

Tagungsberichte / Reports

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XXI. Workshop on “Intercultural Communication and Intercultural Learning”

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The “Intercultural Communication and Intercultural Learning” workshops have been held annually since 2003, first at the Vienna University of Economics and Business under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Renate Rathmayr and Prof. Dr. Edgar Hoffmann and then at the Humboldt University of Berlin under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Astrid Ertelt-Vieth. Currently, the workshops alternate each year between the Institute for Slavic Studies at the TU Dresden (hosted by Prof. Dr. Holger Kuße), the Institute for Intercultural Communication at the University of Hildesheim (Prof. Dr. Beatrix Kreß) in Germany and, since 2024, under my leadership at the School of Humanities and Social Science at the University of St.Gallen (HSG) in Switzerland. For more on previous workshops, see, for example, the reports from Beatrix Kreß of the workshop in 2012 in *Zeitschrift für Slawistik*, 57(3), 361–362, and Holger Kuße about the workshops in 2008 and 2013 in *Zeitschrift für Slawistik*, 54(1), 111–113 and *Zeitschrift für Slawistik*, 58(3), 358–359.

The XXI. Workshop took place on 31 May 2024, for the first time in person after the COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war and the sudden death of Prof. Dr. Edgar Hoffmann (1957–2021), its enthusiastic co-founder and main organizer (see Holger Kuße’s obituary in *Zeitschrift für Slawistik*, 67(3), 486–488).

What are the main takeaways?

The co-authors, Boris Norman (Minsk) and Natálie Rajnochová (Prague), in their report, “The image of the water-spirit in Slavic languages and cultures,” provided data on three languages and cultures: Russian, Belarusian and Czech. The presentation showed the influence that art – particularly cinema, theater and the fine arts – has had on changing the essence of the mythologem. The different degrees of conceptualization (mastery by folk culture) of the concept of the “water spirit” were discussed and its linguistic embodiment was posed.

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Holger Kuße (Dresden) presented in his talk, “Wisdom and humor in the history of different cultures: Aldar-Kose, Till Eulenspiegel and others,” sages and their roles in society. Kuße suggested several typologies and elaborated on discourses of wisdom, humor and culture in Kazakhstan, German-speaking Europe and beyond. His presentation was based on selected proverbs, parables, short stories, poems, songs and metaphors in comparative perspectives.

Bettina Strewe (Potsdam) demonstrated a practical tool: a self-assessment reference system of competences for professionals in the intercultural field (ECILP). The instrument visualizes and formulates the field’s diverse competences on a Europe-wide level, including aspects like experience, behavior, practical skills and self-reflection. It will enable trainers, coaches, mediators and other professionals in the intercultural field to assess their competences to meet today’s requirements in international business, administration, education, social work and other areas.

Martin Henzelmann (Greifswald), in his presentation entitled “The language situation in Budzhak (Republic of Moldova)”, spoke about the linguistic constellation in the south of the Republic of Moldova. This constellation is characterized by widespread multilingualism and ethnic heterogeneity. Henzelmann highlighted individual language groups and the way they managed to preserve and establish their languages in the education system.

Elizaveta Kotorova (Zielona Góra) demonstrated differences in the implementation of speech behavior patterns, such as request, apology and advice, in selected European languages (German, English, Polish, Russian) in her talk, “Communicative behavior in different cultural areas (based on European languages and languages of indigenous peoples of Siberia).” Moreover, Kotorova presented the structure of the speech behavior pattern based on field research, including many examples from the languages of the Siberian North.

Lilit Brutian (Yerevan) presented in her talk, “Complimenting discourse in the context of intercultural communication,” compliments as one of the forms of speech etiquette analyzed in the context of their functioning in different lingvo-cultures. The aim was to reveal and analyze various pragmatic and sociocultural factors that affect the use and interpretation of compliments in different cultures – with very interesting study outcomes for teaching courses on intercultural communication.

Zifa Temirgazina and Olga Andryushchenko (both Pavlodar) in their contribution, “Cultural transfer as a dynamic process in Kazakh Russian-language literature,” argued on the colonial and postcolonial influence of Russian culture on the culture of Kazakhstan. Russian literary traditions were mimicked by the authors such as Olzhas Suleimenov, Rollan Seisenbaev and Pavel Vasil’ev, Kazakh writers who adapted to the pressure of the social institutions of the intermediary state in the transfer of cultures using the Russian language.

Nataliya Tsvetova (St. Petersburg) highlighted the complexity of modern migration processes in her talk, “Media tools for the adaptation of migrants in Russian society.” Taking as an example the relevant media system in St. Petersburg over the past two decades, Tsvetova discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the ongoing situation. Policy and decision makers should target social media more effectively to ensure the successful integration of migrants in the country.

Andrey Polonsky and Valentina Glushkova (both Belgorod) noted in their “Magazine *Zdorov’e* in the context of the dialogue of cultures” that the media play an ambiguous role in the modern world: on the one hand they can enrich the spiritual, intellectual and emotional experience of readerships, creating conditions for a dialogue of cultures; on the other hand, they exacerbate the culture of objection and confrontation with everything by which the world of another is represented.

Olga Burenina-Petrova (Zurich) analyzed in her contribution, “In search of meaning: On contemporary transformations of absurd literature,” the works of Daniel Harms (Oleg Kovalov), Samuel Beckett (Mark Rozovsky) and Eugene Ionesco (Sergei Yursky and Boris Milgram) and their transformation, which created the ground not only for reflections on the disappearing world, but also for reflections on classical and modern literature, as well as on cinema and theatre.

Sergey Klyuchenovich (Minsk) presented in his talk, “Cataphoric-anaphoric univertation as reflection of structural tendencies in modern German,” the results of his comparative analysis based on three discourse types (press, fiction and law texts). The investigation revealed that this type of univertation shows the highest frequency in the legislative discourse. Future studies have the great potential to demonstrate the typological difference in univertation in comparison to Russian and Belarusian languages.

Tatsiana Klyuchenovich (Minsk) elaborated on the results of her study, “Linguo-cultural peculiarities of emotive verbs in Belarusian and British remark.” The research revealed a tendency toward emotive verbs preference in Belarusian remarks in comparison to British ones. This trend can be determined by different pragmatic and national-cultural factors. The results of the comparative analysis of other lexical-semantic verb groups on Belarusian and British remarks in the aspect of ethnolinguistic might be presented in future reports.

Valeriia Kliuieva (Dresden) explored in her talk, “Derussification: Dissimilation of Ukrainians from Russia,” the tendencies emerging on social media caused by the war. Using as an example the prevalence and the avoidance of feminines among the Ukrainian and the Russian online communities, respectively, Kliuieva showed the range of the analyzed phenomena, including the positions of both Ukrainians and Russians on the Ukrainian language, culture and identity.

In my presentation, “Cultural and linguistics characteristics of *relokanty* in Armenia and Georgia,” I talked about new Russian migrants in Yerevan and Tbilisi,

their motives for relocation and their willingness to stay, return home and/or move to the third country. I described the general context of the host countries as well as the impact of the new wave of migration from Russia on local businesses, culture and society at large. My presentation was based on my recent empirical research conducted in late 2023 in both countries.

With this meeting, the “Intercultural Communication and Intercultural Learning” workshop goes back to business as usual, expanding its geography but still remaining a stable haven for vital international and interdisciplinary discussions, bringing together both scholars and practitioners in their different career stages and project developments. The workshop was supported by the Center for Governance and Culture of the University of St.Gallen (GCE-HSG).