

Danko Šipka

Teaching and Program Development Portfolio

For my current classes, please consult <https://webapp4.asu.edu/catalog/> (enter Sipka in the Search by Keyword box)

Comparative Culture and Language PhD Program <https://silc.asu.edu/degree/graduate/phd-comparative-cultures--lang>

Slavic Studies minor

<https://webapp4.asu.edu/programs/t5/majorinfo/ASU00/LASLVMIN/undergrad/true>

BCS Program <https://silc.asu.edu/bosnian-croatian-serbian>

Polish Program <https://silc.asu.edu/polish>

1. Statement of Teaching Philosophy

The following are the basic premises of my teaching philosophy. I believe in a mediated content-oriented and task-based instruction. I deem moderate mediation of the, ultimately Bakhtinian, model of polyphonic instructional discourse with form-focused activities to be unavoidable in developing reading proficiency. I furthermore believe that the ILR, ACTFL, and CEFR scales offer a reasonably sound psychometric frame for assessment of all four proficiency areas (reading, listening, writing, and speaking). Needless to say, the trap of teaching for testing should be avoided at all times. Equal attention in my classes is devoted to summative and to formative assessment - the former mostly through projects and participation, the latter in a standard pre- and post-test format.

I furthermore believe that any instructional model should be student-centered, accommodate diverse learning styles (active vs. reflexive, sensing vs. intuitive, sequential vs. global, verbal vs. visual), and follow all other principles of student-centered instruction. In particular, motivational factors and creation of a life-long link between the student and the language/culture should play the most prominent role in the work of the instructors.

Language acquisition cannot be confined to the classroom and courseware. Mechanisms should be in place to embed the student in the language and culture twenty-four hours seven days a week. Cultural and linguistic immersion should play an exceptionally strong role in any language kind instruction. One should expand immersion practices, such as using databanks of subtitled video footage, paying visits to heritage sites, preparing podcast to be used on portable players, blogs, etc.

Instructors should remain abreast of both language acquisition theories and the scholarship in their target language/culture. Regular workshops, guest lectures, short on-line courses for the faculty should be a matter of course. Concurrently, various motivational mechanisms should be in place.

The potent tool of information technology should be used in developing in-class courseware (extracting subject-matter-related vocabulary, common collocations, morphosyntactic and pragmatic features, etc.) while at the same time various off- and on-line activities should be prepared for the students. The range

of activities should vary virtual reality and social media engagement, to blog entries, to custom-designed task-based software applications.

2. List of Regularly Taught Courses

Humanities Labs, recent examples include:

Only English? Is One Language Enough?

Language Emergency. How to Bend the Curve up?

Language Testing: the Bright and the Dark Side

Graduate Reading and Conference

Language and Culture Clash

History of Slavic Languages

Slavic Capstone Pro-Seminar (linguistic, regional-study, and literature topics)

Computational Linguistics of Slavic Languages

Digital Humanities for Language Majors

The Societies of New Eastern Europe

Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian Composition and Conversation

Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian for Heritage Speakers (students choose between a proficiency-oriented and a literature-analysis version)

Polish Composition and Conversation

Polish For Heritage Speakers (students choose between a proficiency-oriented and a literature-analysis version)

Occasionally taught courses

Language and Identity

Introduction to Linguistics

Introductory Polish

Intermediate Polish

Introductory Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian

Intermediate Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian

Russian Composition and Conversation

Russian Capstone Pro-Seminar (linguistic and regional-studies topics)

Courses recently taught at Columbia University

The Slavs: Myths, Literacies, and Attitudes

Hyphenated Minds: Heritage Speakers and Their Vocabularies

Course recently taught at the University of Belgrade, Serbia

From Society to Lexicography and Back

In addition to teaching in the university setting, I have also organized and taught a number of courses for the US intelligence community.

I have also taught lexicographic seminars for indigenous lexicographers, see:

<https://sites.google.com/asu.edu/introtobilex>

Courses previously taught at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland, include:

History of Literary Language

Slavic Comparative Grammar

Linguistic Pro-Seminar

M.A. Thesis Seminar

Serbo-Croatian Grammar

3. Student Evaluations and Teaching Awards

The average student evaluation for my ten-year teaching at Arizona State University (ASU) is 1.1 on the scale from 1 (the best) to 5 (the worst). For my teaching, I received the Professor of the Year Special Recognition Award from the ASU Parents Association and Dean's Distinguished Teaching Award from ASU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

I am providing two summaries of student evaluations below as an illustration.

