

## BALKAN CONFERENCE 2004

### 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference on Balkan Linguistics, Literature and Folklore

University of Mississippi (Oxford/Miss.)

Date: April 15-17, 2004.

Place: Univ. of Mississippi,  
Oxford/Miss.

Deadline: December 31, 2003

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1 Cankov, Kiril: Balgarskijat ezik izvan granicite na Balgarija. Balgarskijat ezik v Moldova. Komrat: Znak 1994, 2002, pp. 19-24, here p. 19.

2 Mladenov, Stefan: Istorija na balgarskija ezik. Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Balgarska Akademija na Naukite 1979 [Repr. of Geschichte der bulgarischen Sprache. Berlin, Leipzig: de Gruyter 1929], p. 341ff.

#### Abstracts of Papers Planned

**Donald L. Dyer** (Univ. of Mississippi): A Descriptive Grammar of Moldovan Bulgarian

The Bulgarian language of Moldova and the Banatian version of Bulgarian found in Romania are two of the most significant diasporic varieties of the language, dialects which truly occupy special linguistic positions with regard to languages in contact in the world. These two types of Bulgarian are spoken among populations of people known for their polylingualism and language interference. Moldovan Bulgarian is spoken in south Moldova, where one also finds Russian, Romanian, Gagauz and Ukrainian, and Banatian Bulgarian is encircled by speakers of Romanian and Hungarian in Romania.<sup>1</sup>

The Bulgarian dialects of Moldova, taken as a whole, are in fact centered around the Ukrainian city of Bolgrad, which is located at Moldova's southeastern border. They belong to the northeastern group of Bulgarian dialects, in particular, those included northeast of an isogloss line which runs south-southeasterly from Sliven/Jambol, Bulgaria to Edirne, Turkey. Mladenov<sup>2</sup> considers them the outermost branches of a line of dialects which runs north from northeastern Bulgaria, through Dobrogea (far eastern Romania) and present-day Ukraine, to southern Moldova.

This presentation will cover more recent findings on the particular phonological and grammatical features of the Taraclia and Valea Perjei subdialects of Moldovan Bulgarian. These features will be compared to contemporary standard Bulgarian.

**John K. Leafgren** (Univ. of Arizona): Particularly Complex Relative Clauses in Bulgarian

This study reports the findings of an investigation into whether there is a direct correlation between the frequency of use of certain Bulgarian adjectival constructions which appear to be particularly difficult to process, on the one hand, and the mode and register of communication on the other. Frequency of occurrence in six types of data which vary in degree of formality and as to whether they involve oral, written, or written representation of oral communication are examined. Relative clauses, participial phrases and complex non-participial adjectival phrases overall are investigated first. Then attention is turned to particular subsets of these, where factors involving linear placement, restrictiveness and topic-comment structure render the constructions relatively more difficult for the addressee to process. Although there are a few surprises of smaller scale when comparing formal speech to formal writing and when comparing the written language found in journalism to that of scholarly prose, the data generally suggest that there is indeed a correlation between frequency of use and mode and register of communication, with the discrepancy between oral and written data and between informal and formal language use increasing along with the complexity of the constructions.

**Olga M. Mladenova** (Univ. of Calgary): Definiteness in the Bulgarian Dialects

Leaning on the comparison between two varieties of Bulgarian (Modern Standard Bulgarian as represented by my competence as a native speaker of Bulgarian and a selection of diachronies of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), I have constructed a model of the evolution of definiteness in Bulgarian. Definiteness is approached semiotically from the perspective of the relationship of its two aspects: expression (mainly but not exclusively nominal structure) and content. The proposed default inheritance model of the content of definiteness has the following levels listed in an order of diminishing scope: pragmatic (familiar vs. novel in the universe of discourse), referential-semantic (from typifying generics to quantitative generics to encompassing definite sets or, alternatively, distributive singulars to individuating definite sets to unique referents to indefinites to non-specifics and back to typifying generics), lexical-morphological (application of the upper-level values to word classes or individual words) and semantic-syntactic (application of the upper-level values to senten-

