lambastes all the worst excesses of latter-day Czech political and journalistic newspeak.

<sup>2</sup> Bohuslav Havránek *et al.*, *Slovník spisovného jazyka českého*, 2nd ed. (a reprint of the original 1960s work) (Prague, 1989). Hereafter *SSJČ*.

<sup>3</sup> Josef Fronek: *Velký česko-anglický slovník*, Prague, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Olga Martincová *et al.*, *Nová slova v češtině. Slovník neologismů* (Prague, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> 'Cool' itself, like *pohoda*, though not so intimately, is a word widely associated with weather conditions. This also makes the recent widespread slang intrusion of *cool* into teenage Czech (and Slovak) thoroughly redundant. Similar potential meteorological associations also attach to 'fine,' though not to the long-established Cz. *fajn*. As an aside: the ex-English adjectives *fajn* and *cool* are non-inflecting in Czech; the derivate *fajnový* means

the adverb, Martincová offers meanings translatable as 'pleasantly, unhurriedly, calmly,' while Fronek offers 'calmly, unhurriedly.'

Thus, in terms of translation equivalence, three things follow from this snapshot of *pohoda*. 1. its range of meanings has so expanded (and degenerated) in recent times that a wider range of options needs to be considered in English; 2. very few of those options are nouns of a similar order, context almost invariably demanding 'free' translation; 3. (possibly the most important in its consequences) for English-Czech dictionaries, it is hard to see under what entry or entries *pohoda* or some form of it would appear so that a true reflection of its frequency would emerge.

Finally: Czech can generally negate its verbs, adjectives and nouns by the common device of the negative prefix *ne-*, hence *dělat/nedělat* 'do/not do,' *zajímavý/nezajímavý* 'interesting/uninteresting,' *Čech-Nečech* 'a Czech/non-Czech.' The analogous form to *pohoda*, that is, *nepohoda*, merely means 'bad weather' (cf. Ger. *Unwetter*); it has been 'left behind' as a purely lexical negative, totally untouched by all that has happened to its non-negative sister.

#### Appendix

The *pohoda* entries from two major, similar-sized Czech-English dictionaries (the semantic glosses have been translated):

Ivan Poldauf with Robert B. Pynsent: *Česko-anglický slovník*, Prague, 1986

**pohoda**, *f.* fair weather; metaphorically, of a cosy milieu coziness, of comfort bed of roses, of spiritual well-being strain, good mood good humour, bookish good cheer

Josef Fronek: *Velký česko-anglický slovník*, Prague, 2000.

**pohoda**, *f.* **1** obsol. bookish pleasant weather; **jarní p.** spring weather **2** well-being, contentment, composure; euphoria; **duševní p.** peace of mind • coll. **být v ~ě** be fine, be OK; **to je p., je to v ~ě** coll. everything is super; **zvládnout co v ~ě** manage sth without any trouble (at all)

'fastidious.' Slovak (and some versions of urban Moravian Czech) has happily coined the inflecting *fajný* in the appropriate sense, and in May 2005 I even heard the (Slovak) superlative of *cool* as *najcoolaější* (the written form of which, as here given, borders on the grotesque).

#### Image and Word in Central Europe May 31 – July 7, 2007



Image and Word in Central Europe is directed by the Czech Program of the University of Texas at Austin in cooperation with the **Prague Film School (FAMU)**. The courses in film, art history, and architecture explore Prague's rich cultural history **and its vibrant cultural present**.

The program is open to all registered UT undergraduate and graduate students and to students in good standing from other universities or colleges who register for the UT summer session. **The Prague Study Abroad Program** is an intense, challenging, and thought-provoking journey that will broaden your cultural horizons. For more information, please contact Hana Píchová ([pichova@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:pichova@mail.utexas.edu)).



### A Note from the Government of the Czech Republic

In its Statement of August 24, 2005, the Government of the Czech Republic expressed its deep recognition to all former Czechoslovak citizens, in particular those of German nationality, who lived before World War II in the territory of the present Czech Republic and who remained loyal to the Czechoslovak Republic during Hitler's aggression, actively participated in the struggle for its liberation or were persecuted by the Nazi regime. The Government of the Czech Republic at the same time expressed its regret that some of these persons did not live to see the end of World War II and receive the recognition they deserved. Instead, and at variance with the operative legislation of the time, they suffered wrongs as a result of measures applied in post-war Czechoslovakia against the so-called enemy population. The Government of the Czech Republic expressed its apology to all the active opponents of Nazism who suffered such wrongs, irrespective of their later citizenship and residence.