Defended Theses

Arkadiusz Bogulicz, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Agnieszka Borowska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Zyjahmi Cakolli, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Jazysza Cakolli, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Malgorzata Debinska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Joanna Dobosiewicz, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Maciej Dobosiewicz, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Malgorzata Franek, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Katarzyna Gwozdzik, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Anna Józwicka, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Monika Juziak, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Ewa Kaliszewska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Malgorzata Klos, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Agnieszka Król, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Melanie Mierzejewski, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (committee member)
Karina Oller, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Aneta Pecyna, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Karolina Przewozna, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Malgorzata Przybylak, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Monika Robaszynska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Renata Rusche, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Andrzej Sateja, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Igor Serafin, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Renata Szczotkowska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Anna Tuszyńska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Jakub Walesiak, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Lidia Wiatrowska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Jakub Wiecanowski, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Olena Tsurska, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (committee member)
Anna Wilk, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Jakub Zgolinski, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Sybilla Budzinska, University of Wroclaw, Wroclaw, Poland (Ph.D. dissertation, committee member)
Bartolomiej Chraplewski, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Anna Skowron, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Joanna Ceglowska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Robert Niebuhr, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (committee member)
Zoran Rosic, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Debra Neill, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (Ph.D. dissertation, committee member)
Daniela Kostadinovska, Arizona State University (committee member)
Joanna Dobosiewicz, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland (Ph.D. dissertation, advisor)
Anna Skowron, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland (Ph.D. dissertation, advisor)
Cristina Duculescu, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (committee member)
Olena Tsurska, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (Ph.D. dissertation, committee member)
Kara McAllister, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (Ph.D. dissertation, committee member)

Lupcho Spasovski, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (Ph.D. dissertation, committee member)
Amanda Weaver, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (Ph.D. dissertation, advisor)

In progress

Gina Scarpete Walters, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (Ph.D. dissertation, advisor)
Đurđa Jovanović Padejski, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA (Ph.D. dissertation, advisor)

Total: 39 defended M.A. Theses, 8 defended Ph.D. dissertations, 2 Ph.D. dissertations in progress

I have also evaluated two Habilschriften in Poland

5. Work with Honors Students

I am involved with ASU Barrett Honors College (<http://barretthonors.asu.edu/>), the unit devoted to the education of most talented students, at several levels.

First, every semester I have at least one honors student conducting his/her honors contract project within one of my classes. Second, I served as either director or a committee member on over twenty defended honors theses. Third, I have been serving as an honors disciplinary faculty member for Slavic languages. I have also served as the Barrett Honors College Faculty Council member. Fourth, I have been serving on Fulbright, NSEP, and Rhodes campus committees. Finally, in the last three years I have been serving as a member of the Honors Faculty Council.

6. Teacher Training, Supervision and Program Development

Since 2011, I have been serving as coordinator of the Slavic Section at ASU, which involves the supervision and initial orientation of all Russian, Polish, and BCS instructors. I also served as a co-director on a five-year contract (now in its second year) of teaching various languages. My role is to provide initial methodological seminar for the instructors and to supervise their work and monitor the students' progress.

As of 2018, I am heading the initiative to standardize all language courses taught at the School of International Letters and Cultures at ASU, which entails complete curricular overhaul to set ACTFL proficiency benchmarks as learning outcomes and implement the mechanisms of their assessment. As of 2022, all lower-division language classes have adopted proficiency-based final learning outcomes and six instructors have been certified as ACTFL OPI testers.

As of 2016, I am an ACTFL OPI tutor, mentoring testers in Polish.

Upon my arrival to ASU in 2000, I have created BCS and Polish programs and converted Russian into Slavic section. I created the syllabi, secured general studies designations, and established a Minor in Slavic Studies (with concentration in either BCS or Polish). I have been supervising Polish and BCS instructors from 2004.

In the period between 2002 and 2005 I served as a director of ASU Critical Languages Institute, which involved initial training and supervision of the instructors of six different languages.

I designed specialized courses for US Department of Defense titled Bosniac Language and Culture Orientation and Bosniac Immersion Camp. I provided methodological training and supervised the instructors and native informants.

I have held two-day methodological seminars for various language teaching schools, e.g., Sarajevo based Interlingua (for their general teaching programs), and Novi Sad based Azbukum (for their project at the US Embassy in Belgrade).

I have completed various research programs, which have impact in teaching, most notably: Heritage Speakers of BCS (<https://ewjus.com/index.php/ewjus/article/view/280>), Learner-centered Task-oriented Language Instruction (https://www.academia.edu/10756870/Computer_assisted_early_inclusion_of_authentic_Slavic_materials), and Language Instruction Standardization Initiative (https://www.vals-asla.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Journal/Definitif_112.pdf, pp. 181-194

At the University of Poznań, Poland, I was a member of the team which transitioned from the traditional curriculum to the Bologna process compliant one. I was also supervising Serbian and Croatian language instructors at that university.