PREVIEW these new and recent titles at www.MarquetteBooks.com/previewtitles.html


See Our Trade Books at www.DemersBooks.com


FROM THE EDITOR

7  Igor E. Klyukanov
   Introductory Note

ARTICLES

9  Andreas Ventsel
   The Role of Political Rhetoric in the Development of Soviet Totalitarian Language

26  Artemi Romanov
   Communication Satisfaction and Topics of Conversation in Grandparent-Grandchild Communication in Russia

46  Katerina Tsetsura and Gennadiy Chernov
   Constructing Corporate Reputation in the Russian Media

66  Deborah Ballard-Reisch, Sergei A. Samoilenko, Marat Zagidullin, Marina I. Galitskaya and Svetlana F. Nagumanova
   The Intersection of Public Health and Cross-Cultural Communication: Illustrations from the Tatarstan Women’s Health Initiative

81  Victor K. Finn
   Toward Structural Cognitology: Phenomenology of Consciousness from the Point of View of Artificial Intelligence

105  Ekaterina Schnititke
   Logic Questioned: The Communicative Act of Interrogation in a Distorted Poetic Space of Brodsky’s “Homage to Yalta”

FORUM

131  Irina N. Rozina and Victoria I. Tuzlukova
   A Virtual Research Seminar: Toward Analyzing Similarities and Differences Between Traditional and Internet-based Research Communities
BOOK REVIEWS

136  Ellen Carnaghan reviews Ellen Mickiewicz, *Television, Power, and the Public in Russia*

140  Stephen M. Norris reviews Stephen Hutchings, ed., *Russia and Its Other(s) on Film: Screening Intercultural Dialogue*.

143  Kirsten Lodge reviews Valerie A. Kivelson and Joan Neuberger, eds. *Picturing Russia: Explorations in Visual Culture*.


Copyright © 2009. The authors of the articles published in this issue own the copyrights to their works. For permission to reprint, please contact the authors (see title page of each article for e-mail contact information).

*Russian Journal of Communication* (RJC) is an international peer-reviewed academic journal that publishes theoretical and empirical papers and essays and books reviews that advance an understanding of communication in, with and about Russia. The journal welcomes original theoretical, empirical, critical, comparative, and historical studies and is open to all methodological perspectives.

The journal is published in cooperation with the Russian Communication Association (RCA) and the North American Russian Communication Association (NARCA). For more information about RCA, visit http://www.russcomm.ru (Russian language version) or www.russcomm.ru/eng (English language version). For more information about RJC and other academic journals published by Marquette Books LLC, visit www.MarquetteJournals.org. For more information about subscribing or submitting manuscripts, see the information at the end of this journal.

**Information for Authors/Author Guidelines**

All manuscripts should be original and not under consideration by another publisher. Submitted manuscripts should be no more than 8,000 words or 30 double-spaced pages (12-point Times Roman), including references, tables and figures. Longer manuscripts will be considered when space is available.

Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th edition). Manuscripts should be double-spaced, and all pages should be numbered.

The title page should include the title of the manuscript; names and affiliations of all authors, as well as their addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Only the title page should contain identifying information. The second page should include the manuscript title and an abstract of 150 to 250 words, as well as 4-7 key words describing the contents of the manuscript. **All figures must be camera ready and formatted to no more than 5.5 inches in width and 7.8 inches in height. Endnotes (no footnotes please) must be manually inserted.**

All manuscripts should be prepared using Microsoft Word or WordPerfect or converted to that format and submitted electronically to the Editor at iklyukanov@mail.ewu.edu. All manuscripts will be evaluated through a blind peer-review. The normal review period is about two months.

Once a manuscript is accepted for publication, electronic page proofs will be sent to authors in a PDF format. Authors will notify the publisher of any essential corrections within specified time line. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission from copyright owners to use lengthy quotations (450 words or more) or to reprint or adapt a table or figure that has been published elsewhere. Authors should write to the original copyright holder requesting nonexclusive permission to reproduce the material in this journal and in future publications generated by Marquette Books. Authors shall retain the copyright to their works published in *Russian Journal of Communication*. Authors shall give Marquette Books LLC a nonexclusive right to publish the work in its journals or in other publications or books that it may produce at the same time or in the future.

Questions about the submission and production process should be directed to the Editor, Igor I. Klyukanov at iklyukanov@mail.ewu.edu or Associate Editors, Donal Carbaugh at carbaugh@comm.umass.edu or Irina Rozina at rozina@iubip.ru

Cover design by Nick Brown / Cover concept by Igor E. Klyukanov

*Russian Journal of Communication* is published by MARQUETTE BOOKS LLC,
3107 East 62nd Avenue, Spokane, Washington 99223
509-443-7047 voice • 509-448-2191 fax
www.MarquetteJournals.org • books@marquettejournals.org
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

IGOR E. KLYUKANOV

Our wandering through life takes us to all kinds of sites (nowadays increasingly Web sites). Similar to the Greek *theoros*, we make journeys to witness a certain event, and return home with a report that publicizes our findings. However, unlike the Greek theoretical philosophers, upon our return we, more and more often, tend to seek to change the world around us rather than ourselves, and less and less often, our wandering seems to translate into wondering. Yet, wonder plays a crucial role in the pursuit and practice of knowledge. Perhaps we should wonder why wonder is less and less often part of the spectrum of our feelings otherwise so broad and diverse!

According to Aristotle, we start our search for meaning from something that raises our curiosity and by which we are perplexed. Thus, we move from wonder to certainty, from *aporia* to *theoria*; we escape from wonder by theorizing the cause. And yet, there is another way to look at wonder, as Andrea W. Nightingale reminds us in her *Spectacle of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 2006). This different conception of wonder is Platonic wonder, which does not occur only at the beginning of our quest, but is present simultaneously with how we experience the world and ourselves; “it is more like awe or reverence than perplexity or curiosity” (p. 257). Only this way can any object be perceived as kindred to us — beautiful, divine, and wonderful. Only this way can we feel not only puzzlement, but also a reverence for — and kinship with — any object. This is how I try to see communication: It is “a wondrous vision” that persists, a thing of beauty (and wonder) that is “a joy forever”; “An endless fountain of immortal drink, pouring unto us from the heaven’s brink” (John Keats).

Moreover, this is how I approach each submission to this journal. In addition to being curious about each and every manuscript received, I view each paper as intimately related to me and, thus, full of wonder. Most of all, I appreciate submissions to the so-called “general theme” issues because they never fail to produce wonder and stretch your mind and soul. For instance, take this present issue of the journal, where the objects (of study as well as reverence) include scientific means for imitating rationality and productive thinking; interactions between grandparents and grandchildren; promoting international public health
collaborations in Tatarstan; the development of Soviet totalitarian language; and some recent media interpretations of the role of corporate reputation in Russia. Now I am not an expert in AI; I am neither a grandfather nor a grandchild; I have never been to Tatarstan or participated in health campaigns; I never took part in the development of Soviet totalitarian language, either (although I remember some of its rhetoric); and, finally, I don’t have a keen interest in corporate communication. Yet, I do find all these objects wonderful and strive towards feeling kinship with each of them. From this perspective, I feel it is but one step to empathy, and, as John Peters reminds us in his (truly wonderful) Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication (The University of Chicago Press, 1999), the key question for the study of communication today — “a question at once philosophical, moral, and political — is how wide and deep our empathy for otherness can reach” (p. 230). Thus, as I return from my journeys (albeit to my laptop), I seek to change myself, in awe of everything I have encountered during my travels — children, businesspeople, machines. Do you also find these — and other — objects of communication wonderful and wondrous? Just wondering.
THE ROLE OF POLITICAL RHETORIC IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET TOTALITARIAN LANGUAGE

Andreas Ventsel

Scientific discourse is characterised by attempts to minimise the ambiguity of the lexicon, which should ideally halt the drift of signifiers in relation to the signified. One would assume that the scientific nature of the reconstruction of society would have an impact on communication and natural language. The characteristics of totalitarian language reveal, however, that it is not in fact describable by a rigid connection between the signifiers and the signified, and that the semantic distinctiveness of words in the communicative function is compensated by the precise determination of their location in the axiological good-bad axis. In order to overcome this paradox, I will attempt, from a theoretical perspective, to draw out a fruitful intersection between Juri Lotman’s concept of symbol and Ernesto Laclau’s ‘empty signifier’, in light of which a symbol, as a special case of ‘empty signifier’, performs the function of a hegemonizing signifying practice. I will also highlight the role of symbols in political rhetoric and their impact on the development of Soviet language policies and the appearance of totalitarian language, and will point out, by way of a conclusion, that the more totalitarian a society is, the greater the role played in the construction of its socio-political reality by linguistic elements ambivalent in their content.

Andreas Ventsel is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu, Tartu, Estonia (andreas.ventsel@ut.ee). This research was supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Center of Excellence CECT), Estonian Science Foundation grant ETF7988 “The Power of the Nomination in the Society and in the Culture” and grant ETF 7704 “Photography in Estonian Society and Cultural History.”
The construction of political reality is one of the many factors specifying human identity. For the self-reflection of the ideologies of totalitarian regimes, politics has the subordinating function *par excellence*, and for this reason political identity, arguably, has a considerable impact on socio-cultural identity. In what follows, an analysis is presented of the political discourse of the Stalinist era, based on the phenomenon of totalitarian language that was used for the indoctrination of the identity and world-view of Soviet citizens. The issues analysed in this paper are also derived from the phenomenon of totalitarian language. As is well known, the Soviet Marxist-Leninist ideology defined itself as a strictly objective, scientific world-view. Scientific discourse is characterised by attempts to minimise the ambiguity of the lexicon, which should ideally halt the drift of signifiers in relation to the signified. One would thus assume that the scientific nature of the reconstruction of society would have an impact on communication and natural language. The characteristics of totalitarian language reveal, however, that it is not in fact describable by a rigid connection between the signifiers and the signified, and that the semantic distinctiveness of words in the communicative function is compensated by the precise determination of their location in the axiological good — bad axis. It is the author’s position that reasons for this are to be found in the politico-rhetorical origin of totalitarian language, in light of which totalitarian language is to be perceived as a manifestation of power in a rhetorical form. From this perspective, it follows that the function and significance of political rhetoric in the general communicative space of the society has a considerable impact on the normative nature of natural language, especially on the lexico-semantic level. I will try to show this from a semiotical point of view; semiotics is not only a theory of signs, but theory of communication as well. The relationship between language and ideology has been studied by Bakhtin-Voloshinov (1929). A semiotic view to ideology is to be found in Reis’s semiotic theory of ideology (1993). Several analyses come to mind that utilize semiotic vocabulary for dealing with issues usually associated with politics: such as political campaigns, projects or framing (Zicherman, 2006; Clark & Jacobs, 2002) or political advertisements (Mcilwain, 2007). Undusk (2003) and Vaiskopf (2002) have written about the specificity of rhetoric in Stalinist-era political discourse; specifically semiotic analyses in studies of the Soviet cultural type can be found in Lepik (2007) and Ventsel (2006, 2007). Nevertheless, to date totalitarian language has managed to escape semiotic analysis. This paper represents a modest attempt at filling this void.

The paper is divided into two major parts. In the first part, I will briefly specify the relationship between discourse and language, and will describe the Soviet totalitarian
The Role of Political Rhetoric Andreas Ventsel

language. The second part examines the relationship between political rhetoric and totalitarian language, and the role of symbols in political rhetoric. Using a theoretical approach, I will attempt to draw out a fruitful intersection between Juri Lotman’s concept of symbol and Ernesto Laclau’s ‘empty signifier’, in light of which a symbol, as a special case of ‘empty signifier’, performs the function of a hegemonizing signifying practice. I will also highlight the role of symbols in political rhetoric and their impact on the development of Soviet language policies and the appearance of totalitarian language, and will also point out, by way of a conclusion, that the more totalitarian a society is, the greater the role played in the construction of its socio-political reality by linguistic elements ambivalent in their content.

**LANGUAGE AND DISCOURSE**

If discourse is to be understood as a historically specific system of meanings that is embedded in a set of social practices, institutions and organizations (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000), it follows that the entirety of human reality is meaningful and constituted by norms, systems, rules and shared truths, reproduced and transformed through social activity. Discourse, as the totality of meanings, overcomes the distinction between the linguistic and the extra-linguistic. Systems of signification always pre-exist, and determine our patterns of thinking and behaviour, but they can exist only insofar as they are constantly reproduced and transformed through social practices. Thus, social realities are inseparable from the meanings attached to them and constructed by them; in other words, “discursive practices that confer meaning on social reality at the same time constitute social objects and identities” (Raik, 2003, p. 25). In addition, all discursive practices are, in principle, translatable into natural languages. It is language that is used for creating a cognitive and conceptual world; a hypothetical image of reality, delineated by the horizon of awareness of the individuals living in a particular society/culture. By influencing and changing a person’s linguistic world, one can influence their activities, i.e. their acknowledged or unacknowledged orientation in the world (Ušakin, 1995, p. 144).

In the present context, it is language as used in political discourses, and the impact on language as a whole, that is the primary focus of attention. In political discourse, the dominant discourse is also the discourse of power. The relationship between political discourse and other discourses is dependent upon the mode of social relations. Political discourse can directly subordinate other discourses, as it indeed happens in totalitarian societies. The world-view engineered by political communication rests upon identical conceptual structures that reduce thoughts and allow the dominant discourse to differentiate the historically-significant from the historically-insignificant and thereby acquire control.
over the field of interpretations. Individual or group-based political positions are not constituted solely by institutional affiliation or acquired roles, but also by cognitive-evaluative codes (classification schemata) that are necessary for rendering sense to political activity. By way of such schemata, agents classify themselves and allow themselves to be classified (Bourdieu, 1987). In this framework, politics can be conceptualized as a practice for the creation, reproduction and transformation of social relations that cannot themselves be located at the level of the social, “as the problem of the political is the problem of the institution of the social, that is, of the definition and articulation of social relations in a field criss-crossed with antagonism” (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 153). Thus, it can always be understood as an expression of the power of discourses. One of the goals of the construction of political identity is, thus, the creation and reproduction of discourses through which power relations are furtively established in relation to the listener. One such medium, through which these dominant discourses (but also counter-discourses) are constructed, is natural language.

### TOTALITARIAN LANGUAGE

In his anti-utopia *1984*, George Orwell brilliantly describes the transformation that a language can undergo in strictly controlled and closed societies. The practice of 20th century totalitarian regimes indicates that this startling analogy of literary fiction (Orwell’s ‘newspeak’) is possible in reality. During the last quarter of the previous century, linguists introduced the concept of totalitarian language into the vocabulary of the humanities. In specialized literature, totalitarian language is defined as a phenomenon that presumes a particular linguistic mentality, characteristic of totalitarian political systems. The latter are characterised by a complete or near-complete control by the state power over the rest of society (Brzezinski & Friedrich, 1956). In totalitarian political regimes, a particular organization (a party) subordinates the entirety of political power and sets the transformation of the entire society as the goal of its political practice (Anderson, 1993, p. 142). This is legitimized by a relatively clear-cut ideology.