A documentary project launched by the Institute of Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the Museum of the City of Ústí nad Labem and the National Archives in Prague, in pursuance of this statement and with the financial support of the Czech Government, is to map out the history of the opponents of Nazism, among the citizens of the Czechoslovak Republic, to capture and to gather evidence of their life and contribution to the struggle for European democracy. At the same time, the project is intended to inform the general public of the fate of these antifascists. Its outcomes will be presented not only in professional studies and editions but also in the form of traveling exhibitions, radio and film documentaries, international conferences, and an educational project addressing primary and secondary school students. Beginning in the fall of 2008, the results of the project will compose part of the permanent exposition of the Museum of the City of Ústí nad Labem.

The project testifies to the interest of Czech society in these historical phenomena and events as well as in the traditions to which democratic Europe subscribes today. The legacy of the active opponents of Nazism in the Czech Lands is undoubtedly part of them.

In an effort to contribute to deepening historical memory, the project team invites the international public to respond to the following questions:

- Do you belong to antifascists who were citizens of the Czechoslovak Republic during WWII?
- Are you a relative or an acquaintance of such persons?
- Do you have at your disposal valuable evidence of their activities, including photographs or other documents?

Anything that can help create and complete this historical picture is welcome.

Please contact us at:

Ústav pro soudobé dějiny Akademie věd České republiky

**(Institute of Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic)**

Vlašská 9, 118 40 Praha 1

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### Book Reviews

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**James Naughton**  
***Czech, An Essential Grammar***  
**Routledge 2005 (282 pages)**

James Naughton's *Czech, An Essential Grammar* is a concise but thorough overview of Czech grammar that addresses structural features of both the standard written language and the colloquial language. Written in an easy-to-read format, it includes concise explanations with clear, glossed examples illustrating each major point. While focusing on traditional structural categories, it also addresses some pragmatic issues, such as the use of conditionals in polite requests and the choice of question tag (*že ano* vs. *že ne*, etc.), and it includes basic information on punctuation, a topic often omitted in foreign language reference books. Those who don't know Czech but need a quick reference will also appreciate the inclusion of basic practical information, such as the use of the genitive singular in dictionaries as a marker of declension type. The treatment of verbal and other prefixes is especially thorough, with extensive examples that clearly illuminate both the concrete meanings of the prefixes and their metaphorized extensions. Subordinating conjunctions are also especially well illustrated. A detailed index adds to the value of the book as a reference.

The book is remarkably clear of typos and inconsistencies, though two minor points might be worth altering in a further edition. First, the author indicates at one point (page 223) the limited use of the double past conditional (*Kdybych byl býval*); this point should also be emphasized when these conditionals are first addressed on page 155. Second, the inclusion in the section on determinate/indeterminate verbs of motion of all verbs with the “optional future with *po-*” seems lexically anomalous. These points are minor, however, and they do not detract from the book’s overall value.

The main suggestions that this reviewer would have for future editions would concern not the contents of the book, but rather its scope. For example, the author includes valuable information on word formation, including (as elsewhere in the book) some comparison of the standard written language and the colloquial language. The book would benefit from a comparative treatment of lexical issues on a broader level than word formation, and a direct comparison of actual texts, so that readers could see the differences in register in actual usage. The section on pronunciation is well written and thorough, but lacks essential recordings; perhaps the author could expand his website to provide recordings of this type. A website could also provide accompanying exercises, which would greatly enhance the book’s value as a reference for intermediate and advanced language courses. Perhaps these exercises could make use of the Czech National Corpus and other digital sources for true-to-life and more contextually grounded examples. This would be especially valuable for advanced students working on relatively complex topics, such as verbal prefixes and conjunctions, for which internet resources can provide direct comparisons.

In sum, the book is an excellent reference for linguists and language learners alike. If supplemented with additional materials, it could serve well as the basic grammar reference for an intermediate or advanced language course.

Susan Kresin  
University of California at Los Angeles

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### **Books for Review**

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Please contact Susan Kresin  
([kresin@humnet.ucla.edu](mailto:kresin@humnet.ucla.edu)) or Craig Cravens  
([svejk@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:svejk@mail.utexas.edu)) if you would like to write a  
review of any of the following books, or of other

recently published materials. Please contact us also if you have recently published a book related to Czech studies and would like to have it announced or reviewed in a future issue of the newsletter.

**Čeština pro život (Czech for Life)** by Alena Nekovářová. Akropolis 2006 ([www.akropolis.info](http://www.akropolis.info)). 255 pages, 2 CDs, transcriptions of listening exercises, color illustrations, answer key, lists of basic phrases in Czech, English and German.

