

PRAGUE LINGUISTIC CIRCLE: A CENTENARY OF THE FIRST SUCCESSORS OF ITS FOUNDERS

On 9 February, 2009, the Prague Linguistic Circle held a conference commemorating the life and work of the first generation of the successors of the Circle's founding members, which could boast of scholars of no less renown than the founders themselves. Since the renewal of the Circle's activities in 1990 this has been a third major event, in addition to the Circle's regular meetings and discussions, convened twice a month in the course of the academic year. The two previous events took place on the occasions of the seventieth and eightieth anniversaries of the Circle's foundation. The first was an international conference, held in March 28–30, 1996, to commemorate two anniversaries which coincided in that year: 70 years of existence of the Prague Linguistic Circle and a centenary since Roman Jakobson's birth.¹ The second conference took place on 27 September, 2006, and bore the title "The Role of the Prague Linguistic Circle in the Development and Perspectives of Czech Linguistics".²

The most recent conference, noted here, concentrated on presenting seven outstanding members of the generation born between 1907–1909: Pavel Trost, Ludovít Novák, Karel Horálek, Josef Vachek, Julie Nováková, Felix Vodička and Vladimír Skalička. Each scholar was the subject of two, in the case of Julie Nováková of three, lectures.

Pavel Trost was presented by Jan Čermák and Tomáš Hoskovec. Jan Čermák portrayed the life and work of Pavel Trost, the oldest among the first generation of the distinguished disciples of the Prague Linguistic Circle, as a linguist, literary scholar, university professor and philologist. Surveying the principal areas of Trost's academic interests – German and Baltic philology, historical linguistics, onomastics, contact linguistics, stylistics, etymology, German and Czech medieval literature – as well as his method, style and major achievements, the portrayal represents Trost's scholarly programme as one based on what might be characterized as *holistic philology*, guided by, and drawing upon, what Trost himself described as "the great unifying power of language". Tomáš Hoskovec entitled his paper "Holistic Philology as a Programme (on the example of Baltic studies)". Holistic philology studies language in the polarity of an abstract system and concrete texts (which also include utterances). In the abstract system, in which any linguistic sign can be compared with any other linguistic sign, holistic philology describes meaning, while in a concrete text, where one can observe the synergism of only those linguistic signs which are actually used there, holistic philology describes sense. Description of meaning and sense is the main task of philology, which can be neither left, nor delegated to another discipline.

Differential treatment can be applied to linguistic signs of different degrees of complexity, i.e. also to sentences and suprasentential units, and even to whole texts, since these too can be regarded as signs. A differential description of a sign basically depends on what the sign is compared with, in what theoretical framework it is being described. This also applies to signs constituted by whole texts. Theoretical frameworks within which philology studies its texts, especially literary works, do not exist for themselves: the philologist creates them for his/her work and is responsible for their selection. The author gives examples of conscious creation of theoretical frameworks of texts, using material from Baltic philology.

Ludovít Novák was the subject of the lectures by Ján Sabol and Martin Ološtiak. Ján Sabol entitled his contribution "Ludovít Novák's Linguistic Legacy", evaluating Novák's methodological and scholarly contribution. Academician Ludovít Novák (15. 10. 1908 Skalica – 27. 9. 1992 Lubochňa), a Slovak representative of the Prague Linguistic Circle, was the founder of modern Slovak linguistics. His pioneering work influenced not only Slovak linguistic thought, but had a wider impact in particular disciplines: Slovak orthoepy and phonology, the phonological, and partly also the morphological development of Slovak (to some extent also of Czech), and also in the field of the "external" history of Slovak and in general linguistics. His analyses are primarily based on Slavic, Finno-Ugric and Romance languages. Martin Ološtiak's paper "Ludovít Novák, Juraj Furdík, Miloš Dokulil and onomasiological inspiration" dealt with some aspects of the semantics of word-formation, viz. onomasiological structure of a motivated word. It comments on three concepts by Slovak and Czech linguists (L. Novák, J. Furdík and M. Dokulil). L. Novák's theses on *axiomatics of semiology of linear structures* (ternarity of linear structures and various relations among its components: *a beginning – a middle – an end*) were adopted into the word-formation theory by J. Furdík, who postulates ternarity of onomasiological structure of each motivated word (ternarity in terms of *onomasiological base – onomasiological connective – onomasiological mark*). His approach was also influenced by Dokulil's theory of word-formation. In the paper special attention is paid to the middle component, onomasiological connective, and to the relation between lexical and word-formation meaning.