ce components). The highest level of the model determines the features of a given entity unless exceptional values have been encoded for it on a lower level. In the framework of this model the damascene language was connected to Modern Standard Bulgarian through eight consecutive processes that map the path of expansion of the definite article and the delimitation of denotational segments outside the sphere of action of the definite article. My goal in this paper is to check the validity of the model against a broader corpus of data that includes regional variation and which makes it possible to evaluate the constructed model of definiteness from a dialectological angle. In view of the data amassed in Bulgarian dialectology in decades of research, among the relevant issues are the following: the impact of the four grammatical categories (case, animacy, gender and number), identified previously as correlated with definiteness, on the choice of definite article; the position of my diachronic model of definiteness in regard to the opposition between the two systems of articulation known to Bulgarian dialects (triple vs. single articulation) and the relation of the definite article to the long-form adjectives that were in use in the pre-modern stages of Bulgarian.

**Damjana Mraovic** (Inst. for Balkan Studies, Belgrade/Yugoslavia): Travelling East-West: The Novels of Radoslav Petkovic

This paper will present the ways in which some Western stereotypes about the Balkans, as well as some Balkan stereotypes about the West, are depicted in the novels of Serbian author Radoslav Petkovic (1953). This author's *Senke na zidu* and *Sudbina i komentari* deal not only with Western cultural stereotypes about the East and vice versa, but also with the Balkan peoples' stereotypes about each other. For instance, the protagonists' perspective of the Western world is shaped by modern Western arts, like photography, film, or comics. The identity of »the Others« is summarized to its most extreme and visible characteristics (gloomy London, magnificent Venice, muddy and windy Belgrade) and therefore the characters, mostly provincials, are familiar only with the stereotypes about them, taught to them at an early age. One of the consequences of that ideological confrontation, manifested in the novel as a constant dislocation of the characters (Europe-the Balkans; Balkan East-West) or changing their personal identities on purpose, is a sullen existential message. Unlike *Senke na zidu*, in which the characters are travelling East-West and vice versa and where Serbia is the marginal center, *Sudbina i komentari* has several parallel centers caused by the historical background of the novel (the 17<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century), but there are also implied marginalizations of the Balkans, though argued, are not refuted.

**Tom Priestly** (Univ. of Alberta): But Me No Buts: A Test for Dominance in Multilinguals?

The propensity for languages to use »utterance modifiers«<sup>1</sup> belonging to languages with which they are in contact has been noted frequently and ubiquitously. In this paper I discuss one such set of modifiers, namely co-ordinating conjunctions. Some speakers of some dialects of Slovene, for example, have a single such conjunction (/pa/) while other speakers of the same dialects augment this one-item system by having recourse to Standard Slovene /ampak/ and/or to German /ãba/ (dialects in Austria) and/or to Romance /ma/ (dialects in Italy). It has been generally observed that that the »borrowed« (or »switched-into«) conjunction normally belongs to a dominant, or diglossically high, language. If speakers have more than two language-varieties at their disposal, therefore, their choice of additional conjunction(s) will, in theory, show which languages are more dominant. At least two problems must be faced before this apparently simple test can be applied: (1) will the test be valid for instances of both borrowing and code-switching? and (2) to what extent does the composition of the semantic field – in this case, the different meanings of the co-ordinating conjunctions – complicate the problem? Some reference will be made in passing to other examples, e.g., /ama/ in Macedonian dialects.

**Ivelina Tchizmarova** (Ball State Univ.): Analysis of the Bulgarian Discourse Marker »Hajde«

The discourse marker hajde (»haj«, »aj«, etc.) »come on/let's/why don't we ...« accompanies utterances initiating actions. Its multifunctionality and the social-cultural bases for its use highlight key features of Bulgarian spoken discourse. Analysis of informal conversations, phone talks, voice- and e-mail messages suggests that »hajde« is used to:

<sup>1</sup> Matras, Yaron: Utterance modifiers and universals of grammatical borrowing. In: *Linguistics* 36/2 (1998), pp. 281-331; discourse markers and the like.