A conversational handbook designed for intermediate to advanced students of Czech who would like to perfect their conversational skills and sound like native speakers. *Čeština pro život* fills the longstanding gap in the market for relatively advanced students. It teaches students to speak idiomatically about fifteen topics concerning normal situations in everyday life (personal life, work, free time, vacation, shopping, food and restaurants, asking for directions, traveling around the Czech Republic, etc.).

**The Customs and Cultures of the Czech Republic and Slovakia**, by Craig Cravens. Greenwood Press 2006 (<http://www.greenwood.com/catalog/GR3412.aspx>).

An overview of the current social, cultural, and political scene of the two republics designed for the general reader. The culture of beer is not ignored.

**Czech Express 1 and 2**, by Lída Holá. Akropolis 2006 ([www.akropolis.info](http://www.akropolis.info)). Volume 1: 108 pages; Volume 2: 104 pages. Each volume contains textbook, CD and vocabulary cards. Extensive audio, color illustrations, list of international words, tongue twisters, answer key. Teachers’ manual available free of charge online.

*Czech Express* is a course that teaches “Survival Czech” („čeština pro přežití“). It is designed for beginners who want to reach the A1 communication level (“Breakthrough Level”) by communicative methods with less emphasis on grammar. Students learn to understand and react in basic communicative situations and gain a basic, practical vocabulary of 550 words. The two volumes are sold separately. Volume 1 covers the topics of greetings, family and professions, telephone conversations, arranging to meet, restaurants, and discussing past activities. Volume 2 addresses the topics of asking for directions, making plans, living arrangements, health care, and travel.

***Sborník Asociace učitelů češtiny jako cizího jazyka (AUČCJ) 2003-2005.***

Akropolis 2005 ([www.akropolis.info](http://www.akropolis.info)).

The first publication of the Association of Teachers of Czech, this volume contains materials presented at seminars and workshops in the years 2003-2005.

***The Twelve Little Cakes: Memoir of a Prague Childhood*** by Dominika Dery. Riverhead Books, 2004. 370 pp.

Born in 1975 in Prague, the daughter of former dissidents of the failed Prague Spring, Dery has penned a memoir collecting tales from her early childhood. Written in an old-fashioned style mimicking the fairy tales Dery loved as a child, this account presents every event—the house flooding

while under construction, Dery's rejection by her grandparents when she invites them to her Czech ballet debut, the unpleasant death of the family's St. Bernard—in a vacuum.

***Small Doses of Arsenic: A Bohemian Woman's Story of Survival*** by Sylvia Welner and Kevin Welner. Hamilton Books, 2005. 145 pp.

A Historical memoir of a spirited woman born into a Bohemian village in 1905. Tonča began writing her memoirs in conversational letters to her emigrant son in America when she was 80 and continued sending them up to the age of 91. She discusses family and social matters, creating a humanized version of history that reflects the lives of the rural, working-class Czech poor of the 20th century.

**IATC-November Fund Prize**

IATC, in collaboration with the charitable foundation The November Fund ([www.novemberfund.org](http://www.novemberfund.org)), are pleased to announce our first yearly book prize for Czech studies. The criteria for submission are:

- Scholarly and popular works in **Czech literary, linguistic, pedagogical or cultural studies** are eligible, as are books where Czech comprises a significant portion of the topic (i.e. in comparison with one or two other fields);
- Publication in either **2004** or **2005**;
- Electronic works published by recognized publishers are **eligible**;
- Self-published works and websites are **not eligible**;
- The prize will alternate between books published in Czech and books published in other languages. In the first year, we will award a prize to a book published **in Czech**. (The 2007 prize will be awarded to a book published in another language.)
- Membership in IATC is **not required** for entry;
- Authors and publishers can nominate their own books, or books can be nominated by IATC members in good standing.

The prize will be in the amount of \$400, and will be announced in December 2006. The deadline for submission of entries is 31 July 2006. Please circulate this announcement to colleagues, especially those in the Czech Republic!

All submissions for consideration (to include a copy of the work and a cover letter identifying the book and giving any biographical details) should be sent to:

Dr. Susan Kresin  
 Chair, IATC-November Fund Book Prize  
 Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures  
 2207 Hershey Hall, Box 951502  
 University of California  
 Los Angeles, California 90095-1502

## Cimrman Corner

### The Detective and the Poet

Ladislav Smoljak and Zdeněk Svěrák

translated by Craig Cravens

Jára Cimrman's efforts to assert the detective genre in poetry and drama deserve closer scrutiny than they have heretofore been afforded. A valuable document has been recently unearthed that pertains to Cimrman's artistic endeavors in this field—a fragment from Cimrman's ballad *Maralík*, composed for recitation by an ensemble of federal prison inmates in Salzburg.