The two speakers on **Karel Horálek**, Irena Bogoczová and Ilja Lemeškin, outlined, respectively, Horálek's contribution to Slavic and folkloric studies. Irena Bogoczová's paper gives the basic biographical data of K. Horálek, including the departments where he worked, and surveys his most significant scholarly works. Besides Slavic comparative studies, Horálek's interests encompassed general linguistics, literary history, folkloric studies and translatology. In the second part of her paper the author focuses on Slavic studies, supplementing Horálek's ideas concerning the problem of the number of Slavic languages and their classification. She stresses the diversity of the classification criteria of Slavic languages and the interdisciplinary character of the classification. Attention is also paid to less known Slavic languages such as Cassubian, the language of the Croatian minority in Austria, Bosnian, Montenegrin and Rusinian. The author concludes by pointing out that the recognition of the sovereignty of a language exceeds the competences of linguistics. Ilja Lemeškin mapped Horálek's lifelong folkloric contribution in a broader context, from the point of view

of the development, or rather of the decline of Czech folklore studies in the second half of the 20th century (the tradition of the Prague folkloric comparative studies of J. Polívka; J. Horák and K. Horálek, P. Bogatyrev and K. Horálek). It cannot be said that the scholar, who according to A. Zvjagincev considered "lack of structuralism" a fundamental deficiency of the Prague Linguistic Circle, applied an integral structuralist approach in his own studies of folk literature. Horálek primarily paid attention to the folkloric nature of literature, i.e. when studying the genesis of folkloric and literary texts. In the author's view this is Karel Horálek's most important contribution. Inconsistencies of the applied method are illustrated on the basis of the analysis presented by Karel Horálek and Zdenka Horálková in their study of 1958: *Moravskoslezská píseň s námětem "muž na svatbě své ženy"* (*Pokus o historicko-srovnávací rozbor*) (A Moravian-Silesian song on the theme "a man at the wedding of his wife". An attempt at a historical-comparative analysis).

Josef Vachek was presented by Ludmila Urbanová and Bohumil Vykypěl. Ludmila Urbanová evaluated Vachek's contribution to general linguistics theory in the field of language philosophy. She pointed out distinct parallels between Vachek's understanding of language development and the corresponding ideas of Wilhelm von Humboldt reflecting the coexistence of external factors (changes in the extralinguistic reality) and the internal factors (in the inner nature of the language system), which brings about the system's constant innate transformation. Vachek's conception of language norms and his division into the spoken norm and the written norm was compared and contrasted with the views on the subject expressed by M.A.K. Halliday and Wallace Chafe. Bohumil Vykypěl dealt with the relationship between the Prague School and the "empirical functionalists" (or "Greenbergians"), i.e. linguists such as T. Givón, William Croft, Bernard Comrie, Martin Haspelmath and Joan Bybee. He pointed out the common concepts, primarily those elaborated by Josef Vachek (synchronic dynamism, interaction of language levels, interplay of external and internal factors in shaping language). The author further mentioned aspects in which the currents can enrich each other (e.g. broad empirical basis, methodology of explicative comparison of languages, grammaticalization and iconicity on the side of the empirical functionalism; e.g. methodology of detailed holistic description of individual languages, questions of language cultivation, topics leading beyond linguistics on the side of the Prague School). In conclusion he stressed the need for work on making classical Praguian texts accessible.

The life and work of **Julie Nováková** were the topics of three speakers, Eva Stehlíková, Martin Bažil and Martin Steiner. Eva Stehlíková outlined the professional career of Julie Nováková (1909–1991), who was the first Czech woman to lecture in the Prague Linguistic Circle. Nováková's career was complicated since she was twice obliged to change the field of her professional pursuits. At the time when she was lecturing on antiquity at Olomouc University, she published scholarly papers on versology based on her lectures in the Circle, a monograph *Devět kapitol o tak zvaném stříbrném věku římské slovesnosti* (Nine Chapters on the so-called Silver Age of Roman Literature, 1953) and a semantic study *Umbra* (1964). These studies, as well as her translations of Lucretius, Musaios, He-