The actual experiential world of the members of a society as a whole is, in a sense, unfathomable and diffusive. Ideology appears here as an interpretation of “reality”, as the relation of code to texts; the set of individual experiences. Ideology, by functioning as a code in which concrete social information is accumulated and in which it is ultimately transmitted, thus possesses certain properties of “language” that enable the reception of this or that fact, both real and potentially possible, according to the specific historic-cultural context. One of today’s foremost ideology researchers, Andrew Heywood (1990), defines ideology as a system of beliefs, the veracity or falsity of which cannot be demonstrated in
any scientific sense, but which nevertheless assists in structuring the world’s comprehensibility (p. 2). Thus, ideology’s field of significance is extremely broad. In political discourse, ideology appears primarily as the legitimizer of political power, as a factor in mobilising people, and creates a certain ideal organization in the customary muddle of political life by providing the so-called fundamental principles for the interpretation of the surrounding world.

It can be said that ideology as an element in social consciousness exists above all in natural language. Mediated by language, ideology takes root and begins to function in social consciousness. Conditionally, ideology can be treated as a relation of a secondary language to natural language, as a “secondary modelling system” in the terminology of the Tartu-Moscow school. Language allows power, in its diversity, to raise goals, to impart the ideology that legitimizes the practice of power, and to organize social order, all of which should ideally guarantee unanimity and the unification of pre-set patterns of behavior in the society (Kupina, 1999, p. 11). In totalitarian states, the politics of language have always served as an instrument in the hands of the dominant ideology by which the functioning and development of language is purposefully influenced, and which primarily operates on the language’s lexico-semantic level and determines the axiological aspect of words (Kupina, 1995, p. 7). Ideally, these processes lead to a situation where individual linguistic consciousnesses are identified to the highest possible extent with the linguistic consciousness of the masses, and instead of the interpretations of an individual “self”, there exists the position of the collective “self” (cf. Dobrenko, 1993; Ventse, 2006). This process is succinctly summarised by Arthur Koestler in his excellent *Darkness at Noon*, a book that dissects the logic of totalitarian power; the self, it is a grammatical fiction (Koestler, 1941). It means that in totalitarian society individual *I* is pure grammatical category. All depends on power.

**THE SOVIET TOTALITARIAN LANGUAGE**

Soviet totalitarian language in its most radical form appears during Stalin’s reign of power. It was during this period that the absolute cult of the leader and the total control by the state’s (party’s) power over the rest of society took their final shape in the Soviet Union. In order to characterise the totalitarian language of the era, I will first provide a list of relevant, very broad characteristics of Soviet ideology that will help in understanding the pursuit of linguistic determination by the authorities:

The Soviet ideology presumes to be scientific, i.e. it claims to describe the world objectively. “The Marxist-Leninist theory is the science of the development of society, the
science of the working-class movement, the science of the proletarian revolution, the science for the construction of a communist society” (Lühikursus, 1951 (1938), p. 321).

The above leads to the second important distinction: only Marxist ideology is inherently scientific. Since science describes the world objectively, the “scientific” conception of the world becomes the sole correct way of describing reality (Arendt, 1973, p. 460—483). The “true” way of comprehending the world that comes from the “correct” proletarian class consciousness, its conditions and the tasks it leads to, were argued over by most of the artistic organizations in the Soviet Russia during the 1920s (e.g. Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (Rossysskaya assotsiatsia proletarskikh pisatelei - RAPP), the left-wing art front (Levij Front Iskusstva — Lef)). Influenced by these ideas, the canon of Stalinist social realism later took shape, and ultimately, essentially monopolised the possibilities of cultural cognition in general (Hlebkin, 1998, p. 59–64; Groys, 1992).

The axiological nature of Soviet ideology. Everything irreconcilable with communist values is excluded from the pyramid of values and turned into a negative.

The eschatological nature of Soviet ideology: history culminates with the arrival of communism. The projection of supreme value into the future, and with it the end of history as such (or more appropriately, the end of prehistory and the start of true history).

The most relevant item in this list is Soviet ideology’s criterion of scientificity. In the ideology of totalitarian regimes, emphasis on the discovery of “the objective laws of history” or “the laws of life and nature” appeals to the common-sense understanding of the synonymy of science and truth (Chalmers, 1992, “Introduction”). Our everyday intuition tells us that the scientific world-view can be expressed in a language that is clear and distinct and has zero degrees of ambiguity. Ideally, this should halt the shift of significations in relation to signifiers and every word should correspond to a maximally, clear-cut content. According to the Marxist linguist Nikolai Marr, the Soviet theory of language was to be founded on principally novel, scientific thinking (Marr, 1936, p. 419). In Marr’s theories of language a worldwide ‘new language’ associated with the appearance of a new language user, the masses. In Marrism, language is defined by way of material culture, that is, through denotation: by its very nature, language is the creation of the human collective, the reflection of not just thought, but of social order that reverberates in the language’s syntax, grammar and semantics. Consequently, language does not exist in and of itself, but only through an organic connection with material culture and the society’s history. In such a theory of language, signs and their denotations are rigidly bound to each other; denotation determines the concrete instances of sign use. In principle, this amounts to an isomorphism of reality, thinking and language (Romanenko, 2003, p. 189). Every structural change in the material world (e.g. change in relations of production) that should have an expression in the human consciousness (e.g. unitary proletarian class consciousness), is reflected directly in language (e.g. proletarian mass language).
In her *Totalitarian Language: The Dictionary and Utterance Reactions* (Тоталитарный язык: словарь и речевые реакции) (1995), the noted Russian linguist Nina Kupina analyses the Stalinist period “Glossary of the Russian Language” (ed. D. Ušakova). A dictionary represents the norms of the linguistic system of a particular era, describing and prescribing the rules for using and interpreting signs and sign systems. Thus, a dictionary, with its normative functions, is thus a suitable object of study for analysing language policies of state powers and the development of totalitarian language.

The following attributes characterise the Soviet totalitarian language according to Kupina (1995, p. 13—15):

- **Tendency towards the reduction and transformation of constant, ideological semantic concepts** (*Leninism* — it is Marxism in practice; *social pacifism* — a special case of *opportunism*, a social-democratic tactic that supports the imperialist policies of its state).

- **Tendency towards the creation of artificial and quasi-ideologemes** (e.g. *aristocrat-bourgeois*). (Ideologem - ideologically loaded word or expression (Kupina 1995, p. 13).

- **Tendency towards a dualistic axiologization of vocabulary.** The ideological expansion takes hold of all the levels of a word’s semantic structure, thereby determining the word’s connotative signification and simultaneously positioning the word in the polarised good-bad axis of values (e.g. *revolutionary* — *counter-revolutionary*, *soviet* — *antisoviet*).

- **Tendency towards the creation of antonymous and synonymous rows that systematically affirm ideological dogmas.** Even ordinary, everyday words that at first sight should carry no ideological baggage turn into ideologemes (e.g. ‘illiterate’ — someone who has grievously erred against a particular field of knowledge, *this person is politically illiterate*).

- **Tendency towards an ideological codification of non-traditional lexical combinations.** Pronouns, adverbs etc. are explained ideologically (e.g. ‘from below’ — *because of the pressure exerted by the masses from below, the bourgeoisie may, from time to time, accede to the demands of the masses*).

The subordinating role of the political dimension towards other fields that constitute the society (philosophical, religious, aesthetic, moral, legal, etc.). This was apparent in a particularly radical and explicit form in Stalinist totalitarian language. The most important basic ideologemes are formulated in political discourse, and on their basis, other semantic spheres acquire their political-ideological significations (Kupina, 1995, p. 23). In this manner, a new system of ideological values is selected, which then becomes the basis for the construction of primary semantic-ideological oppositions and the development of axiological rules.
These attributes of Soviet totalitarian language are plainly not in agreement with neither the marxist approach to language, nor the central pretension of Soviet ideology: to be a world-view based strictly on science. In light of the above attributes, totalitarian language can be described as a language whose target is to give form to the linguistic consciousness of a primitive man. Primitive thinking is characterised by the feeling of self-superiority (in totalitarian language, an absolute value judgement, where ‘us’ is always marked as the bearer of positive value) and the avoidance of complex thought operations that may threaten to crack the ready-made world-view (Vygotsky & Luria, 1993, p. 74—75).

In principle, the entire strategy for constructing this political-ideological discourse can be reduced to two underlying statements: present US in a positive light and present THEM in a negative light. From these two statements, an operation of a reversal is derived: never speak anything negative about US and never speak anything positive about THEM (Dijk, 1998). The way in which these pairs of oppositions appear in texts, whether implicitly or explicitly, is dependent on the nature and purposes of the interest groups that produce the ideology.

It can be argued that through the mediation of totalitarian language, an asocial societal childishness was cultivated, with the purpose of completely inhibiting the social activity of the masses. This is most clearly expressed in the didactic and “educational” nature of the semantics of totalitarian language (On indoctrination during the Stalinist era, see e.g A.Tšerbinin, 1998; 1999). The ideal citizen of the Soviet society was an adult child, whose consciousness is easy to direct and manipulate by the authorities (Dobrenko, 1993, p. 45).

This axiologically-polarized linguistic primitivism is clearly at odds with the clarity of scientific discourse and excludes the latter in principle. The key to explaining this contradiction is provided by an analysis of the function of political rhetoric, since, as was already noted above, it is politics that is the field in totalitarian language that subjects other semantic spheres to itself.

**RHETORIC IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE**

If by politics we mean the application of mechanisms of power for the attainment of specific purposes, it is evident that such activities require a certain consensus on part of the subjects involved in political discourse concerning the content and mutual relations of concepts that circulate therein, on the basis of which political discourse can exist as a field of communication in the first place. For the purposes of the present paper, political discourse can be defined as follows: political discourse is a body of discursive practices that identify the participants in a political situation as such and formulate the subject matter of concrete political communication. In order to mobilise the masses into a struggle for a class-
free society, it is required, first of all, that the masses are able to conceive as significant the
terms and concepts used in the discourse. In discussing political rhetoric, it should first be
determined what distinguishes political rhetoric from other forms of rhetoric.

The classic conception of rhetoric says that it is an art of persuasion, defined by a set
of specific rules. This paper is only concerned with verbal rhetoric. Extra-verbal rhetoric
(e.g. gestures) is not addressed. The rules and structure of rhetorical discourse are not
directly derived from natural language, but are rather a decisive reconceptualization of it
(there are shifts in the system of linguistic relationships, the degree of facultative structures
rises and they become the primary structure, etc.). “Rhetorical structure is transferred into
verbal text from the outside and comprises a supplemental level of order for the text”
(Lotman, 2002, p. 418). If we think of language as a discrete coding system, then rhetorical
structure will appear in relation to it as a continuous coding system, integrating the text into
a coherent meaning. The meaning of a complete text does not grow out of a linear or
temporal sequence of segments, but is rather diffused in an n-dimensional semantic space
of a given text (on a canvas, on stage, on screen, in an act of ritual, in social behaviour or
cultural semiotics only superficially contradicts the linguistic definition of ‘text’, since even
in linguistics texts are in fact coded twice: in natural language, and in a specific language’s
meta-language of grammatical description. Messages only satisfying the first requirement
are not treated as texts (Lotman, 2002, p. 159).

For the sake of clarity with regard to the purpose of the present paper, rhetoric can be
perceived from two aspects. First, rhetoric as a practice of speech, which covers rhetoric
perceived as a verbal art of persuasion, and its teaching. Second, rhetoric as a discipline.
This latter case covers the descriptive and normative instances of rhetoric (Lachmann, 1994,
p. 5-21). The normative dimension allows us to treat rhetoric as essentially a secondary
grammar and define the socio-cultural function of rhetoric. Rhetoric functions as a meta-
system, consolidating the society and shaping its self-consciousness. Rhetoric as a
descriptive-normative system of signs and sign relations allows us to conceive of it as an
intra-cultural correlate of social and aesthetic values (ibid.).

THE FUNCTION OF POLITICAL RHETORIC

In accordance with its pragmatic nature, rhetoric is divisible into clearly defined types
of speech whose specificity is established by the purposes of the speech. The primary types
of rhetorical speech are political speech, court speech, and solemn or parade speech.
Political rhetoric is distinct from other speech practices primarily because it is used to register *official* political positions and intellectual frameworks that are then used not only for describing and conceiving, but also for *changing* the surrounding world. According to the American sociolinguist Joyce Hertzler (1965):

> ... the active language of people is a primary outgrowth of their life, and centres about things and occurrences that are essential to them. Hence it reflects every phase and aspect of their life, represents all known realities of life and tremendously influences every facet of life; in fact, it determines in considerable part what we are aware of, what we believe, how we pattern our thought and how we act. (p. 20)

But what, then, is the specificity of political rhetoric? According to the Russian researcher Rostislav Vodak, political language is located as if in a field of tension between two poles. On the one hand, it is determined functionally; on the other hand, it is subjected to the jargon of a specific group, together with its ideological world-view. “Political rhetoric must fulfil contradictory purposes: to be intelligible and comprehensible (in accordance with its propagandist tasks), and simultaneously targeted at a specific group (for historical and socio-psychological reasons)” (Vodak, 1998, p. 24). Thematic differentiation of political rhetoric determines its rhetorical specificity. Above all, political rhetoric is advisory and is thus directed towards the future. Its persuasiveness determines whether the addressee agrees with the addressee and either acts or does not act according to the latter’s will. At the same time, it determines social behavior and shapes the self-image of individuals (their diligence, resistance, decisiveness, manliness, patience, etc.). Thus, it is parade rhetoric that is characteristic of political rhetoric, whose purpose is to develop certain qualities and to mobilise psychological resources in the society (Khazagerov, 2002, p. 27). Thus, one of the functions of political rhetoric is the creation of social identity. This brings us promptly to the issue of symbols in political rhetoric.

**SYMBOLS IN POLITICAL RHETORIC**

In political discourse (including rhetoric), symbols fulfil various different functions (Kolonitski, 2001, p. 11-12). First, symbols are means of identification, enabling the creation of collective consciousness, solidarity, and the feeling of a unitary social community. Thus, symbols point to collective identity, operating as its sign. Second, symbols have a mobilizing and legitimizing function. In political practice, the utilization of symbols that are rooted in collective consciousness may help legitimize and assure the support of the masses for political subjects who use them for supporting their activities.
Third, symbols bear a communicative function, used for transmitting important information that constitutes political discourse.

In the present context it is important to keep in mind that a symbol’s capacity for producing meaning is always greater than is exemplified by its current realization: the associations that a symbol establishes with one or the other semiotic environment by its expression does not exhaust its meaning valences (Lotman, 2004a, p. 241). As a significant memory mechanism, symbols carry texts, plot schemas and other semiotic formations from one stratum of culture to another. Two aspects are relevant for us here: on the one hand, a symbol retains its invariant nature in the flow of time, yet on the other hand, “a symbol correlates actively with its cultural context, is transformed by its influence and transforms it itself” (Lotman, 2004a, p. 242). Its invariant nature is realized in different variants (ibid.).

