karolina.vyskocilova@ff.cuni.cz

Title: Texas Czech Legacy Project: Corpus Building and Language Documentation
Author: Lida Cope, East Carolina University

This presentation focuses on the Texas Czech Legacy Project and its main initiative, the building of an open-access digital Texas Czech Dialect Archive. Texas Czech dialect is a product of over a century and a half of contact between Moravian Czech and English spoken in Texas. Although its life cycle is rather typical of diasporesc dialects, its resilient life span represents decades of self-sufficient existence in a rather enclosed sociolinguistic space organized around farming and small business ventures periodically rejuvenated by religious and fraternity activities without the need for an outside social world. While we cannot reverse language shift, we can document the life of this dialect—and of the community—preserving the voices of Texas Czech speakers for generations to come.

Following a brief sketch of the socio-historical background of ethnic Czechs and Moravians in Texas, I will discuss the process of building TCLP, specifically its digital open-access repository of speech recordings and the complexities involved in designing a product that serves community members, educators and students of the Czech language and culture, and a diverse group of researchers. Using examples of both typical and idiosyncratic features of this diasporic dialect, I will demonstrate the Project’s purposes and practical value for its multiple audiences. Populated by timeless voices of Texas Czechs, the TCLP’s searchable oral archive will be a virtual sociolinguistic space for both reflection and active learning, facilitating a stronger sense of ethnolinguistic belonging that the real life can no longer nurture and enabling comparative, collaborative research by international scholars with complementary interests.


copel@ecu.edu

Title: An Alternative Viewpoint or Agitprop? A Corpus-based Discourse Analysis of the Internet News/Opinion Portal Sputnik
Author: Masako Fidler, Brown University
co-author: Vaclav Cvrček, Faculty of Arts, Charles University

This paper will examine the discourse strategies in Sputnik, a recently launched internet news-opinion portal targeting the Czech-speaking audience <cz.sputniknews.com>. Sputnik sets as its goals to mediate and promote an alternative point of view: “Sputnik mluví o tom, o čem jiní mlčí” (Sputnik talks about what others are silent about).
Data will be drawn from keyword analysis (KWA) of the Sputnik texts in Czech. KWA <kwords.korpus.cz> extracts keywords (KWs), which serve as “keys” to text interpretation, “giv[ing] access to features of a text or corpus that are not immediately obvious” (Bondi 2010). Keyness (Scott 2010), i.e., varying strengths of KWs, will be measured with Difference Index (Authors, forthcoming). KWA will also uncover connections among KWs; these KW links will be especially helpful in revealing the discourse patterns in Sputnik.

We will contrast the Sputnik texts (on news from and about the Czech Republic) and the reference corpus of periodicals in Czech (SYN2013PUB or later); we expect to discover topics that are different from those found in other Czech journalistic texts (e.g., rusofobie” Russiapobia”), interaction between evaluative expressions and context (e.g., zjevnou stopu amerických tajných služeb” apparent footprint of American intelligence services”), and less expected links among the keywords (e.g. intrig” of intrigues” and českých tajných služeb” the Czech intelligence services”).

The quantitative data will be complemented by qualitative analysis of texts and by KWAs of articles dealing with similar thematic links in other Czech internet news portals (e.g., iDnes, Novinky, iHned).


Authors, forthcoming. Corpus-assisted analysis of reader viewpoints: Reconstructing the historical reader using keyword analysis.

Scott, Mike. 2010. Problems in investigating keyness, or cleansing the undergrowth and marking out tails… Bondi and Mike Scott, eds. Keyness in Texts. 43–57.

masako_fidler@brown.edu