siod, and others, were essentially influenced by structuralism, although neither references to the literature nor structuralist terms can be found there. After closure of antiquity studies at Olomouc University, Nováková devoted the rest of her life to studying and publishing the works of J. A. Komenský. Martin Bažil gave a lecture on Nováková's contribution to Czech translations of classical poetry. He characterized Nováková as a classical philologist, literary historian and translator. The influence of structuralism on her work became most strongly pronounced in the 1940s and in the early 1950s. It was during these years that she published her major studies in versology and in the theory of verse translation. Her poetry translations from this period are to some degree experimental; for the dactylic hexameter alone, she suggests as many as four functional equivalents: dactylic pentapody (Lucretius), alexandrine (Musaios), a meter "halfway between hexameter and alexandrine" (Vergilius) and trochaic octosyllable (Hesiodos). Although other translators have applied a similar method, the scope of her invention combined with the structuralism-influenced theoretical thought leave Nováková's contribution to Czech classical philology unsurpassed. Martin Steiner concentrated on Nováková's contribution to Comenius studies. Owing to her profound linguistic erudition and scholarly integrity, Nováková worked her way up from a classical philologist to a versatile specialist on the work of Jan Amos Komenský. She focussed on editing his Latin works and on uncovering the characteristic features of his Latin and style. Her contribution to Comenius studies lies in her emphasis on precision in critical text edition, on philological interpretation of texts and on adhering to the *ad fontes* principle. When seeking an answer to the question what has remained of her contribution to Comenius studies, it is undoubtedly her approach to editing based on rigorous study of both the edited text and its author, his language and style, which she inculcated in her followers. Moreover, other results of her scholarly work will also have to be taken into account by further generations of Comenius scholars.

Felix Vodička was presented by Tomáš Kubíček and Ondřej Sládek. In his paper entitled "Method and opinion" Tomáš Kubíček demonstrated that Vodička's task theory is a direct continuation of the structuralist method stemming from the question of functional determination of linguistic/stylistic means, from the way they are organized and their ability to produce meaning. Vodička's theoretical contributions from the 1950s are not a mere conservation of the structuralist idea but its further elaboration and novel shaping. On the background of his texts on the National Revival, Vodička finds new or newly treated older themes: the problem of literary development and concretization, the problem of periodization, of value and its social anchoring, the problem of reality as a problem of representation and reference, the question of reception and of reception series in connection with the identity of a literary work. The result of the analysis is the finding that even in the case of the theory of tasks the meaning dominant is not ideologized by a unidirectional intention, but that the intention is connected with a constant renewal of the meaning movement of the literary work. Even owing to this Vodička's theoretical thought thus preserves creative empathy and openness to recognition of the dynamics of the text meaning. Ondřej Sládek entitled his paper "Felix Vodička in the context of contemporary literary theory and history:

reception and revision". The number of critical receptions and studies of Felix Vodička's work, as well the number of his students and followers prove how inspiring his heritage has been to these days. The author focusses on mapping the echo of Vodička's work both at home and abroad, and on a recapitulation of crucial literary theoretical and historical concepts of Vodička's work which still stimulate literary critics and theoreticians. The first part of the paper deals with the most important studies, conferences and proceedings devoted to Vodička's work. The second part elaborates three main principles of his structural theory (the development of literary structure, the history of echo of literary works and structural thematics) which were adopted by other scholars (H. R. Jauss, W. Iser, R. Ronen, L. Doležel) in their work.

Vladimír Skalička, the last representative of the Circle's post-founding generation commemorated at the third conference, was addressed by František Čermák and Ivo Vasiljev. František Čermák gave a detailed outline of Skalička's life and professional pursuits. Vladimír Skalička (1909–1991) was professor of general linguistics at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University. He specialized in Finno-Ugric and typology, and founded Finnish studies in Prague. Being interested in language variety, his interests encompassed a great many different languages. He is widely known as a typologist distinguishing five language types: agglutinative, inflexional, isolating, introflective and polysynthetic. In the second part František Čermák demonstrated Skalička's conception of language by quoting some of his tenets and ideas, such as "The basis of all linguistics is the fact that in all languages everything applies only to some extent, *à peu près*", "Everything in a language exists in relation to everything else", "Natural language functions well despite the imprecision of its concepts", "Different languages represent different solutions of the same problems". Ivo Vasiljev chose the subject "Approaches to language diversity in present-day theory and practice", to honour Skalička's memory. Though best known for his contributions towards language typology, Skalička also considered due attention to language diversity in general to be one of the corner stones of linguistics. The author maintains that despite the huge increase of interest in various problems of language diversity over the last fifty years, the most influential linguistic theories either underestimate its theoretical value (Chomskian approaches), or do not sufficiently test their tenets against its reality (cognitive linguistics). The author outlines the present-day multilingualism as the language ideology and language policy of the European Union and shows some specific examples of the EU language planning activities, including organized research (e.g. the LINEE & DYLAN projects) in language diversity and various aspects of multilingualism within its member states.