**POLITICAL SYMBOL AS A CATEGORY IN HEGEMONIC PROCESSES OF SIGNIFICATION**

I will now attempt to flesh out the above consideration of symbols with the concept of ‘empty signifier’ by one of the leading contemporary political theorists, Ernesto Laclau, as one of the central categories for specifying hegemonic relationships. However, this does not amount to the claim that as concepts, symbol and ‘empty signifier’ are identical; instead, in certain articulations of the process of signification, symbols appear in hegemonic functions (for a more thorough theoretical synthesis of Lotman & Laclau, cf Selg & Ventsel 2008). According to Laclau, it is only at the level of discourse that any sense is rendered to hegemony. For Laclau, discourse is the primary terrain of objectivity as such. Nothing is constituted outside discourse. Yet all this has nothing to do with the debate between realists and idealists. Laclau does not deny that earthquakes and other physical phenomena exist. But whether an earthquake is constituted in terms of the wrath of god or in terms of natural disaster depends on discursive structurations (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 108). So the problem of the constitution of social and political reality becomes, for Laclau, the problem of the constitution of discourse. Thus, hegemonic relation is a certain articulation of meanings (Laclau, 2006, p. 114). This articulation requires that a particular difference loses its particularity and becomes a universal representative of the signifying system as a whole. That way a closure for that system is provided. Since every system of signification is essentially differential, its closure is the precondition of signification being possible at all. This particular signifier, an ‘empty signifier’ in Laclau’s terminology, thereby acquires a dominant position in the signifying system, or discourse, and subordinates, to a greater or lesser extent, all the other elements of the discourse, allowing them to appear as equivalent and undermining their particular differences (Laclau, 1996a, p. 36–46). Paradoxically, this...
undermining results in a certain unity or transparency (systemicity). Yet, the important conclusion from this tension between the logic of difference and the logic of equivalence is that there cannot be a final victory of either logic over the other; instead, it has to be created because without that object there would be no signification. However, it is relevant that, according to Laclau, the chain of equivalence that embodies the empty signifier cannot expand forever, since the expansion is limited once a set of core relationships have been established (Laclau, 1996b). The result is that at least some new associations (particular contents) would no longer be compatible with the residual particulars that are already in the chain. In other words, its invariant nature is realized in variants, making them similar to symbols as described above.

Thus, a symbol is a sign that possesses a singular content, arising from the co-existence of metaphor and metonymy. It points simultaneously to the particular and the general (Khazagerov, 2002, p. 168). “This is, however, nothing other than the defining characteristic of the symbol: the overflowing of the signifier by the signified” (Laclau, Mouffe, 1985, p. 11). This once again suggests Lotman’s idea that a symbol’s capacity for signification is always greater than its current realization.

**POLITICAL RHETORIC IN THE STALINIST ERA**

The political rhetoric of the Soviet Union must be examined in an evident relationship with political propaganda. Broadly speaking, political rhetoric as an art of persuasion can be divided into four interrelated types: oratory, homiletics, didactics and symbolics. Each has its own strategy in speech and fulfills a specific task. The strategy of oratory is metonymic, being based on the juxtaposition and analysis of phenomena and ideas. By its very nature, oratory is dialogic. Unlike oratory, homiletics is monologic and its primary field of application is solemn, parade rhetoric. A homilist is similar to a prophet whose truth cannot be contested. Here there is no need to justify the superiority of one’s position, but only to explain it. Homiletics is closely interwoven with symbolics. The latter provides the former with the structuring elements of speech, on the basis of which the unity of discourse is established. It is the unmistakeable predominance of these two types of political rhetoric, homiletics and symbolic, that shifts political rhetoric towards propaganda. It should be noted here that in political rhetoric, the ambivalence inherent to symbols functions in yet another way. Here, the impassioned and emotional load of the symbols becomes imperative. As long as a particular symbol is constantly associated with closely linked emotions, it will lay a foundation to an emotional generalization, required by the propagandist, and will hereafter aid the speakers in influencing the people in their desired direction (Barlett, 1940, p. 65). Mediated by symbols, the people’s behavioral patterns and corresponding mental models
are homogenized and fixed, in the long run reducing the deviation of their reactions from the norm.

Additionally, there was complete party-based censorship in Soviet culture over the public circulation of texts, which according to some researchers (Barlett, Lippmann), is one of the basic conditions for successful propaganda. This can be rephrased to say that the presence of censure will inevitably lead to the demise of oratory as a dialogic type of rhetoric.

Unlike in the post-revolutionary period, the political rhetoric of the Stalinist period is characterised by a considerable reduction in the relative importance of oratory and the fusion of symbolist and didactic types, and their propagandist peculiarity. The political turnabout that took place during the Stalinist period was expressed in the fading of national-bolshevist revolutionary fervour, and the pathos of a “peaceful build-up”, which, in turn, led to the localization of the concept of world revolution; “to build socialism in a single country”. However, at the same time this more-conservative direction in the Party political line was still explained with vocabulary derived from the revolution, leading to further emptying and ambivalence of the signifiers. Proceeding from political symbols treated as axioms, the goal of didactics was to provide order to the world-view, and the communication of this ordered picture to the audience in an intelligible manner. Stalinist didactics, however, took over the function of symbolics as well; the zone of axioms swelled until it turned into whole complete curricula, with their truth determined by reference to the authority: Stalin (Khazagerov, 2002, p. 197; Kupina, 1994, p. 44-52). Although Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin all figured as authorities, it was the will of the latter that determined which quotations could be used and how they should be interpreted.

This change is theoretically explainable on the basis of the works of Laclau and Lotman. The characteristics of Soviet totalitarian language as described by Kupina (1994): the reduction and transformation of ideological semantic concepts, the thriving of quasi-ideologemes in language, the construction of synonymous and antonymous rows, and the dualist axiologization of words, all indicate that a non-discrete translation strategy is prevalent in political rhetoric; discrete and clearly distinguishable signs are translated into a non-discrete whole, and “the main feature of such a world is universal resemblance of everything to everything; the main organizing structural relation that of homomorphism” (Lotman, 2004b, p. 570). In other words, the identity of the formerly-discrete elements is more or less transformed. This continuous translating strategy “makes one see manifestations of the One phenomenon in the various phenomena of the real world, and observe the One Object behind the diversity of objects of the same type” (Lotman, 2004b, p. 571). Political discourse’s hegemonic logic of signification establishes a chain of equivalence between incommensurable words and concepts, which, ultimately, subordinates the vocabulary of other fields constitutive of society (philosophy, religion, aesthetics, ethics,
jurisprudence, etc.). In Soviet totalitarian language, the political sphere subjected the semantics of the rest of language to itself. This process is roughly as follows: there are different signifiers floating in the discursive field, with their specific meaning lost (they are as if suffused with meanings — the extent of the attachment of signifiers is inversely proportional to the extent of their circulation in the given discursive formation); at some point, an empty signifier intervenes and, with a retroactive power, constitutes identity to the floating signifiers by attaching them together into a pragmatic chain of equivalence. This led to a situation where the Marxist-Leninist theoretical terminology, formerly part of scientific language, was emptied of its prior or particular content and, having become ambivalent political symbols, began to represent the entire social totality. Industrialization as an economic-technological term was emptied of its particular meaning and constitutes a chain of equivalence with signifiers from other discourses. Industrialization is the weapon of class-struggle; only through industrialization is communism possible, etc. This means that industrialization was turned into a universal representation for the entire social totality. The quotations, theoretical concepts and so forth, derived from Stalin and other classics of Marxism-Leninism, evolved into axiomatic-didactic symbols, began to justify the entire political situation, and legitimized the practice of power. The basic aim of the propagandists lay in maximizing the circulation of these slogan-like political symbols and in fastening them to the consciousness of the masses (Khazagerov, 2002, p. 169-171).

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it can be noted that the reality constructed from political symbols during the Stalinist period was not one that could be used to describe the world in maximally unambiguous terms. The primary function of symbols circulating in political discourse was not to transmit specific and clear-cut content, but rather to generate an affect of emotions, crucial for identity creation. Under totalitarian conditions, the purpose of politico-rhetorical language is not the description of reality as unambiguously as possible, but rather the creation of an axiological (a so-called “black and white”) system of symbols, then used for constructing social identity, mobilizing the masses in the direction desired by the authorities, and legitimizing the party’s position of power in political discourse. In a society where politics subjects to itself other fields that together constitute the society, the impact of political rhetoric, stemming from its peculiar nature, is inevitable for language as a whole (cf. Lachmann’s socio-cultural functions of rhetoric, especially the chapter “Rhetoric in political discourse”). Soviet totalitarian language is a telling example of this. Paradoxically, it seems that the more totalitarian the society, the more ambivalent the semantic references used by the authorities for self-description. The transparency and clarity of verbal contents
might have undermined, on the linguistic-discursive level, the most important thesis of a totalitarian society: The Party is always right!

REFERENCES


The Role of Political Rhetoric

Andreas Ventsel


COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION AND TOPICS OF CONVERSATION IN GRANDPARENT-GRANDCHILD COMMUNICATION IN RUSSIA

Artemi Romanov

This study surveyed Russian university-aged grandchildren and their grandparents and investigated their reports of topics of conversation with each other. For grandchildren and grandparents, education and family were identified as the most frequently reported topics. Occupation, health, friends, current events, and historical events were also reported as common topics of conversation. For Russian grandparents, three reported conversational topics (education, family, and history) were significantly and positively associated with communication satisfaction, whereas one reported conversational topic (current events) was negatively associated with communication satisfaction. For Russian grandchildren, reported conversations with grandparents about family were positively associated with communication satisfaction, while reported discussions about health negatively correlated with communication satisfaction. The study was aimed at finding cultural differences between grandparent-grandchild communication in Russia and identified several of them.

Keywords: Grandparent-grandchild communication in Russia, communication satisfaction, conversational topics.

Artemi Romanov is associate professor of Russian at the University of Colorado at Boulder (Artemi.Romanov@Colorado.edu).
This paper examines conversational topics of grandparent-grandchild (GP-GC) communication and attempts to find associations between topics of discussions and communication satisfaction. Discussion of GP-GC communication in Russia is preceded by a brief overview of the current demographic situation in Russia with a focus on older Russians that will create a more meaningful context for our readers.

According to the Russian Federal Service of Statistics, in 2007, the population of the Russian Federation was 142 million. Out of 142 million people, the total number of pensioners was 38 million (the retirement age is 55 for women and 60 for men), although many of these continue to work to supplement their pensions. In 2007, the population of those 65 and older was nearly 19 million, and about 12 million people were 70 and older. Despite a significantly lower life expectancy in Russia (currently 60 for males and 72 for females), Russia’s population is aging and experiencing a trend in changing family structure similar to that in the US and in European countries (Soliz et al., 2006). The birth rate in post-Soviet Russia dropped from 15.9 births per 1000 people in 1980 and 13.4 births per 1000 people in 1990, to less than 10 births per 1000 in the 1990's and 2000's and mirrors the demographic trends typical to many European countries. With fewer children per family unit, the Russian family composition has changed from a relatively small number of generations with many people in each, to a larger number of generations populated by fewer people, resembling a beanpole structure.

The older generation in post-Soviet Russia has been often called a “lost generation”. Russians 50 years of age and older have been reluctant, slow, or unable to adapt to new economic and social realities (Beliaeva, 2004). Many of them found themselves at the bottom of the social ladder as a result of drastic changes in 1990s, such as the collapse of the Soviet banking system that wiped out their savings and the rapid disintegration of Soviet healthcare and social services. Despite the socio-economic difficulties experienced by older Russians, the role of grandparents in Russia has not diminished. Grandparents actively engage in familial networks of mutual assistance and report being involved in the giving and receiving of aid within families (Ivanova, 2002; Ovcharova & Prokofieva, 2000). The flow of care and concern in Russian families is almost always bidirectional, at least over the long term. Often in Russian multigenerational households, children are brought up by their grandparents and even great-grandparents, especially in single-parent households, and many keep close communicative contacts well into adulthood. Traditionally, Russian grandparents have played an important role in transmitting cultural and religious traditions and family values and beliefs (Panchenko, 2005).

Communication is one of the most important factors in multigenerational support systems that allow people to cope with challenges facing individuals in all generational positions. Recent surveys indicate that older Russians face the problem of a dwindling circle...
of communication. Sixty-one percent of retired Russians indicated that their communication circle had shrunk (Presniakova, 2005). Data suggests that there is a positive relationship between the age of people and the communication deficit they report. Thirty-seven percent of Russians 70 years and older indicated that they experience a lack of communication, whereas only 26% of respondents in the age group of 50-55 expressed a similar opinion. Elderly women complained about the lack of communication more often than men did. Part of the explanation for this is the loss of spouses in this age group, a phenomenon that especially affects Russian women: among women 70 years of age and older, only 17% lived with their husbands, whereas more than 50% of Russian men 70 years and older lived with their wives (Presniakova, 2005). Aging in Russia goes hand in hand with some reduction in social activities, such as patronizing theaters and cinemas, hosting guests, traveling, and so on; while at the same time, older Russians report that they have more free time during which they would like to engage in more active communication.

Grandparent-grandchild communication is an obvious area that could compensate for the communication deficit experienced by older people, especially if they reside in extended and multigenerational family units. Recent research reports that about 21% of Russian grandparents live with their grandchildren under one roof (Presniakova, 2005). The size of a family matters: the more children in the family, the more likely Russian grandparents are to live with their grandchildren. For example, Presniakova (2005) reported that 26% of Russian families with three or more children reside with at least one grandparent. Recent research suggests that grandparents view this cohabitation with their grandchildren as more beneficial than their grandchildren do. When asked about their living arrangements, 33% of grandparents expressed their desire to live with their grandchildren, whereas only 18% of grandchildren said that they would rather live with their grandparents (Vovk, 2005). These data may indicate that, unlike their grandparents, younger Russians do not tend to experience a communication deficit, at least as far as communication with their grandparents is concerned.

In the system of values of Russian older people, communication occupies a high place. Russian elderly valued communication with family members and communication outside the family higher than things such as independence in life, respect from others, an interesting hobby, post-retirement employment, and community service (Kovaleva, 2001). Only health and material well-being have been ranked higher than communication in the lists of values by people 60 years of age and older.

Communication studies in Russia are relatively recent phenomena that have only seen some growth over the last fifteen years. Intergenerational communication has not been a subject of intense research in Russia (for a review, please see Romanov, 2008).

Research on communication between grandparents and their adult grandchildren in Russia is almost nonexistent. The lack of attention to the role of grandparents in family
communication is reflected, for instance, in a recent study on empathic listening (Zorkaya & Leonova, 2004), in which researchers asked respondents in a survey about an ideal listener who cares about and empathizes with them. Among possible responses in their questionnaire (spouses, parents, sons and daughters, friends, colleagues, doctors, priests, and even pets) grandparents were conspicuously absent.

At the same time, there have been several studies that did cast some light on communication between grandparents and grandchildren in Russia. Recent surveys show that roughly three quarters of Russian grandparents believe that they experience no problems in communicating with their grandchildren and only one fifth of older Russians do find problems in such communication (Vovk, 2005). In this study, respondents who advocated for more active communication between grandparents and grandchildren listed such reasons as “having someone to talk to, getting rid of boredom, feeling that you are not alone, grandchildren help to reverse aging, important to know that someone needs you, grandparents love their grandchildren”.

A study (Krasnova, 2000) on the role of grandmothers in Russian families found a correlation between the grandmothers’ level of education and their patterns of communication with grandchildren: Russian grandmothers with higher levels of education tend to spend less time in communicative interactions with their grandchildren in comparison with less educated grandmothers. The same study also established that Russian grandmothers have more frequent communication if they reside in three-generation families; they also tend to communicate more with their daughters’ grandchildren (Krasnova, 2000) and less with their sons’ grandchildren, which is typical for families in Western countries (Williams & Nussbaum, 2001). In countries with strong patrilineal family structures (China, Taiwan), communication with paternal grandparents tends to occur more frequently (Lin & Harwood, 2003).

