

Syllabus - LING 470 Proseminar in Semantics: Tense and Aspect in Slavic Spring 2003

Class meetings: Tues. 12:30-1:50 ANNG G 29; Fri. 11-12:20 Ling Sem Room

Instructor: Elisabeth Elliott, Slavic Dept., eelliott@northwestern.edu, 491-8082

Office hours: T 2:15-3:15; W 11-12; & by appointment

Course description: This proseminar will examine the semantics of verbal tense and aspect from a particularly, though not exclusively, Slavic perspective. The Slavic languages are a prime area of interest for this course, given their very rich temporal and aspectual verbal systems. No prior knowledge of tense, aspect, or any Slavic languages is assumed or required. We will also touch upon some discourse and pragmatic treatments of tense and aspect. Through the readings students will gain an overview of tense and aspect in Slavic as it has been treated in the scholarship starting in the 50s and ending in present day. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignments. Assignments include: leading class discussions on readings, presentation of final paper, and a final written paper.

Grading: Class and leading class discussions: 35%
Presentation of paper (and handout): 30%
Final paper (due Monday June 9): 35%

Readings: Comrie's books Tense and Aspect are available in the Norris Bookstore; articles will be made available in advance to students to photocopy.

Tentative and partial reading schedule:

Week 1:

Syllabus, Introductions

Comrie Tense Chapters 1 and 2

Week 2:

Comrie Tense Chapters 3 and 4

Thurs.-Sat. April 10-12 39th Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society

Week 3:

Comrie Tense Chapters 5 and 6

Comrie Aspect Chapters: Introduction, 1 and 2

Week 4:

Comrie Aspect Chapters 3 and 4

Comrie Aspect Chapters 5 and 6

Week 5:

Jakobson "Shifters, Verbal Categories and the Russian Verb"

Vendler "Verbs and Times" and Chung and Timberlake "Tense, Aspect, and Mood"

Week 6:

Chvany "Backgrounded Perfectives and Plot Line Imperfectives: Towards a Theory of Ground in Text" and Fielder "Narrative Perspective and the Bulgarian I-participle"

Aronson "Towards a Typology of Aspect in the languages of the Balkan Peninsula" and Aronson ""Form, Function, and the 'Perfective' in Bulgarian"

Week 7:

Friedman "Aspectual Usage in Russian, Macedonian, and Bulgarian" and "The Loss of the Imperfective Aorist in Macedonian"

Week 8:

Week 9:

Week 10: (Reading week)

Make-up class (for Fri. 4/10)