- (1) preface utterances initiating actions: orders/requests, advice/suggestions, warnings, promises, e.g. (see also 3A): »Hajde da varvim.« (PRT to go-2PL) »Let's go.«
- (2) mark leave-taking (as a pre-closing or closing device), e.g.:
  - (i) »Hajde, trjabva da svarshvame.« (PRT should to finish-2PL) »O.K., I need to go.«
  - (ii) A: »Hajde, chao.« (PRT bye) »O.K., bye.«  
B: »Hajde.« (PRT) »Bye.«
- (3) preface utterances indicating agreement, e.g., B's response:  
A: »Hajde da izlezem.« (PRT to go-out-2PL) »Let's go out.«  
B: »Hajde.« (PRT) »Let's.«
- (4) preface expressions of surprise, e.g.: »Aj stiga be. Neverojatno!« (PRT enough man unbelievable) »Come one, stop it, man. Unbelievable!«

»Hajde« is an action-initiating marker, which can have negative politeness functions in informal symmetrical discourse, i.e., serve as a hedge minimizing the directness of action-initiating utterances and degree of imposition on hearer autonomy.

These social-expressive functions are rooted in Bulgarian culture, its closely-knit networks, and focus on emotions. Conservation employs hajde to hedge advice, minimize the threat of commands, requests, etc., or to ease one's way out of talk, i.e., to bridge the gap between sounding coercive and empathetic.

### Special Events

Optional excursions are being planned for conference participants, including: a Double Decker bus tour of Oxford; Rowan Oak, the home of William Faulkner; the Univ. Museums; the J.D. Williams Library (where we will have a display of works on Balkan studies); Square Books, the famous local bookstore; the Peabody Hotel, Beale Street, Graceland, the Pyramid, Mud Island and the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis; and Elvis Presley's birthplace in Tupelo. Also planned is a book/poetry reading at Off Square Books. Details will be forthcoming.

### Travel and Accommodations

Travel to Oxford, MS – Oxford is located at the crossroads of State Highways 6, 7 and 30 in north central Mississippi. Oxford is approximately 3 hours by car from Birmingham, 5 hours from Little Rock or Nashville, and 7 hours from New Orleans or Atlanta. Greyhound Buslines has a stop in Oxford. Memphis has the closest international airport (approximately one hour from Oxford), although Tupelo, MS has a small regional airport (only 50 minutes away). The Memphis International Airport is a hub for Northwest Airlines but is also serviced by American, Continental, Delta and United Airlines, AirTran, US Airways and TWA. The Tupelo Airport currently is serviced only by Northwest Airlink.

Northwest/KLM Airlines is the official airlines of the Balkan 2004 conference in Oxford, Mississippi. If you or your travel agent call Northwest to book your reservations, you will receive a 10% discount off the lowest applicable published fare, if you book your reservation 30 days or more in advance. Otherwise, you will receive a 5% discount off the lowest applicable published fare. Discounts also apply on Continental, KLM and Northwest Airlink flights, as well as other Northwest code share partners such as Pinnacle, Mesaba, Continental Express, AA Eagle, Hawaiian and Aloha Airlines on certain flights in certain markets. Call Northwest's Specialized Meeting Reservations Center at 1 / 800 / 328 1111 to obtain the best fares and schedule information. Make sure you refer to the special Worldfile Designation for the Balkan Conference, which is »NMYVC«. Dedicated reservation agents are on duty Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., EST. If you would like to visit NWA's website to see its systemwide schedule, click [here](#), or if you would like to check out flight schedules to Memphis or Tupelo for all airlines before calling, take a look at this.

Arrangements will be made to make available shuttle transportation from Memphis to Oxford. The cost of this transportation will be \$40 one way and \$60 roundtrip.

Lodging: A block of 50 rooms at a special rate of \$69 (plus tax) per night has been reserved at the Downtown Inn (662-234-3031), which is located just off the Square in downtown Oxford, about a 15-minute walk from the campus of The Univ. of Mississippi.