One study of cross-generational communication in Russia (Romanov, 2007b) was modeled on surveys of intergenerational communication recently conducted in the US, Britain, and Pacific Rim countries (Williams and Giles, 1996; Giles et al., 2001). The survey found that attitudes toward intergenerational communication in Russia are somewhat similar to those in Western countries. Participants reported experiencing more satisfaction while talking to interlocutors of their own age group. The study found a statistically significant relationship between the age of respondents and their reported communication satisfaction. Older people reported that they were less satisfied when holding conversations with younger people compared to their communication satisfaction with interlocutors of their own age group. Results of the survey indicate that younger Russians, like their counterparts in other countries, often feel a desire to avoid or end conversations with non-family elders. The study, however, did not address specifically familial communication between grandparents and their grandchildren.
There has been a growing interest among researchers in GP-GC communication in the US (Anderson et al., 2005; Soliz & Harwood, 2006; Tam et al., 2006; Monserud, 2008) and in Asian countries, such as Japan, Taiwan, and China (Giles et al., 2001; Lin & Harwood, 2003; Romanov, 2007c; Lin et al., 2008). Researchers who investigated GP-GC communication operated within such theoretical perspectives as the Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles et al., 1991), which examines the underlying motivations and consequences of what happens when two speakers shift their communication styles and argues that during communication, people try to accommodate or adjust their style of speaking to others. Other researchers used the Intergroup Contact Theory (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000), which suggests that contact in long-term relationships can be particularly powerful in influencing general perceptions of the outgroup. Some researchers also employed the Communication Predicament of Aging Model (Hummert et al., 1998), which summarizes communication problems facing old and young interactants and explains how stereotypes may lead to problematic speech and other detrimental consequences for older adults (learned helplessness, social and emotional decline). Researchers studying grandparent-grandchildren communication looked at such factors as group and age salience (Harwood et al., 2006), shared family identity (Soliz & Harwood, 2006), stereotypical perceptions of older adults (Pecchioni & Croghan, 2002), frequency of contact, effects of self-disclosure (Tam et al., 2006), types of accommodative behavior (Harwood, 2000), geographical separation between interlocutors (Holladay & Seipke, 2007), and others.

A recent study examined grandparent-grandchild relationships in an intergroup context, with a specific focus on the effects of grandparent-grandchild contact on prejudice against older adults (Harwood et al. 2006). Previous research has demonstrated that by and large, attitudes toward the elderly tend to be negative. At the same time, it has been shown that contact with grandparents tends to influence attitudes toward the elderly. Young people with positive grandparent-grandchild communicative experience tend to have more positive attitudes toward older people in general (Soliz & Harwood, 2006). In other words, research on grandparent-grandchild relationships suggests that communication within family can influence age attitudes.

Research shows that positive grandparent-grandchild communication is beneficial to young and older participants. Grandchildren who report close relationships with their grandparents are more likely to engage in various social activities with their grandparents and be influenced by and share some of their grandparents’ beliefs and values (Anderson et al., 2005). Grandparents are also a potential source of information on family history (Harwood, 2004) and of social support (Lin et al., 2002).

As grandparent-grandchild relationships produce the most frequent and positive communication between the two generations (Williams & Giles, 1996), it is important to examine the content of communication in these contacts and identify its main topics.
Researchers suggest that knowledge about topics in GP-GC communication can be beneficial in several ways (Lin et al., 2002): for example, grandparents and grandchildren could benefit from simple ideas on what to talk about and establishing associations between conversational topics and communication satisfaction may help to better clarify the ways in which significant family relationships function effectively for some family members and operate less successfully for others. According to grandchildren’s recollections (Webb, 1985), their grandparents talked with them mostly about family, school, and health issues. Other topics such as weather, religion, and death were reported less frequently. In a study analyzing recorded conversations between grandparents and grandchildren (Nussbaum & Bettini, 1994), researchers found that grandmothers talked more about family issues and family history, whereas grandfathers talked more about their youth experiences and health issues. A more comprehensive study of grandparent-grandchild conversational topics (Lin et al., 2002) provides a survey of the literature and calls for additional research in this area, which so far has received only sporadic attention.

The current study focuses on topics of grandparent-grandchild conversation in Russia, and attempts to go beyond descriptive analysis of reports on conversational topics in communication between Russian grandparents and their grandchildren. There is a growing understanding that Russian grandparents and older people in general experience communicative deficit. In view of this, it is important to know whether or not specific topics of communication between Russian grandparents and grandchildren are related to the communication satisfaction of the interactants. It is also important to know if Russian grandparents and grandchildren try to avoid certain topics, as there are theoretical arguments, grounded in communication privacy management theory (Petronio, 2002), suggesting that topic avoidance can be benign in some relational circumstances (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004).

The cultural specificity of intergenerational communication in Russia makes this an important and unique study. The Russian Federation is both a European and an Asian country. Although it is linked to the West by language, religion, and basic culture, Russia’s territory expands far into Asia. The Eurasian school of historians, for instance, has tried to interpret the entire development of Russia in terms of its unique geographical position (Riasanovsky, 1993). There have been very few empirical studies on intergenerational communication in Russia (Romanov, 2007b; Romanov, 2008) that have attempted to examine whether intergenerational communication patterns in Russia are closer to patterns of communication found in the East or in the West. Content data in GP-GC communication in the US have been reported in several studies (Lin et al., 2002; Harwood 2006). Similarly, there have been several recent reports on GP-GC communication in China and Taiwan (Zhang & Hummert, 2001; Lin & Harwood, 2003). This study aims to compare content data in GP-GC communication in Russia with data reported from Eastern and Western countries.
Based on the reviewed literature, several research questions were formulated to examine GP-GC communication in Russia. RQ1: What topics do grandparents and grandchildren report discussing in their conversations? RQ2: To what extent do grandparents and grandchildren report similar conversation topics? RQ3: Are reports of talking about specific topics related to GP-GC communication satisfaction? RQ4: Does contact frequency predict variance in communication satisfaction among Russian grandparents and grandchildren? RQ5: Is the reported content of grandparent-grandchild communication in Russia similar to the reported content of GP-GC communication in the US?

**METHOD**

**Participants**

The current study analyzes a subset of the data from a larger study in which data were collected on grandparent-grandchild communication. One hundred eighty-five students (113 females, 72 males, mean age = 19.6 years) of the School of Sociology at St. Petersburg State University, Russia, participated in this study and received credit for their participation. Forty-eight of the students had no grandparents, were unable to contact their grandparents, or returned incomplete questionnaires. Students with more than one grandparent were asked to select only one grandparent. In the final sample, there were 86 female and 51 male grandchildren (mean age = 19.8 years). One hundred thirty-seven older adults, the students’ grandmothers and grandfathers, (98 females, 39 males, mean age = 72.3 years, range = 58-91) also participated in the study on a voluntary basis. Fifty-eight percent of the grandmothers were from the maternal side; 54% of the grandfathers were also from the maternal line. As a group, the students’ grandparents had good educations: 14% had advanced university degrees, 39% had completed five-year university educations, 41% had a secondary education (a high school diploma), and 6% had an incomplete secondary education. Both grandparents and grandchildren were informed that their responses were confidential.

**Procedures and Materials**

The students and their participating grandparents completed a survey, adopted from Lin et al., 2002, with slight modifications and translated into Russian, about their
relationship and communication with that grandchild/grandparent. The survey contained several sections, but only those relevant to the current study are described here. In the questionnaire, participants provided an open-ended report of up to five conversation topics that were most frequently discussed with their grandparents. Participants were asked not to focus on a specific conversation, but to recall how conversations generally go with their grandparent/grandchild. Responses were coded by the researcher. A coding scheme to examine these open-ended responses was also adopted from Lin et al. (2002) and contained an eleven-category system (see Table 1). Grandchildren and grandparents reported how frequently they communicated with their selected counterparts and whether this communication took place face-to-face or by telephone. In addition, participants (both the grandchildren and their grandparents) completed a general evaluation of communication satisfaction in a typical conversation with their counterparts (their grandchild or grandparent) using a shortened version of a communication satisfaction scale (Hecht 1978) translated into Russian. The five items included the following statements: “I am generally satisfied with the conversations” (“Я в целом удовлетворен/а разговорами с ...”), “I do not enjoy the conversations” (“Я не получаю удовольствия от разговоров с ...”), “I am generally dissatisfied with the conversations” (“Я в целом не удовлетворен/а разговорами с”), “I would like to have other conversations like those I generally have with my grandparent” (“Мне бы хотелось участвовать в других разговорах, похожих на те, что я веду с моей бабушкой/ моим дедушкой”), “These conversations flow smoothly” (“Наши разговоры протекают гладко”). Scores ranged from 1 to 5, with high scores indicating a high level of communication satisfaction. Grandparents were instructed to put their questionnaires in the envelopes provided, seal them, and return them via their grandchild.

**ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

The current study in Russia was designed to replicate a study in the US (Lin et al., 2002) and find similarities and differences in grandparent-grandchild communication in regard to conversational topics and communication satisfaction. In Lin et al. (2002), research on communication satisfaction in a typical grandparent-grandchild conversation produced the following results: $\bar{a} = .77$ for grandparents, $\bar{a} = .90$ for grandchildren; $M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.78$ for grandchildren; $M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.53$ for grandparents. In the current study, somewhat lower levels of communication satisfaction were found for both Russian
grandparents and their grandchildren (á = .84 for grandparents, á = .89 for grandchildren; 
M = 3.67, SD = 0.89 for grandchildren; M = 4.07, SD = 0.61 for grandparents). However, 
the general trend appears to be the same in the two studies, with both American and Russian 
grandparents reporting higher levels of communication satisfaction in GP-GC conversations 
than their grandchildren do. In the current study, when selecting a grandparent as a 
communication partner, 63% of the grandchildren chose a maternal grandparent and 37% 
chose a paternal grandparent, which seemed to indicate a preference for maternal 
grandparents, especially maternal grandmothers, among Russian grandchildren. There is a 
simple explanation for this: a grandchild’s mother in Russia is more likely to interact with 
and be close to her own mother than she is to her mother-in-law. However, one can find 
cultural differences in this issue depending on the country surveyed. For example, in a study 
on GP-GC communication in Taiwan (Lin & Harwood, 2003), both generations displayed 
a preference for the paternal line. Maternal grandparents in St. Petersburg reported 
somewhat higher levels of communication satisfaction in comparison with paternal
grandparents when asked about communication with their grandchildren; however, these differences were not statistically significant.

Descriptive statistical analyses (Table 2) were performed to examine what topics Russian grandparents and grandchildren report discussing in their conversations and to find out to what extent Russian grandparents and grandchildren report similar conversation topics. Conversational topics reported by grandparents in St. Petersburg and their grandchildren are presented in Table 2. For the purpose of comparison, the sequence of topic entries is the same as in the Lin et al. (2002) study.

Grandparents’ and grandchildren’s responses were analyzed separately. Family and education turned out to be the most important topics to both groups. Current events, health, occupation, and history were also relatively important topics, particularly for grandparents. Slightly more grandparents than grandchildren reported talking about occupation, health, and history. The last two columns in Table 2 specify the extent to which grandparents and their grandchildren reported talking about similar topics, and descriptive data is presented reflecting the degree of agreement. There is a considerable agreement among grandparents and grandchildren on two conversational topics: family and education (70%-80%). On average, grandparents reported more conversational topics than did the representatives of the younger generation.

### Table 2
Grandchildren’s and Grandparents’ Reports of Topics in Conversations with Their Grandparents/Grandchildren

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Grand-children*</th>
<th>Grand-parents*</th>
<th>% of Grandparents Agreeing With Their Grandchildren**</th>
<th>% of Grandchildren Agreeing With Their Grandparents**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current events</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Column representing the number of grandparents and grandchildren reporting a specific topic and the percentage of the total for each.

**Column representing the extent to which grandparents and grandchildren reported the same topic as one another.
To examine the issue of agreement or disagreement on conversation topics between grandparents and grandchildren, the questionnaires were scrutinized on the number of matches in the dyads, in a similar fashion as in the Lin et al. (2002) study. When the five topics reported by both parties were the same, the dyad was scored 5; when no common topics were reported, the dyad was scored 0. Of the 137 grandparent-grandchild dyads, none reported the same five topics, only three reported the same four topics, 52 dyads (38.0%) had three topics in common, 61 dyads (44.5%) reported two common topics, 18 pairs (13.1%) reported just one topic in common, and just three dyads did not report any common topics (2.2%).

The study aimed to identify topics of conversation that are associated with communication satisfaction and reported frequency of contact in grandparent-grandchild interactions (research questions 3 and 4). Correlation analyses of the variables for grandparents’ and grandchildren’s evaluations of conversational topics were conducted to obtain a general idea of their interrelations (see Table 3 and Table 4). In Tables 3 and 4, Pearson correlations of the more frequently reported topics (education, family, health, occupation, current events, and history) are presented, and less frequently discussed topics (leisure, weather, and contact) are excluded from the tables as none of them had statistically significant associations with communication satisfaction and frequency of contact for both groups. In the grandparents’ evaluations (Table 3), a moderate positive correlation was found between perceived communication satisfaction and reported frequency of contact with grandchildren (r = .43, p < .01). Three reported conversational topics, education (r = .21, p < .05), family (r = .23, p < .05), and history (r = .31, p < .01), were positively associated with communication satisfaction, whereas one reported conversational topic, current events (r = -.19, p < .01) was negatively associated with communication satisfaction. Other

| Table 3 | Intercorrelations: Communication Satisfaction, Reported Frequency of Contact, and Reported Topics of Conversation for Grandparents (N = 138) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Communication satisfaction | 2 | .43** | .21* | .23* | .13 | .03 | -.19* | .31** |
| 2. Frequency of contact | .17 | .14 | .08 | -.04 | -.21* | .20* |
| 3. Education | .32** | .19* | .07 | -.11 | .19* |
| 4. Family | .15 | -.03 | -.08 | .09 |
| 5. Health | .12 | .07 | .03 |
| 6. Occupation | | | | | -.02 | .12 |
| 7. Current Events | | | | | | | | | -.11 |

*p < .05; ** p < .01
reported topics (health and occupation) failed to correlate with communication satisfaction, but were included for comparison.

In the grandchildren’s evaluations (Table 4), reported frequency of contact and perceived communication satisfaction were correlated with one another ($r = .35, p < .01$).

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Communication satisfaction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>-.26*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Frequency of contact</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Education</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Family</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Health</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Current Events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Reported conversational topics showed fewer correlations with communication satisfaction. Statistically significant associations with communication satisfaction were found in only two reported topics of conversation. Conversations with grandparents about family were positively associated with communication satisfaction ($r = .25, p < .05$), whereas discussions about health negatively correlated with communication satisfaction ($r = -.26, p < .05$).

The results indicate that several reported topics of GP-GC talk appear to be related to communication satisfaction. These relationships between reported conversational topics and grandparent or grandchild communication satisfaction are statistically significant. On the other hand, the results are not particularly profound as a correlation of 0.2 to 0.3 indicates that relationships between reports of several conversational topics and the measure of communication satisfaction are weak. However, the interpretation of a correlation coefficient depends on the context and purposes (Cohen et al. 2003). Conversational topics (such as talking about family) that are positively associated with communication satisfaction are potentially interesting in that, although they do not positively predict communication satisfaction, they at least are not negatively associated with it. From an applied perspective, then, these topics appear not to harm communication satisfaction in conversations between grandparents and their grandchildren.
DISCUSSION

The current study, conducted among Russian students and their grandparents in St. Petersburg, Russia, attempted to replicate a previous study on conversation topics and communication satisfaction in GP-GC relationships (Lin et al., 2002) that involved students from the University of Kansas and their grandparents.

