

Form, Function, and Context: A Quest to Reveal the Systems of Language

Charles E. Townsend's career has been devoted to the intricacies of linguistic expression, exploring the form-function dynamic across the contexts of various literary and spoken registers. A dual purpose prevails throughout his work, providing both the challenge of intellectual precision and the opportunity for pedagogical application, demonstrating the role linguistic description can play in the language classroom. Townsend has focused his work primarily on the linguistics of Czech and Russian, but has also engaged in significant research on Polish, Serbo-Croatian, and Bulgarian, and indeed none of the Slavic languages is neglected. The range of languages in his mastery have provided the means for Townsend's sustained commitment to contrastive analysis, particularly evident in his *Czech through Russian* (recently republished in a revised version with Eric Komar). Although the bulk of Townsend's oeuvre addresses synchronic issues, he has made significant contributions to our understanding of the historical development of the Slavic languages, and has provided us with the handbook *Common and Comparative Slavic* (co-authored with Laura A. Janda). The present festschrift addresses all these aspects of Slavic linguistic inquiry, and its authors offer it in the spirit of Charles Townsend's enthusiasm for the field.

In his landmark *Russian Word-Formation*, Townsend put flesh on Roman Jakobson's proposal of a one-stem verb system. He was the first to spell out all the details, providing a springboard from which many others would dive into detailed systematic analyses of language forms. Several authors in this volume venture formal analyses along the parameters of phonology (Bethin, Gladney, Scatton & Velcheva, and Worth), morphology (Feldstein, McShane, and Slijvic-Simsic), and syntax (Babby and Vakareliyska). Both Bethin and Gladney have approached issues in Czech prosody; Bethin presents findings on Czech secondary stress patterns as compared with Polish and Sorbian, and Gladney suggests rules governing Czech vowel length alternations. Scatton & Velcheva sort out the chronology and dialectal geography of vowel and consonant adjustments subsequent to the second palatalization of velars in Old Bulgarian. Worth examines phonological reflexes to determine the status of the Monomax Section of the Boris and Gleb Skazanije, questioning the role of Slavonicisms in

the history of East Slavic. Morphophonemic patterns are the focus of Feldstein's classification of Ukrainian nominal paradigms, identifying three types of shifting stress. McShane tackles the complexities of Polish verbal morphology, with an innovative eye toward computational applications. Serbian verbs are the topic of Slijvic-Simsic's corpus-based analysis of conjugational types. Babby brings us into the realm of syntax with an inventory of factors influencing the felicity of the dative case for predicate adjuncts that serve as the subject of infinitive clauses in Russian. The syntax of the dative case likewise provides material for Vakareliyska, where the presence of a redundant dative clitic personal pronoun facilitates the dropping of the preposition *na* in Bulgarian, as we see in this statistical study.

The relation of form to meaning is a hallmark Townsend's work, a continuation of the Jakobsonian tradition also honored by authors of this volume who have focused on the functional aspects of language (Andrews, Chvany, Janda, and Kresin). Andrews applies a semiotic analysis to the Russian derivational suffix *-ovk*, proposing a general definition of its semantic range and considering its semantic contribution to compound suffixes. Chvany makes an appeal for the application of etymology to language pedagogy, by making the functional structure of vocabulary transparent via word nests, providing viable mnemonic associations for students mastering the Russian lexicon. Comparison of Czech and Russian grammatical systems figures in the work of both Janda and Kresin; Janda takes us through a detailed semantic comparison of case systems, exposing alternative cognitive strategies used by the two languages, and Kresin examines the grammatical status of demonstratives, which appear to be approaching the function of definite articles in both languages.

Various pressures on grammatical systems derive from contexts of use, be they spontaneous and colloquial, literary and refined, politically charged, technically motivated, or driven by contact across language boundaries. Townsend pioneered efforts to describe and discuss the effects of all these factors on the relationship between the two registers of Czech, culminating in his *Spoken Prague Czech*. This endeavor is continued in the present volume by Kraus, Sgall, Eckert, Fidler, Lauerstorf, Rehder, Klein, and Launer. Both Kraus and Sgall write specifically about the phenomenon of Czech diglossia. Kraus probes the relationship between orality and literacy, both historical and current, and Sgall encourages further research on phenomena of literary vs. colloquial Czech to dispel the myths of misinformation that persist among linguists and speakers of the language alike. The influence of language contact and politics on Czech are examined by Eckert and Fidler. Eckert documents the process of language death in Czech tombstone inscriptions in Texas, where features of English gradually crowd out those of Czech; and Fidler compares the political underpinnings of pronominal reference in political speeches in Czech, English, and

Japanese, Czech, along with Latin and German, was the source of linguistic pressure on the development of modern Slovak, as Lauerstorf asserts in his diglossia approach to this issue. The unity of the language historically known as Serbo-Croatian has been shattered, and the resulting linguistic communities have responded in various ways to this situation; Rehder discusses the status of the Bosnian language in this context. Two authors have applied their insights to specific constraints on the use of Russian: Klemen gives a linguistic analysis of features manipulated by the poet Alanasy Fet, and Launer presents evidence that the borrowing of technical terms is driving changes in various grammatical subsystems, particularly derivational morphology and syntax.

This festschrift is representative of the range of inspiration Charles E. Townsend has provided to the field of Slavic linguistics, joining painstaking attention to the mass of formal details with incisive observations about their function as realized in the contexts of authentic use. Together we thank him for his guiding example, and congratulate him on his lifetime achievements.

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Russian Derivational Morphology and Shifting Ref

The field of Slavic linguistics has made significant contributions not only study of Slavic languages, but also to the study of human language theoretical linguistics. This is especially true in the scholarship of Jakobson and three generations of his students. In a volume dedicated Charles Townsend, one of the most prominent Slavic linguistics working Jakobsonian tradition and a central contributor to the field of Slavic formation and grammar in particular, I would like to focus my remarks Russian suffixation.

There has been a great deal of scholarship devoted to the quest defining linguistic meaning and reference in what I would broadly refer the semiotic tradition. Those theoretical works that I consider to be insightful include principles articulated by de Courtenay, Benveniste, Hjel Jakobson, Saussure, Bakhtin, Voloshinov, Peirce, van Schooneveld, Wier and Langacker. However, it is often the case that local problems deal specific semantic fields of a particular type of word-formative element reveal important aspects of the construction of linguistic meaning at a global level. In this vein, the Russian *-o/k* suffix, including compound s in *-o/k* (cf. *-lk + /o/k*, *-ok + /o/k*), presents an interesting test ground defining the range of reference in Russian derivational morphology additional reason that Russian suffixation is an exciting area of research only its rich paradigmatic depth (given the robustness of the phenomenon Contemporary Standard Russian (henceforth CSR), the extensive ra suffix options and high morphological productivity), but also its imp defining the boundaries between grammatical and lexical categor particular questions of declensional and syntactic gender. Although I considering a restricted set of suffixes in CSR, it is important to note th work presupposes extensive analysis of the entire Russian suffix s Without knowledge of the entire system, it is unlikely that statement semantic salience would be possible.

¹ In my previous work, I have initiated all discussion of linguistic meaning detailed analysis of the essence of the invariant properties of general meaning Jakobson's terminology, *Gesamtbedeutung*) (Andrews 1996: 2-17). In the present