Jára Cimrman: "Maralík"

Across the counter, young Ms. Tichá  
Is deftly counting banknotes green  
When of a sudden who appears,  
A little man who's rather mean.

Quite inconspicuous he seems,  
Yet eyes do flash in lynx-like gleam,  
His evil paces through the hall.  
It is a burglar, rather small.

Reach for the sky, I'll shoot you dead!  
He's anything but haphazard.  
His booty's all inside his bag,  
And then he's gone, the cheeky bastard.

Hey Look, it's Trachta, the detective!  
Already here, just in the nick.  
His wise old head is wisely nodding,  
The old, experienced private dick.

"Have no fear, my young Ms. Tichá,"  
"We'll apprehend the ne'er-do-well."  
"Have no fear, my young Ms. Tichá,"  
"We'll toss him in a prison cell."

He blows three times upon his whistle,  
His faithful Doberman bounds in.  
Off he goes, just like a missile,  
Sucking up those tracks like gin.

He's apprehended better crooks  
And has a slew of school degrees.  
Hey there! What's that beside the brook?  
The Doberman sniffs at some trees.

Quick, to the tree! Trachta's command.  
The dog, however, pays no mind.  
His feet are stuck in muddy sand.  
The Doberman gets left behind.

Go fetch a saw and axe, my friends,  
Don't stand there gaping senselessly,  
Apparently the rascal plans  
To hide within this hollow tree.

They saw and chop the thickset oak,  
And then a shout, quite fell and grim:  
"You've got me, Trachta," a voice doth croak,  
"I'm just above you on this limb."

The sly boots perched above his head!  
He'll sit quite long inside the jug.  
Led by smarts and thoroughbred,  
Brave Trachta apprehends the thug.

Ms. Tichá cheers the crook's defeat,  
The crafty puppy's tickled pink.  
The rascal's going to jail *toute de suite*.  
And his name was Maralík.

A charming collection of miniature stories marks the transitional phase to larger works in the detective genre, which Cimrman wrote in Spilberk Castle when he held the post of Custodian of Public Education and Religion. His job was to prepare inmates to return to civilian life. Cimrman's point of departure was his principle – which has since been disproved – that once a criminal, always a criminal. Thus in his opinion there was no reason to try to reform the delinquent, but rather, as far as his professional career was concerned, to thwart him. Therefore, the educational goal of his stories was to make the future recidivist subconsciously imitate his literary protagonists, which would make it easy for him to be apprehended. The stories themselves will make this clear.

Jára Cimrman: "Clever Lojza"

Once upon a time the jewel thief Alois Bruderhans found a nice little jewelry store. "I'll go about this craftily," he said to himself, "and prepare myself well for this punishable offense." He went to the police station, greeted the police sergeant affably, and asked when there would be no patrol in front of the jewelry store. They advised him well at the police station, and even accompanied him part of the way. And so, Clever Lojza pilfered well.

Jára Cimrman: "The Good Habit of Bouzek the Safe-Cracker"

Safe-cracking is a thankless job. Every thief is caught in the end. Only the safe-cracker Bouzek always gets away. For he possesses an admirable habit that always brings him luck. After every theft, he breathes on his fingers and presses them upon

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some shiny surface of the safe. The police inspectors rack their brains in vain. They are no match for Bouzek.

These stories met with a warm reception among the criminal underworld. Cimrman recalls that after reading the last story, the experienced and worldly safe-cracker Nekuda said to him, "Sir, you have no idea what a numbskull you are." Back then, my friends, that meant something in criminal circles.

Prison themes even penetrated the master's stage plays. His seven one-act plays intended for amateur prison ensembles compose a special chapter. They are: "Life Term," "The File in the Cake," "The Armless Pickpocket," "Hunger Strike," "Prison Party!" "Quarantine," and "Merry Bars." The most popular was "Hunger Strike," which twice won the International Prison Theater Competition Award.

**All members: Please mail the form below to:**

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Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies  
University of Texas at Austin  
Calhoun 415  
Austin, Texas 78713

or fax it to 1-512-471-3607 attention Craig Cravens.

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ÚJOP University Karlovy  
Vratislavova 10  
128 00 Praha 2

2006 Membership Dues:	Regular Members:	\$20 (150Kč)
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\* Institutional membership dues include one free advertisement (half page), a mailing list of IATC-NAATC, and five copies of the Czech Language news.

Payments to IATC-NAATC should be made by means of personal checks or money orders.

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