In both studies, grandparents and their grandchildren generally assessed their communication as satisfying, although the level of perceived communication satisfaction in Russia was somewhat lower for both grandparents and grandchildren in comparison with those in the US. In both studies, students and their grandparents reported that they talk more often about issues related to family and education. The older and younger generations’ concerns about these two topics are not difficult to understand, and it is easy to see how both these topics serve as common ground for intergenerational conversations within families.

For grandchildren studying at universities, education seems to be an obvious topic of discussion with all family members, including the grandparents (Williams & Giles, 1996). In St. Petersburg, sample grandparents had a high level of education: more than half of them possessed college degrees (and could rely on their own experience in studying at various universities), which seemed to facilitate interfamilial discussions on issues of education. The topic of education serves as an appropriate venue for grandparents to express their feelings about their grandchildren’s accomplishments (Harwood & Lin, 2000). These factors provide a reasonable explanation for the positive association between the perceived communication satisfaction among grandparents and the reported discussion of education in GP-GC communication that was found in the current study.

Discussions on various family issues between grandparents and their grandchildren were reported as the most frequent topic in the current study. What prompts grandparents and grandchildren to talk primarily about family? Intuitively, there may be several motivations. First of all, family is a topic that grandparents and grandchildren know very well. Second, family members realize that discussion of family issues often brings family members closer to each other regardless of their age. On a more theoretical level, family may be seen as a common ingroup identity, which allows family members of different ages to view each other as sharing an identity with each other (Lin et al., 2002). Also, the salience of family in GP-GC communication and positive associations with perceived communication satisfaction for both grandchildren and their grandparents indirectly supports the findings reported in previous studies (Soliz & Harwood, 2003) about more positive general attitudes toward older people.
Cultural differences between GP-GC communication between Russian and American participants were noted. The data shows that Russian grandparents, unlike their American counterparts, reported that health, occupation, history, and current events were fairly frequent topics in conversations with their grandchildren. Russian grandchildren displayed solidarity with their grandparents and also reported that these topics played a rather significant role (although less significant than for their grandparents) in GP-GC communication. At the same time, Lin et al. (2002) found a relative absence of talk about history and health and comparatively few reported discussions on the topics of occupation and current events among University of Kansas students and their grandparents.

The relatively frequent discussions of history in GP-GC conversations in Russia seem to be a culturally specific phenomenon, at least for the current generation of Russian grandparents in St. Petersburg. Older Russians have been witnesses to and participants in many important events, both traumatic and glorious, during their lives. Older residents of St. Petersburg experienced the 900-day siege in Leningrad during WWII, in which more than 1.5 million people died; they may have also experienced other traumatic incidents, such as the Stalinist purges. On the other hand, they were witnesses to glorious events, such as victory in WWII or the launch into space of the first cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin. These are some of the historic events that their grandchildren study in their history courses. Many Russian grandparents of this generation seem to take particular pride in the roles they played during historic events many years ago. The current study suggests that culturally specific factors play a role and make history as a topic of conversation quite acceptable and even desirable for this generation of older Russians. This is corroborated by our findings that reported discussion of history in GP-GC communication was positively associated with communication satisfaction for Russian grandparents. For older people, talking about historical events conveys group-specific knowledge that younger people do not possess. It seems that talking about historical events can have positive effects for Russian grandparents in terms of earning credit in the eyes of their grandchildren for having coped successfully with difficult events.

In contrast to findings by Lin et al. (2002), Russian grandparents and grandchildren reported talking fairly frequently about health issues. Thirty-three percent of Russian grandchildren and 57% of grandparents reported that health was a topic in GP-GC communication. Our findings are supported by the Russbaum and Bettini (1994) study, which also found health to be a common topic in grandfathers’ discussions with their grandchildren. In the current study, Russian grandmothers reported talking about health as often as Russian grandfathers (no statistically significant difference). Russian grandchildren also reported health as a fairly common topic of conversation with their grandparents. Russian conversational norms require that younger family members inquire politely about older family members’ health. However, health seems to be a topic that Russian
grandchildren would rather avoid. Conversations about health were the only topic of conversation that was negatively associated with communication satisfaction for Russian grandchildren at a statistically significant level. Talking about health in GP-GC conversation often results in the revelation by grandparents of intimate information on ill-health, bereavement, immobility, loneliness, and so on. Painful self-disclosures have been described as an elderly phenomenon and have been examined through discourse analysis. Later researchers (Bonnesen & Hummert, 2002) investigated the influence of disclosure type (painful self-disclosures vs. non-painful self-disclosures) and participants’ age on perceptions of disclosure characteristics, discloser traits, and motivations. They found that older adult disclosers are disadvantaged in intergenerational interactions because they are violating young adult norms and because painful self-disclosures are associated with negative stereotypes and may trigger negative intergenerational conversational schemas. It seems that the established negative association between communication satisfaction and reported conversations about health in GP-GC communication suggests that Russian grandchildren’s reactions to painful self-disclosures are similar to the reactions of their Western counterparts.

Current events were reported fairly frequently as a topic in GP-GC communication by both grandchildren (33%) and their grandparents (45%). For grandparents, however, this was the only topic that was negatively associated with their perceived communication satisfaction. A plausible explanation of this finding lies in the current status of the elderly in Russia. As mentioned before, the Russian elderly were the social group hit hardest by the economic, political, and social changes in post-Soviet Russia. Many older Russians lost their savings in the transition period of the early 1990s. They face high inflation, rising prices, and stagnant pensions; and here they have to deal with the crumbling public medical care system or high bills in private clinics. At the same time, they read about a whole new generation of Russian multimillionaires who buy palaces on the Mediterranean coast in France and Spain or professional soccer clubs in Britain. It is therefore easy to understand why many of them feel bitterness and irritation when they have to discuss current events with their grandchildren. It is remarkable that some of the Russian grandparents mentioned current events in the questionnaires in the following form: “argue with my grandson about current events”; “tried to explain to her why I support Zyuganov” (leader of the Russian Communist Party). Reported discussions of current events in GP-GC communication go beyond Russia: “my granddaughter educates me on modern American movie stars”, “if the Soviet Union existed today, there would not be war in Iraq”, “tsunami in Asia”, and “illegal immigration from China” were some of the listed topics. For Russian grandchildren, current events proved to be a rather neutral topic which showed neither positive nor negative association with their communication satisfaction. Thus, in spite of the fact that both grandparents’ and grandchildren’s responses revealed a fairly high level of agreement on the
topic, there is clearly a difference in the perception of many current events in and outside Russia between the two generations. In future research, it would be important to determine who initiates a specific topic, as this could facilitate better predictions of communication satisfaction and understanding of the dynamics in GP-GC communication.

As mentioned before in Lin et al. (2002) study, researchers have failed to find statistically significant relationships between reports of discussions of specific conversational topics and the measure of communication satisfaction. The current study managed to find positive and negative relationships between several specific topics and communication satisfaction in GP-GC communication in Russia and provided plausible explanations for these associations that may have some interesting implications, as well as theoretical implications, for future research. The study placed an emphasis on conditions culturally specific to Russia that may influence the choice of conversation topic and level of communication in GP-GC interactions. It was found that contact frequency does predict variance in communication satisfaction among Russian grandparents and grandchildren and that there is a fairly strong positive association between the two variables. Future research should examine the choice of conversational topics in GP-GC communication in Russia in correlation to closeness of relationship, age salience, stereotyped perceptions, and reciprocal self-disclosures, as these variables are found to serve as key predictors (Anderson et al., 2005) of communication behaviors in an intergenerational context.

The findings indicate that the reported content of grandparent-grandchild communication in Russia is fairly close to the reported content of GP-GC communication in the US. In both countries, the most important topics are family and education; however, Russian grandparents and their grandchildren seem to be more diverse in more frequent reporting of other topics explored in their intergenerational discussions.

**Limitations**

It must be acknowledged that the questionnaire was driven by a Western conceptualization of grandparent-grandchild communication processes. Therefore, it is possible that some survey items are not able to capture culturally specific characteristics of Russian grandparent-grandchild relationships. In addition, the translation of survey items from English into Russian presents certain semantic and stylistic difficulties. However, the communication satisfaction scale and communication accommodation instrument have been used in several cross-cultural studies (Lin & Harwood, 2003, Giles et al., 2001) with sensible results. The current study provides additional support for the cross-cultural utility of the survey instruments. However, we would argue for expanding the examination of the relationship between topics of communication and communication satisfaction in
grandparent-grandchild communication using qualitative studies in Russia (in-depth interviews, ethnographic studies), which may have interesting results. Additionally, observational work on actual GP-GC communication patterns could yield insight into the dynamics of conversational topic selection. The current study was limited in that it used a convenience sample of respondents and was based on self-reports. Almost 70% of the participants among our grandparents were grandmothers. Among students, almost 70% of the participants were also female. The latter percentage reflects the gender composition of the student body in sociology departments in Russian universities. Demographic realities in Russia also influence the imbalance in the grandparent sample. However, we need to acknowledge that this gender imbalance presented additional difficulty for identifying sex differences in certain variables, and further studies in grandparent-grandchild communication in Russia should aim at drawing a more balanced sample.

REFERENCES


This study investigated how corporate reputation is discussed in the Russian media. A content analysis of articles on corporate reputation published in the major Russian print media between 1999 and 2006 revealed conflicting media interpretations of the role of corporate reputation in the marketplace and some simplification of the concept “corporate reputation,” in regards to understanding how corporate reputation can pave a way for a Russian company to succeed on the market.

**Keywords:** corporate reputation, public relations, media transparency, Russian media.

Most Russian scholars and professionals agree that great challenges exist in communicating with Russian publics about the corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility due to the fact that these concepts are not well defined and established in the contemporary Russian media discourse (Rating of reputation of companies, 2003; Shishkina, 1999; Sinyagina-Woodruff, 2003). Massive distrust of Russian citizens toward commercial companies and the inability of modern Russian journalists to accurately identify newsworthy information and distinguish between publicity and advertising make the task of spreading community-beneficial news through Russian mainstream media quite challenging (Hønneland, 2004; Tsetsura, 2003). However, opportunities are vast for the development of the discourse about corporate reputation in Russia. Public relations practitioners and journalists alike emphasize the importance of understanding and recognizing that Russian
communities perceive corporations, first and foremost, not as communal, but as corporate citizens (Igor Mintusov, partner of a leading public relations agency Nikkolo-M, personal communication, August 3, 2007). Today, the Russian corporate mentality hardly recognizes “the doing-good for the sake of doing well” philosophy (Mikhail Maslov, senior partner, personal communication, August 3, 2006). It takes the development, growth, and maturity of the market to realize that strict financial profits will not benefit organizations in a long run (Heath, 2006).

Little has been written about the concept of corporate reputation in Russia (Rating of reputation of companies, 2003; Gerasimov, Chernous, Blinova, Galkin, & Golovchenko, 2005). Particularly, no research-based studies discussed how this concept is presented by the Russian media. However, corporate reputation is “a talk of the town,” and many professional conference presentations, business-oriented periodicals, professional seminars, and round-tables continue to discuss the impact of corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility on the Russian market (see, for instance, multiple publications in the leading business, strategic communication, and public relations magazines, such as Sovetnik, Expert, and ZHUK). Thus, it is essential to investigate how the Russian media discuss corporate reputation to provide an additional dimension to how the concept may be understood in Russia.

The study utilized the content analysis of major Russian print media of national and regional scope to identify how Russian media cover corporate reputation. One can hypothesize that normative discussions of necessity of corporate reputation would dominate the journalistic realm of Russian media since little research examined the nature and implications of reputation fluctuation (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003; Peregudov, 2000). Particularly, no studies directly addressed how corporate reputation or corporate social responsibility concepts are discussed in relation to the Russian business and marketplace. Anecdotal evidence suggest that most of these discussions happen in the Russian periodicals aimed at general audiences, in addition to business-oriented and specialized business publications.

This study is the first of its kind to identify how and to what extent the concept of corporate reputation is discussed in Russian media. This is important for two reasons: first, such analysis will provide a solid research-based picture of how the concept is presented and discussed in the Russian media outlets, the main public arena for Russian businesses; second, it will build a foundation for future studies and investigation to reveal how this concept is understood and interpreted by the media of a country with a transitional economy.

Next, the paper presents an overview of the literature on corporate reputation to lay a foundation for the study and provide the background for the research question.
CORPORATE REPUTATION IN RUSSIA

Corporate reputation has become a popular subject in the Russian mass media in the last few years. A single most comprehensive rating of corporate reputation of Russian and foreign companies is developed and presented by the nation-wide business magazine Expert. The magazine has been publishing annual ratings of companies with the best corporate reputation since 1997, with the latest available report published in 2003 (Rating of reputation of companies, 2003). Results of that report are used in many media or business discussions about corporate reputation of companies in Russia (Nikitina, 2005). This rating is based on surveying major opinion leaders in the country, including presidents and CEOs, business analytics, business owners, and top managers, public relations directors, editors of major business-oriented media, and companies’ CEOs in different industries (Rating of reputation of companies 2003). Many believe that this is the only one reliable rating as other public opinion polls about corporate reputation are rather fragmental and not scientific (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003; Leschinskaya, 2007).

Expert also regularly conducts regional corporate reputation studies. The regions are usually divided according to geopolitical divisions of Russia (Tsetsura, 2003). The most recent study presented a rating of companies in the Ural region in 2005 (Orlova & Rublevskaya, 2005). The Ural region seems to be the only one that carried out such studies of corporate reputation in 2004 and 2005.

Little research is done in the area of corporate reputation in Russia. Publications on the subject focus on the practitioners’ point of view. Many of those magazines are read by top managers and owners of companies and are tailored to a specific management or industry. Among those periodicals are ZHUK (Journal of Company Management), Expert, Economist, and Kommersant. Kommersant, the leading Russian business newspaper and a publishing conglomerate has numerous specialized volumes, including Kommersant-Money and Kommersant-Economics, which also publish articles about corporate reputation. Vedomosti, a Russian version of the business publication created by the Wall Street Journal and Financial Times, periodically covers corporate reputation and organizes numerous conferences at which topics of corporate reputation are discussed by industry professionals (Vedomosti, 2006).

In summary, corporate reputation in Russia is discussed and presented in business-related periodicals and business and management-related research but not in communication research. The authors were able to locate only four Russian-language books on corporate social responsibility (which are extensively cited in this study) and no books on corporate reputation. As John Buttle (2006), a leader of Global Financial Services group of Ernst &
Constructing Corporate Reputation in the Russian Media

Katerina Tsetsura and Gennadiy Chernov

Young in the CIS, pointed out, a universal system of evaluation and preparation of corporate social responsibility accountability and corporate reputation is still missing in Russia.

**CORPORATE REPUTATION IN RUSSIAN MEDIA**

Russian media refer to corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility as concepts defined in the scholarly tradition of public relations studies (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003). Russian media coverage of how corporate reputation is understood reflects how the concept developed over the years. In some cases, corporate reputation to this day equates to corporate image; this is similar to the thinking about corporate reputation back in the 1970s in the USA (Bernays, 1977). In some media, corporate reputation is understood as an overall evaluation of the company by stake-holders (Buttle, 2006; Gotsi & Wilson, 2001). Stakeholders and consumers’ evaluations are often included in the corporate reputation assessment (Sobolev, 2007). Finally, an overly extended definition includes all potential target groups that form the collective evaluation of the company reputation based on the experts’ assessment of economic, social, and ecological aspects of the company’s activities (Novichenkova, 2007).