Gabriela Brůhová, Veronika Srchová (Prague)

Notes

¹ Extended versions of most of the lectures presented at the conference appeared in Vol. 3 of *Prague Linguistic Circle Papers*, Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 1999.

² For the proceedings from this conference, see *Slovo a slovesnost* 69, Nos 1–2, 2008.

REVIEWS BESPRECHUNGEN COMPTES RENDUS RESEÑAS

KÖSTER, RUDOLF (2003).
*EIGENNAMEN IM DEUTSCHEN
WORTSCHATZ. EIN LEXIKON*
Walter de Gruyter-Verlag, Berlin/New York,
196 S.

Der Umfang der mit Eigennamen verbundenen deutschen Lexik ist nicht zu unterschätzen, die Möglichkeiten deren Aufnahme in ein Allgemeinwörterbuch dagegen eingeschränkt, weshalb Namenwörterbücher erhöhte Aufmerksamkeit verdienen. **Rudolf Kösters** Buch (K-E) trägt den Untertitel "Ein Lexikon", worunter heutzutage eher eine Enzyklopädie zu verstehen ist. In der vorliegenden Rezension wird es jedoch als ein Wörterbuch behandelt, weil (a) es Sach- mit Sprachwissen (Genusangabe bei Substantiven, "sw.V." bei Verben) kombiniert – das Letztere bleibt in Enzyklopädi- en oft aus (b) es vom Autor im Vorspann und vom Verlag auf dessen Websites (<http://www.degruyter.de/> [11.3.09]) als Wörterbuch bezeichnet wird.

K-E ist ein etymologisches, deskriptives, gedrucktes Spezialnachsschlagewerk mit einer nestalphabetischen Makrostrukturform. Seine Hauptteile stellen vier Außen- texte (*Vorwort, Konzept und Artikelaufbau des Wörterbuchs, Verzeichnis der Abkürzungen, Benutzte und weiterführende Literatur*) und ein Register dar, in dem der Autor um Auflistung der wichtigsten Eigennamenwör- tern des deutschen Wortschatzes und deren

im Vergleich mit bestehenden Allgemein- wörterbüchern befriedigendere Explikation bemüht ist. Es war nicht die Ambition des Projekts, "ein hochgelehrtes, streng wissen- schaftliches, mit Hunderten von Anmerkun- gen, Quellenverweisen, Exkursen und ähn- lichem belastetes Wörterbuch" (XIII) zu schaffen, sondern ein **Lesewörterbuch**, das zum Schmökern verleiten würde (vgl. ebd.). Der Stil ist entsprechend locker gehalten, der vorausgesetzte Benutzerkreis breit (in- teressierte Mutter- und Fremdsprachler).

Die Auffassung der Eigennamen ist in K-E weit begriffen; unter dem Wortbildungs- aspekt treten sie als Simplicia (*Kassandra*) auf oder als Bestandteile von Mehrwortle- xemen (*Ei des Kolumbus*) und Komposita (*Heulsuse, Pitotrohr*) oder als Derivations- basen von Ableitungen (*Ibsenismus*). Die Lemmanzahl bewegt sich um 3 700 (ein- schließlich der Varianten), ca. 95,5% davon sind Substantive u. substantivische Fügen- gen (*Crohnsche Krankheit*), 2,3% Adjektive u. adjektivische Fügungen (*frech wie Oskar*), 2,0 % Verben u. Verbfügungen (*sein Damas- kus erleben*), weniger als 0,2% andere Wort- arten (Adverbien, Interjektionen – *franko, hallelujah*). Substantivische Lexeme be- zeichnen v.a. Lebewesen (*Bacchus*), Ge- genstände (*Saxophon*), abstrakte Begriffe (*Maoismus*), Markennamen (*Audi*) oder geografische Entitäten (*Atlantis*). Eine voll- ständige Auflistung von Eigennamenwör- tern war logischerweise nicht beabsichtigt;