Early on, corporate reputation was often discussed in relation to corporate social responsibility. In one of the first Western definitions, corporate social responsibility refers to “the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society” (Bowen, 1953, p. 6). The Committee for Economic Development (CED), a non-profit organization based in the USA, stressed the dominant public policy role of society in its contract with business (CED, 1971). The current trend is to consider the corporate social responsibility as comprising economic, legal, philanthropic, and ethical responsibility aspects (Carroll, 1999). A national context of the corporate social responsibility application intermingles with the globalization factor, and leads to a possible unease in adjustment of businesses’ national and global functioning. As Townsley and Stohl (2003) attested, global content appears to be “the new frontier zone or the ethical space where a variety of constituencies struggle to define, perform, and control the global rules of CSR” (p.604).

Many Russian public relations and strategic communication practitioners believe that corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility are closely connected and that they depend more on the particular local context (Mikhail Maslov, senior partner of Maslov PR, personal communication, August 3, 2006; Sergey Chumikov, partner of Maslov PR, personal communication, October 5, 2007). Some argue that Western models of corporate responsibility or models of certain other countries do not work in Russia as the country with a transitional economy; they also point out that the crystallized and established relations
among businesses, government, and society are characteristics of the marketplace, which Russia is only now approaching (Sotsial’naia otvetstvennost’ biznesa — mezhdud dvumya mirami, 2006).

An evolution of business development in Russia created generally negative attitudes among the main members of the Russian society toward the words “corporation” and “business.” The negligence of social and ethical business practices by many Russian businesses overshadowed single charity acts performed by some corporations in 1990s. Later, strengthened governmental control led to an increase in corporations’ participation in fulfilling their social obligations in line with the concept of corporate social responsibility (Zharenova, 2004). However, most socially responsible steps seem to be forced by the government as a result of predominantly negative public attitudes toward the corporations’ role in society (Zharenova, 2004). Although the implementation of corporate social responsibility in everyday practices of Russian businesses becomes more vivid, 87% of the participants in a recent poll characterized corporations’ statements about their corporate social responsibility as mere declarations (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003). Most of the respondents stressed the following indicators that characterized the companies with a high level of corporate social responsibility: (1) quality of the products made by the companies; (2) fairness in relationships with labor; (3) environment protection; (4) social involvement and ethical conducting of business; and (5) respect to the laws and regulations (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003). Business people also admitted that problems exist in implementing strategic social responsibility acts to improve corporate reputation, and they indicated that such implementation is a long, gradual process that also depends, in part, on more precise definitions of the corporate social responsibility and corporate reputation with clear regulatory mechanisms for providing and evaluating the measures that can help companies realize corporate social responsibility actions and, as a result, improve corporate reputation of Russian companies (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003; Peregudov, 2000).

**MEDIA SYSTEM IN RUSSIA**

The media system in Russia can be examined according to its state of control, outreach, and access (Sriramesh & Verëiè, 2003). Recently, the Russian government has been aggressively active in hopes to restore control over the Russian media (Koltsova, 2006; Yablokova, 2006). Although many media outlets are considered as privately owned, today publishers quietly sell publications to those who are favorites of the Kremlin (Yablokova). Thus, the government, through subsidies and indirect influence, and corporations, through investments and advertising, have an impact on the media. Financial, as well as political,
constraints put the media in a disempowered position in the public sphere in comparison to government and business representatives.

Traditionally, Russian media have been divided into two large categories: national and local. The national media typically had their headquarters in Moscow, with the best equipment and personnel (Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2004a). During the Soviet era, national media played a crucial role in government’s information dissemination and was tightly controlled. Local media echoed the national media, was also strictly controlled, and essentially followed the same rules as the national media. Thus, the centralized, top down control of the media clearly defined the Soviet journalism (Pasti, 2005a). Today, President Putin’s administration tries to restore the centralized system of media control by the government, engaging in the series of activities for centralization of the media control (Cooper, 2006; Koltsova, 2006; Zassoursky, 2004).

The outreach and access of Russian media is tremendous. A colossal infrastructure of production and distribution of news in print and broadcasting forms was perfected during the Soviet era (Kuznetsov, 2006; McReynolds, 1991). Fast and clear dissemination of information was a major advantage of the centralized media system as “this media outreach created an opportunity for fast dissemination of information to the whole country” (Tsetsura, 2003, p. 313). To this day, the structure of print and broadcasting media, as well as their distribution, is strong; thus, media are widely accessible to the majority of Russian population (Zassoursky, 2004).

**CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN MEDIA IN SEARCH FOR NEWS VALUES**

Several studies have examined the transitional period of the Russian journalism, primarily concentrating on studying how Russian journalism and Russian journalists adapt to a new socio-political and economic environment (Pasti, 2005a, b; McNair, 1991; Tsetsura, & Kruckeberg, 2004a). For instance, Pasti (2005a) interviewed St. Petersburg journalists to uncover emerging characteristics and tendencies of Russian journalism. The results revealed crucial changes in Russian media after the decade of political and economic reforms: an active development of informational and advertising services in society, commercialization of the Russian media, and discrepancies in understanding the roles of journalism to serve the interests of the public rather than political and economic elites (Pasti, 2005a). In her other study, Pasti (2005b) demonstrated actual differences in mentality and decision-making processes between older and younger journalists in Russia. If the former category perceived journalism’s role in continuous collaboration with authority and accepted journalistic function as to share news from the authoritative perspective, the latter emphasized the entertainment value of contemporary journalism and its function as a liaison.
between public relations sources of businesses, influential groups, and society at large (Pasti, 2005b). However, both categories accepted “the political function of journalism as a propaganda machine for the power elite during elections and other important events” (Pasti, 2005b, p. 89).

Now, Russian journalism follows traditional news values of the Western world, with a particular emphasis on the importance of news to the society and its function of communicating messages from the political and business elites (Pasti, 2005b; Zassoursky, 2004). Most of the research indicated the following contemporary issues and problems of Russian journalism: self-censorship of Russian journalists (Kroichik, 2008; Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2004a), legal and economic constraints of journalists and publishers (Yablokova, 2006), and inability of the contemporary media to play an influential role in a country with increasingly more centralized media (Koltsova, 2006; Pasti, 2005a).

Self-censorship is the single most destructive element of contemporary Russian journalism. Political, financial, and legal pressures from the government officials at all levels and corporations, as well as the return of a Soviet-like mentality to have an absolute, total control of the media contribute to self-censorship. As Kroichik (2008) put it, “Mass media lost the position of a social opponent to power structures, stopped being an equal partner in a dialogue with the governing power” (p. 36).

Self-censorship continues to be one of the largest problems of Russian media during the Putin era (GDF, 1999; Koltsova, 2006; Pasti, 2005b). In the last few years, the power of financial groups close to the Kremlin grew. Recent updates to the Russian media laws and additional changes to the law on mass media allowed further centralization of the media system (GDF, 2008). The new media law limited freedom of speech in Russia and created a situation in that the media are now trapped in the middle of a huge battle for power and money (Koltsova, 2006). Such centralization also provides opportunities for media access to government subsidized newspapers that support the Kremlin regime, such as Rossijsakya Gazeta, which is available to all Russian citizens at an extremely low subscription price. At the same time, private and independent newspaper subscriptions are much more expensive because they are offered at a market price. As Tsetsura (2003) put it “On the one hand, business conglomerates involve the media often in accusing and attacking one another. On the other, federal, regional, and local government officials try to control the media to keep criticism of their out of the public eye” (p. 314).

Because of the rising pressure from the government, self-censorship, and a declining quality of the Russian journalism education (Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2004a), some analysts and journalists argue the Russian media lacks an ability to analyze and criticize relevant newsworthy issues presented on the public sphere (Humber, 2006; Simonov, 2003). Commercialization and re-evaluation of news values becomes a major constrain on freedom of press in modern Russia.
Media transparency is another problem in Russia. Often, articles that appear on news and editorial pages are paid by a company or an organization; sometimes, this practice is called hidden advertising (Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2004b). This problem of media transparency and media bribery is not unique to Russia and has been actively studied worldwide (Kruckeberg & Tsetsura, 2003). In the 2003, the international index of media bribery, Russia was ranked 16 out of 33 ranks among 66 countries in the world, occupying the same rank as Slovakia, Latvia, and South Korea (Kruckeberg, Tsetsura, & Ovaitt, 2005).

It is important to recognize this problem as Russian media plays a key role in covering business news. For example, 88% of what people learn about the CSR comes from television, and 66% of relevant information comes from the press (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003). The problem is that businesses blame the media for misunderstanding what corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility are, and media often skip coverage of corporate social responsibility efforts or depict them in a negative tone if the company did not pay for news coverage (Klyueva, 2008; Tsetsura, 2005). The media usually respond that they cover current situations and write about business news only if this news is interesting and newsworthy to the readers, or only if the media outlet has a contract for informational coverage with the company that generated news (Klyueva, 2008). Thus, publications about corporate social responsibility acts often appear as a result of direct or indirect payments (Tsetsura, 2004).

After reviewing the literature, the following research question emerged: How is the concept of corporate reputation is presented and discussed in the Russian media, specifically in Russian national and regional general dailies, weeklies, and business publication outlets?

**Methodology**

**Sampling**

A quantitative content analysis, with elements of a qualitative analysis, was employed to determine the scope of coverage of the corporate reputation concept as well as the trends in application of this concept by Russian media. All printed Russian media with full texts available through the Factiva database, a leading international periodical publication resource for communication practitioners and scholars, were chosen for the analysis. Currently, Factiva holds 650 Russian print media titles (Factiva, 2008).

The content analysis of major Russian newspapers and magazines was performed to collect and interpret the data. The researchers used the time period between January 1, 1999, and October 20, 2007 (the date when the data collection began). The concept of corporate
reputation was not actively used by the Russian publics before 1999 due to the lack of a long history of free-market economy, contemporary marketing, and public relations.

The initial search identified 547 articles that used two combinations of a phrase corporate reputation in Russian (“korporativnaya reputatsiya” and “reputatsiya kompanii” which translates as “corporate reputation” and “company reputation”).

The reason why these terms, although not synonymous, were chosen is that they are often used interchangeably in the Russian media (Novichenkova, 2007). In addition, these terms are interchangeably used by Russian communication professionals. For instance, these terms are translated as synonymous in the Graham Dowling’s book Creating Corporate Reputation (2003) which was published in Russian in 2003 and became a major handbook of corporate reputation (Starodubskaya, 2004). The book in its Russian translation distinguishes between reputation and image but does not distinguish among “corporate reputation,” “company reputation,” and “reputation of a company.” Thus, a corporate reputation is discussed in similar fashion in this study to mimic the Russian usage of the term.

Researchers selected a random sample of the articles published in the printed Russian media between January 1, 1999, and October 20, 2007, that mentioned corporate reputation. Every sixth article was chosen to comprise the sample, for a total of 91 articles. In addition, eight more articles were randomly chosen out of the remaining list. Thus, the final sample consisted of 99 articles.

Data Analysis

The unit of analysis was any single thought-completed sentence or a paragraph containing words “corporate reputation.” The scope of coverage was captured by the following four categories: (1) “mentioning,” (2) “discussion within the company/organization,” (3) “discussion within the business/industry,” and (4) “discussion outside the business/industry.” The first category, “mentioning,” meant the concept was just mentioned in discussion of business practices. More thorough discussion of the corporate reputation in media was characterized by one of the other three categories: (2) the discussion pertaining to the particular company or organization dubbed “discussion inside the company/organization;” (3) the discussion pertaining to the companies or organizations other than the one described in the article dubbed “discussion inside the business/industry;” and (4) a broader discussion that involved different industries was labeled “discussion outside the business/industry.” Other important dimensions such as business type or sector, size of business including annual turnover or number of employees, were not available to researchers and thus, were not accounted for in this study.
The companies and organizations covered in the media in regards to the corporate reputation concept were divided into following categories: (1) specific businesses, (2) broader industries, and (3) academy/research. Two other categories, the source of publication and the year of publication, were added to analyze which media are involved in discussing the concept and when this coverage took place. The Holst’s inter-coder reliability was calculated with all analyzed articles and equaled .90 for two coders.

A qualitative analysis of articles aimed to identify major topics and themes in media coverage of corporate reputation. The use of the thematic and illustrative analysis (Owen, 1984) provided additional insight to understanding how corporate reputation was discussed in the Russian media and helped to illustrate, with specific examples, meanings of the phrase “corporate reputation” used by the Russian media. Owen’s criteria of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness were used for isolating themes within the articles. Researchers independently read articles and looked for reoccurring themes and repetitions, a procedure usually recommended in qualitative research to ensure triangulation (Patton, 1990). Additional illustrative analysis, performed separately by the researchers, aimed to identify a specific article which provided interesting details, examples, citations, or other valuable information that could enrich the study.

After both thematic and illustrative analyses were completed, researchers met to create a master list of all categories and to identify exemplar citations from the articles, which would illustrate themes identified in all categories. Researchers continued to compare their independently identified themes and categories and discussed all chosen citations until they agreed on categories and representative citations.

RESULTS

The research question asked, how is the concept of corporate reputation presented and discussed in the Russian media, specifically in the Russian national and regional general daily, weekly, and business publication outlets?

Corporate reputation was exclusively mentioned in 52 articles comprising 54% of the whole sample (“mention” category). Elaboration on the importance of the corporate reputation for business relations between different industries (“discussion between industries” category) was found in 13 cases (14%). Elaboration on the importance of the corporate reputation for the company referred to in the article (“discussion within the company/organization” category) was found in nine cases (about 10% of the whole sample). Elaboration on the importance of the corporate reputation for the company in relations with other companies was found in 10 cases (about 11%).
When the media described institutions that were concerned with corporate reputation, specific businesses were at the center of discussion in 49 articles (50% of the whole sample). Multiple industries were referred in 39 cases (40% of the whole sample). The concept was discussed from an academic perspective only in three cases, and in another three cases, sources could not be classified in any of the categories.

The vast majority of the articles defined corporate reputation and positioned it as a necessary concept for successful business. However, there were very few examples how corporate reputation is achieved by businesses in Russia. Often, corporate reputation was mentioned in relation to ratings reported by the leading business magazine Expert (Rating of reputation of companies, 2003). Usually, corporate reputation was defined as the financial success of an organization and presented as a necessary element of successful business practice.

The further analysis demonstrated that some confusion still exists in separating the terms corporate image from corporate reputation. The corporate image, grounded in the basis of the perception of information, often substitutes the integrated and multi-dimensional evaluation of corporate activities in relation to its long-term legitimacy (corporate reputation) (Nikitina, 2005). In many articles, corporate reputation was discussed in a way that companies could improve their reputation overnight or as a result of a single action (Belova & Maslennikov, 2007; Sokolov, 2007). In many cases, the question about corporate reputation becomes relevant when the companies plan to enter international markets (Govorun, 2007; V Dauneli nachinaetsya prodazha kvartir premium klassa [Selling of the premium condominiums begins in Dauneli], 2007).

This can be a late response to the demands of international markets for positive corporate reputation of a company at local, national, and international levels, as positive corporate reputation is necessary for a successful initial public offering. As evident from some articles, sometimes investments in corporate reputation were presented more as a necessary evil the company has to face because of external pressures than the actual understanding that maintaining corporate reputation is a rational, profitable, and ethical choice. For instance, in one article corporate reputation was treated as an irrational set of perceptions and myths that can be addressed by the manipulations of the company image (Delovaya reputatsiya: Itogi proekta formula lubvi [Business reputation: Results of the project Formula of love], 2006).

Several articles pointed out that the role of corporate reputation is not as critical if a company simply seeks short-term financial gains. They stress, however, that a long-term success involving cooperation with other businesses depends on applying high standards for achieving high corporate reputation both at home and abroad (Andreev, 2006). Several articles reported that many companies added departments of corporate reputation management. The goal of these departments is to minimize reputation risks through planned
and elaborated measures to complement successful financial, productive, and judicial performance (Smolokurov, 2006). Some publications concentrated on the harmful effects of a bad corporate reputation (MacDonalds, 2005).

The qualitative analysis of discussions of corporate reputation in the media showed that Russian corporations are starting to understand that creating and keeping a good corporate reputation is not a single case of embellishing the corporate image or a tactical public relations campaign implemented right before entering the international market, but a long, complex process of building reputation on impeccable performance in financial, economic, ethical, and social areas informed by the inner belief that the company must not only seem to be a good partner, but really should be a great, reliable, and responsible one (Polunev, 2006).

The results showed that more and more businesses in Russia realize the growing importance of corporate reputation. This is reflected in the increasing number of publications in the Russian media over the last eight years. At the same time, the term corporate reputation is not well developed or discussed in detail, and the weight assigned to various aspects of the concept shows that there is no one interpretation of what corporate reputation is. Multiple interpretations included evaluations of corporate reputation in regard to relevant segments of society and in relation to economic, social, and ecological aspects of corporations’ performance (see, for instance, an article “Zastrojschik shantazhiruet soinvestorov [Builder blackmails co-investors]” published in Region-Inform February 28, 2007 and the article by Nikitina in the Company Management magazine published October 20, 2005).

The increased coverage of the corporate reputation in Russian media was often connected with the concept of corporate social responsibility, which is consistent with previous research (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003; Peregudov, 2000). This connection reflects a recent surge in the concept of prominence for Russian corporations. Three reasons for this tendency were identified through an additional qualitative analysis of the articles: (1) public opinion polls showed that nearly a half of the respondents (48%) think that businesses do not live up to the expectations of how they should fulfill their societal role in terms of the corporate social responsibility (Agentstvo biznes novostei, 2006); (2) governmental organizations insist that businesses should be more active in alleviating social problems (Garanin, 2006); and (3) the companies entering the international markets are expected to adjust their practices to generally accepted in the modern business world and are accepting the importance of corporate social responsibility (Reputatsiya ne byvaet besplatnoj [Reputation is not free], 2006; Agaeva, 2006).

The place and the role of business practices in Russia’s transitional economy is yet to be defined. As a result, efforts to determine what elements of the established corporate culture would be appropriate to specific Russian conditions are evident from the articles on
corporate reputation published in the Russian media between 1999 and 2007. For some, corporate social responsibility stops when the business paid the taxes (Agentstvo biznes novostei, 2006). Others still debate whether charity events fit the corporate social responsibility definition (Sotsial’naia otvetstvennost’ biznesa — most mezhdu dvumi mirami [Social responsibility of business- between two worlds], 2006). Most of the experts cited in the analyzed articles agreed that the definitions of corporate social responsibility and corporate reputation must include a philosophy of management which not only aims at a commercial success, but also follows ethical norms, participates in social programs, and fulfils obligations to the people and the environment affected by the business (Voronin, 2006).

The thematic analysis also revealed the following three points of view circulating in the current debate about business practices in Russian media: (1) corporate social responsibility means abiding the law in respect of trade relations and environment (e.g., Agentstvo biznes novostej, 2006); (2) businesses should go beyond current legislation in order to contribute in social and economic development of the broader regions where these businesses operate (e.g., Voronin, 2006); and (3) corporate social responsibility is about certain public relations steps for boosting the corporation’s reputation in the eyes of society (e.g., Smolokurov, 2006).

Finally, the qualitative analysis of articles also demonstrated that acts of corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility by the Russian companies were criticized and scrutinized more compared to Western companies. Western-owned companies were often used as exemplars of how corporate reputation and responsibility should be managed and communicated (Garanin, 2006; Govorun, 2007). Many articles also addressed concerns that Russian companies are not ready yet for developing and implementing corporate social responsibility practices (Leschinskaya, 2007; MacDonalds, 2005).

**DISCUSSION**

The key finding of the study was the fact that many companies consider corporate reputation a subordinate element to other corporate performance indicators. The main pattern of media coverage of the concept revealed that corporate reputation is mentioned by different institutions (mainly for-profit companies) as a desirable tool to simply boost current economic and financial performance without further deliberation on its importance and sustainability.

Examined articles expressed consensus among journalists that corporate reputation is first, and foremost, built around the financial success of the company. These results supported previous research on understanding corporate reputation and the anecdotal
Constructing Corporate Reputation in the Russian Media

Katerina Tsetsura and Gennadiy Chernov

Evidence cited earlier (Bowen, 1953; Carroll, 1999; Gerasimov et al., 2005; Zharenova, 2004). The increased coverage of the corporate reputation in Russian media was often connected with the concept of corporate social responsibility, which is consistent with the extant literature (Litovchenko & Korsakova, 2003; Peregudov, 2000).

Promising signs of new understanding of what comprises corporate reputation started to appear in Russian media. Corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility are based on voluntary corporate investments in social programs that not only benefit communities, but also directly affect business activities (Sinyagina-Woodruff, 2003). The social partnership model leads to change in society’s assessment of corporate reputation; such partnership also leads to economic dividends expressed in growing willingness of consumers and business partners to deal with the companies successfully fulfilling their social obligations (Zharenova, 2004).

Russian journalists tended to cover foreign-owned companies with less scrutiny and more excitement in relation to socially responsible actions. At the same time, they report on the socially responsible activities of Russian companies with care and caution. In an investigative-like manner, journalists try to uncover the real reasons why a certain company engages in socially responsible actions, and takes a reactive approach to interpreting such activities. Almost every socially responsible activity is described as a direct result of a financial failure or conflict with local communities. This might be a result of the self-censorship and media bribery pressures Russian journalists experience in the workplace (Koltsova, 2006; Pasti, 2005a, b; Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2004b) as well as the changing nature of Russian journalism (Zassoursky, 2004).

In summary, the study revealed conflicting media reports in understanding the role and place of corporate reputation in the marketplace, discrepancy in covering Russian-owned and foreign-owned companies, and some pessimism in corporate social responsibility as a way for a Russian company to succeed on the Russian market.

Conclusions

Content analysis of major Russian print media of national and regional scope identified that Russian media often discuss the importance of corporate reputation but provide very little details about the nature of corporate reputation and fail to define and analyze the phenomenon. However, when it comes to sharing what activities companies engage in to establish and maintain corporate reputation, Russian media lack interest in covering such examples. This first and foremost normative discussion of necessary social accountability and corporate reputation with no examples of specific acts that contribute to developing and maintaining positive corporate reputation could stem from a history of self-
censorship and media bribery pressures evident in Russian media practices (Koltsova, 2006; Pasti 2005a, b; Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2004b). In addition to these factors, a strong history of censorship in Tsarist and Soviet Russia, as well as the changing nature of journalism in post-Soviet Russia (Zassoursky, 2004), could create confusion of terms and build hurdles on the way to adequate coverage and discussion of corporate reputation in the Russian media. Another problem lies in an ambiguity and indeterminacy of the concepts. These terms crystallize and get clarity through business practices and further discussion among professionals. As the market economy matures in Russia, a better understanding of the importance of corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility becomes necessary and inevitable. As a result, terms and definitions will further take shape and will be clarified.

The study showed that opportunities are vast for the active development of corporate reputation in Russia. Publics and journalists alike emphasize the importance of understanding and recognizing that Russian communities perceive corporations first, and foremost, not as community but as corporate citizens. As such, they are expected to make money and, to some extent, be blamed for it. The analysis of articles published on corporate reputation in the Russian media between 1999 and 2007 proved that the Russian corporate mentality hardly recognizes the doing-good-for-the-sake-of-doing-well philosophy. It takes the development, growth, and maturity of the market to realize that strict financial profits will not benefit organizations in a long run.

This research has made the first step toward understanding how corporate reputation is discussed in the Russian media. Although investigating a discursive difference in using the Russian term “reputation” was not a focus of this study, future studies, no doubt, should investigate a broader range of ideas, concepts, and practices related to this term. Researchers should further examine and analyze the reasons for the indeterminate, unstable set of terms concerning corporate reputation and corporate responsibility. Such analysis and discussion could focus on different ways of defining the word “reputation” in diverse media contexts and could shed some light on the range of semantic and pragmatic features of these terms.

Russian corporate communication professionals face tough discussions and choices when they communicate corporate ideas through the media. They have to be careful about creating too-good-to-be-true news and should always be ready to answer the question “How does the organization benefit from it?” This question is asked by different players: by the organization’s management and by the media. In a sense, corporate communication specialists are placed between two fires so their corporate reputation and communication management efforts are complex, mysterious, and confusing at times.

Corporate reputation increasingly becomes one of the major topics for discussion in the mainstream Russian media. However, journalists mostly publish oversimplified overviews and informational interviews of a prescriptive character, without emphasizing the need for the development of the corporate reputation studies and practices. Corporate
Constructing Corporate Reputation in the Russian Media

Katerina Tsetsura and Gennadiy Chernov

reputation is the phrase widely used by journalists and professionals alike, but rarely do discussions of corporate reputation develop into meaningful analyses or debates. The problem the Russian media faces is how to discuss and understand corporate reputation as a phenomenon which exists, but is not defined, analyzed, or examined in theory or in practice.

A long and complicated process of defining and developing corporate reputation practices awaits the Russian business. Russian media play an essential role as a communication channel among multiple business actors and the society. That is why Russian journalists will continue to further cover, discuss, and attempt to analyze what the phrase “corporate reputation” really means for Russian businesses, Russian markets, and the Russian society and how this concept and related corporate activities can help Russian companies and organizations to enter and succeed in the national and international marketplace.

REFERENCES


Gerasimov, G. I., Chernous, V. V., Blinova, M. C., Galkin, M. H., & Golovchenko, L. V. (2005). Korporativnaya otvetstvennost v sisteme tsennostej studencheskoj molodezhi Dona i yuga Rossii [Corporate responsibility in the value system of the young people of the Don region and the South of Russia]. Rostov-on-Don, Russia: CKHBVi BSh [SKNVTs BSh] Publisher.


Govorun, J. (2007, August 20). Nezavisimye ot raboty 6 prichin nanyat’ nezavisimogo direktora [Independent of work six reasons to hire an independent director]. Smart Money, Russian Edition, 72, NPAG. Factiva Document SMARM0020070820e38k0000h


Kruckenberg, D., & Tsetsura, K. (2003). International index of bribery for news coverage: A composite index by country of variables related to the likelihood of the existence of “cash for news...


Leschinskaya, K. (2007, February, 7). Korporativnaia sotsial’naia otvetstvennost’ biznesa kak neot’emlemaia chast’ deiatel’nosti kompanii [Corporate social responsibility of business as an indispensable part of company’s functioning]. Gazeta, daily newspaper, NPAG. Factiva Document GANPON0020070206e3270000w


MacDonal, Y. (2005, September, 7). Staryj drug prihodit na pomosh. Vyvodit’ iz krizida kompaniju, obvinennuju v mosshennichstve, poruchili priyatu prokurora [The old friend comes to help. The task of saving a company from a crisis was delegated to a friend of a prosecutor]. Vedomosti, 166, NPAG. Factiva Document VEDMOS0020050906e19700001


Nikitina, V. (2005, October 25). Zhazhda — ничто, имидж — всё! [Thirst is nothing, image is everything, or why the reputation of the company if more important than its financial characteristics]. Company Management, NPAG. Factiva Document MGC00020051129e1ak00002


Peregudov, S. (2000). Krupnaja rossijskaja korporatsija kak sotsialno-politicheskij institut (Opyt kontseptual’no-prikladnogo issledovaniya) [Large Russian corporation as a socio-political
institute (results of conceptual and practical research). Moscow: ИМЭМО РАН [Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences].


Reputatsiya ne byvaet besplatnoy [Reputation is not free] (2006, November 16). Rossiyskaya Gazeta, NPAG. Factiva Document ROSSIG0020061115e2bg00023


Sotsial'naia otvetstvennost’ biznesa — mezhdv duviuma mirami [Social responsibility of business between two worlds]. (2006, November, 13). Ekspert, NPAG. Document EXPERT0020061113e2bd0001a


Zastrojschik shantazhiruet soinvestorov [Builder blackmails co-investors]. (2007, August, 28). Region-Inform, NPAG. Factiva Document TOOREG0020070828e38s000g4

Zharenova, O. (2004). Korporativnaia blagotvoritel’nost’ v Rossii [Corporate charity in Russia]. Moscow: TSPI.
THE INTERSECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE TATARSTAN WOMEN’S HEALTH INITIATIVE

Deborah Ballard-Reisch, Sergei A. Samoilenko, Marat Zagidullin, Marina I. Galitskaya and Svetlana F. Nagumanova

This paper reports on the application of Sharf and Kahler’s (1996) Cultural Sensitivity Model to the experiences of cross-cultural researchers engaged in the conduct of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey. In the summer of 2001, a cross-cultural team composed of researchers from Kazan State Medical University, Kazan State University, ROR OPP Women of Russia Movement and the University of Nevada, Reno, USA, with the support of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tatarstan, conducted an interview study of 1018 female subjects throughout the Tatarstan Republic. Topics covered dealt with a variety of interpersonal, intercultural, social and economic issues faced by Tatarstan women in their everyday life. This paper analyzes the choices and challenges experienced by the cross-cultural research team as they engaged in this collaborative project, and reiterates the importance of applied communication theory and research in promoting international public health collaborations. Basic tenets of effective international public health collaborations have emerged and their implications are discussed.

Deborah Ballard-Reisch is Kansas Health Foundation Distinguished Chair in the Elliott School of Communication, Wichita State University, Kansas, USA (Deborah.Ballard-Reisch@wichita.edu). Sergei A. Samoilenko teaches in the A. Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications at Kansas State University (ssamoyle@k-state.edu). Marat Zagidullin teaches in the Department of Sociology, University of Nevada Reno, USA (marat@unr.edu). Marina I. Galitskaya is executive director of the “Fatima” Women Crisis Center in Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan (mgalitsk@mi.ru). Svetlana F. Nagumanova is an associate professor in the Department of Philosophy at the Kazan Medical State University, Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan (nagouman@mail.ru).
The world is getting smaller. Increased international mobility, global food distribution, cross border environmental contamination, and increased chemical dependence are threats to global public health that transcend national boundaries and increase the potential for the rapid international spread of infectious agents, contaminants, and their vectors. Consequently, the World Health Organization’s 2007 World Health Report *A Safer Future: Global Public Health Security in the 21st Century* called for “collective international public health action [to] build a safer future for humanity” (p. 5). As borders continue to merge and divide, intercultural collaborations to promote health at both macro and micro levels become increasingly important. The promotion of health and disease prevention is not only a priority for any civilized culture, it is a global imperative, one that requires both international understanding and culturally appropriate health communication.

However, international and intercultural collaborations provide both unique opportunities and challenges as partners attempt to negotiate significantly different world views, customs, beliefs, and assumptions about health and appropriate interventions. This paper explores such a collaboration; the Tatarstan Women’s Health Initiative, and in particular, the research team’s experiences with the development and dissemination of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey throughout the Tatarstan Republic of the Russian Federation.

The purpose of this case analysis is to unpack some of the critical issues that emerged in international collaboration and how they were impacted by cultural differences and dissimilar health communication characteristics. These cultural and communication challenges are discussed within the context of the Culturally Sensitive Model along with strategies for managing differing cross-cultural perspectives.

**The Case of the Russian Federation**

A team of Russian experts and consultants, led by Dr. Valery Yelizarov, Head of the Center for Population Studies at Moscow State University, authored a comprehensive report entitled *Demographic Policy in Russia: From Reflection to Action* released in May, 2008, that examined the demographic situation in Russia with reference to fertility issues, the aging population, causes and consequences of mortality, and proposed steps to address these issues. According to the report, the current life expectancy for males in the Russian
Federation is 59 years; for females, 72 years (p. 2). The report advanced that Russia is 15-19 years behind developed countries for life expectancy for men and 7-12 years behind for women (Yelizarov, 2008, p. 9). Of particular concern is what the report termed the “hypermortality” observed primarily in the working-age populations that will significantly impact the long-term health and sustainability of the nation.

The report articulates goals for promoting population stability and combating “hypermortality” within the Russian Federation that include increases in fertility rate, migration, access to care in “medical, social, prevention and primary treatment”, and reductions in the impact of preventable diseases (Yelizarov, 2008, p. 10), including “alcoholism, smoking, improper nutrition, avoidance of healthcare and psychological stress” (Semionova, 2008, p. 30). Additionally, infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS, which has shown a 370-fold increase in registered cases in Russia between 1997-2007 (Russian Federal AIDS Center, 2007), and the corresponding incidents of drug resistant tuberculosis, worldwide epidemic and pandemic concerns like SARS, and avian and pandemic flus are significant concerns.

The case study upon which this paper is based occurred within the Tatarstan Republic of the Russian Federation. Unique cultural dynamics in Tatarstan necessitate the introduction of the Republic here.

**THE TATARSTAN REPUBLIC OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

The Tatarstan Republic is a democratically constituted state within the Russian Federation located at the confluence of the Volga and Kama Rivers in the East-European Plain. Tatarstan is home to over 70 nationalities; Tatars (52.9%) and Russians (39.5%) are the most numerous. The republic comprises 67,836 square kilometres with a population of 3,779,300 as per the 2002 census. The current population is estimated at 3,773,800. The capital city, Kazan, is home to over one fourth of the population of the republic (Department of Foreign Affairs to the President of the Republic of Tatarstan, 1998-2008).

Seeking to regain economic and social stability like many post-Soviet states after the collapse of the old Soviet system, the cultural context in Tatarstan has been evolving as ethnic identity has strengthened over the past two decades. Part of negotiating their status as an independent state within the Russian Federation included the elevation of Tatar as one of two official state languages (along with Russian), the construction of new Mosques, and the mandate that children study both Tatar and Russian languages in school as a way of strengthening and promoting the centrality of Tatar culture within the republic (Chamber of Commerce, 1996). The Tatarstan government holds cultural tolerance as a core value (Chamber of Commerce, 1996).
Tatarstan is currently undergoing what the government refers to as a “religious revival”, predominantly among Muslim and Orthodox Christian residents (Department of Foreign Affairs to the President of the Republic of Tatarstan, 1998-2008). Islam is important to the ethnic identity of many Tatars while Orthodox Christianity plays an important role in the identity of a significant portion of the Russian population in the republic. Many Tatars observe the major ceremonies of Islam, but do not adhere to the daily religious practices; this is mainly due to the discontinuity of religious practices in the Soviet era. Islam in Tatarstan has been historically viewed as moderate or Euro-Islam, and focused on culture rather than ritual. It has been typically viewed in contrast to the radical brand of Islam practiced in parts of the Caucasus and Central Asia (Gorenburg, 2005).

In search of common features of Slavic and Turkic peoples researchers distinguish the priority given to collectivism which highlights the importance of communal interests as opposed to individual needs. However, as capitalist influences grow, a shift toward individualism is developing among both Russians and Tatars (Khakimov, 2000; Vasilenko, 1996).

Recognizing the pressure of economic, political, and social evolution on the health of the citizens of Tatarstan, the duma in 1998 called on women to promote and protect both their own health and the health of their families. With strong patriarchal structures and traditions, and inadequate domestic democratization (Graney, 2002), the health of women in Tatarstan became critical to the health of families and the Republic.

THE POTENTIAL OF INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

While some of the health issues and concerns facing Russia and the Tatarstan Republic are common worldwide (for example the increase in preventable causes of mortality) (WHO, 2002), others are unique to the Russian context, and still others are a direct result of the international transmission of infectious disease (WHO, 2007). These dynamics allow for the possibility of the introduction of effective models to manage Russian issues from other countries, as well as valuable contributions to global strategies to mediate these issues that emerge within the Russian context.

To address the diverse issues identified in the Demographic Policy Report (2008), Yelizarov calls for “studying the experiences of other countries that try to address similar problems” (p. 11). As Danishevsky (2008) concludes later in the report: “One step to increase the scope and efficacy of prevention initiatives in Russia is professional training of specialists capable of influencing attitudes towards health, as is the case in Europe and the US” (p. 34). Additionally, Danishevsky (2008) notes that different factors influence the health of Russian Federation citizens than those effective in other countries. For example,
risk campaigns effective in Europe and the U.S., which have been found to be effective in prevention efforts, are not effective in Russia where positive campaigns that pair targeted risk-reduction behaviors with desired outcomes are more effective. Learning in the context of international collaborations is not a one-way street as Russian examples of effective health promotion campaigns can offer alternative strategies to inform efforts to impact hard-to-reach, hard-to-influence populations in other nations. Effective international collaborations require the willingness of all sides to learn from one another and to manage barriers to effective collaboration and communication.

**THE TATARSTAN WOMEN’S HEALTH INITIATIVE**

The Tatarstan Women’s Health Initiative was designed to bring together health promotion and primary care providers, scholars, researchers, members of NGOs, and representatives of the general public to promote women’s health in the Tatarstan Republic of the Russian Federation. The Tatarstan Women’s Health Initiative is an on-going collaboration that began in 1996 when the American author of this paper was a Fulbright Scholar at Kazan State University in Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia. It continued through a comprehensive interview survey of over 1000 women in the summer of 2001 (the foundation of the case study), the development of a domestic violence informational handbook distributed to crisis centers throughout the Russian Federation in 2004, and to this day, as an initiative partners plan for a follow-up to the 2001 survey to identify areas of change in women’s health status.

The development and dissemination of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey in the summer of 2001 was a significant undertaking. The project evolved over the course of three years as community and academic partners were identified, steering committee members and academics were trained in the development of survey research instruments and procedures, interviewees were selected and interviewers trained, and it culminated in the summer of 2001 when, over a 6-week period, more than 1000 women were interviewed by 26 trained interviewers in 6 regions of the republic encompassing urban and rural areas, and Tatar and Russian villages. The survey contained 152 questions over 10 topics including: women’s perceptions of their health; engagement in health maintenance activities; life-style choices around nutrition, sleep, tobacco, drug, and alcohol use, etc.; issues of sexuality; reproductive health; experiences with violence; conflict in romantic relationships; depression; sex education and children, and life values. The survey was available in Tatar and Russian languages so interviewees could select the language with which they were most comfortable.

A variety of intercultural communication issues emerged throughout the development and dissemination of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey. These issues illuminate the
critically important nature of quality intercultural communication, respect, and patience in promoting intercultural understanding and quality communication among researchers from different countries or cultural backgrounds. As scholars from around the world identify new opportunities for research in the former Soviet Union and other countries, and the global community strives to ensure global public health security and the management of discrepancies in worldview, cultural traditions and communication patterns become critical. Quality intercultural communication is crucial to the success of important global public health initiatives.

This analysis utilizes Sharf and Kahler’s (1996) Cultural Sensitivity Model as a framework to analyze cultural issues that emerged in the conducting of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey.

**CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON HEALTH COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES: APPLICATION TO THE TATARSTAN WOMEN’S HEALTH SURVEY**

Ting-Toomey and Chung (2005) note that “on a communal level, culture refers to a patterned way of living by a group of interacting individuals who share a common set of history, traditions, beliefs, values and interdependent fate” (p.35). While culturally shared beliefs refer to a set of fundamental assumptions or worldviews, cultural values refer to a set of priorities that guide “good” or “bad” behaviors, “desirable” or “undesirable” practices, and notions of what is “fair” or “unfair”. Clearly, differences in cultural perspective, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and education can create distance, lack of understanding and shared meaning, and problematic communication in international health communication initiatives at macro and micro levels. While Sharf and Kahler’s (1996) Culturally Sensitive Model was designed to provide a framework for understanding patient-physician communication, it will be applied, in this analysis, to explore the dynamics involved in negotiating between three cultures the conduct of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey. The Culturally Sensitive Model provides insight into five layers of meaning that have the potential to impact international health communication collaborations.

The Ideological Layer of Meaning explains the core values or basic organizing principles of society (Sharf & Kahler, 1996). For example, one of those characteristics is collectivism or a value-tendency of a culture to emphasize the importance of group identity and group needs over individual identity and needs (individualism). Consistent with Hofstede’s (2001) cultural comparisons, the U.S. has traditionally been viewed as an individualistic culture while Russia has been typically viewed as a collectivist culture. As Ballard-Reisch and Letner (2003) conclude in their article on communication and cancer management, “Desires for communication and consultation, and approaches to agreement
and disagreement vary from culture to culture and individual to individual” (p. 3). Traditionally, approaches to cultural variations in health communication preferences and the theory and practice of bioethics, as well as the policies and procedures that regulate research for U.S. researchers, heavily emphasize participation in research and health care initiatives as the prerogative of informed, autonomous individuals who choose to participate or to undergo medical treatment. As Marshall, Koenig, Barnes, and Davis (1998) assert, the Western-focused bioethic supporting autonomous, individual decision-making by informed clients and based on open disclosure is simply not valued in other cultures (p. 421).

Case Example #1: Informed Consent and the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey

Differences in cultural ideology emerged quickly in the negotiation of human subject concerns regarding the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey. U.S. institutions, through their Instructional Review Boards (IRBs), require that participants in research be fully informed of the risks and benefits of participation and offered the opportunity to participate, refrain from participating, or withdraw from participation at any time. Typically, a signed “informed consent document” is required verifying that participants have been informed of potential risks and their rights as research participants. These requirements created some unique challenges for the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey.

With respect to signed, informed consent documents, the steering committee and pilot investigations indicated that the most efficient way to get women to refuse to participate in the survey was to require that they sign anything. Participants indicated that they were willing to participate, but anonymously, and that they were not willing to sign anything that would verify their participation. Ultimately, the U.S. IRB acquiesced, allowing women to initial a receipt for honoraria received for participation and decided to forego the signatures on informed consent documents.

This decision took significant time as the U.S. IRB came to understand the historical context in Russia and the foundations for women’s reticence to sign documents affirming their participation in the study. Concerns over the possibility that governmental officials or others might be able to identify participants and somehow link responses to specific women ultimately held sway with the U.S. committee.

A second issue emerged, upon which the U.S. IRB was not willing to negotiate, that led to some difficulties for interviewers. The IRB required that, as this was a unique situation in which an interviewer would complete the survey for interviewees, interviewers would be required to remind participants at various times throughout the interview process that they could refuse to answer any question or withdraw from participation at any time.
The IRB committee identified what they considered to be the most invasive or sensitive topic areas, specifically those around sexual behavior, abortion, violence and conflict, and required this reminder prior to each of those sections.

Two issues emerged for participants. First, this recurring statement led to frustration on the part of both interviewers who were required to repeat the caveat and interviewees who responded with “I told you I would do the interview, why do you keep telling me I don’t have to answer questions”. The reassertion of an unfamiliar individualistic orientation, within the context of a collaborative interview, resulted in what numerous interviewers viewed as unnecessary tension that impacted interviewee trust and connection with the interviewer, a barrier that was at times difficult to overcome. Further, the issues identified by the U.S. IRB as sensitive were not viewed as such by interviewees who found certain health questions and religion questions as more sensitive.

Differences in the ideological layer of meaning required negotiation and compromise from international collaborators such that both the demands of the U.S. IRB regarding the protection of human subjects and the desires of Russian and Tatar participants for anonymity could be met. Similarly, cultural differences in perspective regarding what topics were sensitive were revealed.

The Sociopolitical Layer of Meaning deals with the politics surrounding the power distribution in society and examines the relationships of race, ethnicity, gender, economic status, etc. (Sharf & Kahler, 1996).

Case Example #2:
Encouragement to Participate

Variance in sociopolitical meanings actually put the whole project at risk. Once the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey was complete, Russian collaborators took the survey to the Health Ministry to inform them of our efforts. The Health Ministry was pleased with the effort and to encourage participation, drafted a letter to potential interviewees mandating that they take part in the project. The view of the ministry was that women’s participation would result in valuable data that would be used to improve the health of all the women in the republic. Thus, participation in the survey was something they should do for the “greater good”. Again, the U.S. IRB refused to sanction this approach, viewing it as coercive and contrary to independent, voluntary consent. This response was frustrating to Russian collaborators who saw the efforts of the Health Ministry as promoting the importance of the project in a culturally appropriate manner. Discussions of whether or not the ministry would allow the survey to be conducted without their sanctioning ensued. As funding for the
Sociopolitical issues about the role of the Health Ministry and their capacity to mandate participation for the “greater good”, a completely reasonable assumption based on collectivist philosophy, was in direct contrast to the U.S. IRBs interests in autonomous, voluntary participants. While this project was allowed to continue, disagreement on the proper role of the Health Ministry created potential barriers yet to be resolved for future collaborations.

The Institutional Layer of Meaning focuses on the meanings of health and illness held by health care organizations and government establishments (Sharf & Kahler, 1996). As noted by Dalton (1989), public health officials often approach complex diseases (e.g., AIDS) as a biomedical phenomenon and fail to realize how culture, politics, and disease intersect.

Case Example #3:
Risk Assessment and Process Evaluation

In the case of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey, discrepancies in institutional layers of meaning emerged regarding “appropriate oversight” of the project. As there was no Institutional Review Board at either Kazan Medical University or Kazan State University at the time of this project, the U.S. IRB required that a parallel review process be set up in Tatarstan to assess the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey and dissemination procedures in a culturally appropriate manner. The U.S. IRB required that the parallel process include academics, public health officials, and members of the general public in separate tiers of assessment to avoid undue influence. In collaboration with the project steering committee, procedures were developed during one of the U.S. researcher’s visits to Kazan. Approximately a month later, after her return to the U.S., Russian partners informed the U.S. researcher that these procedures were no longer necessary as the state sociologist had examined the survey and procedures and found them to be safe and without risk for participants. The sociologist thought that it might even do women good to take part in this project and talk about their experiences. The perspective of the Russian steering committee was that as they had “expert” assessment of the potential impact of the survey, there was no need to consult the general public as they would not be adequately informed to make an appropriate evaluation. The U.S. IRB committee reinforced the need for all “approved” steps to be followed to the frustration of Russian collaborators.

The Ethnocultural/Familial Layer of Meaning focuses on the notion that the ability to cope with a disease depends on traditions, styles, customs, rituals, values, social
interactions as well as forms of social support available/not available from family members and cultural communities (Sharf & Kahler, 1996).

**Case Example #4:**
**Conducting Interviews for the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey**

Various requirements of the Institutional Review Board made the collection of data for the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey a complex process. First, the committee desired that participants have the option of completing the survey themselves. It took several months for the U.S. researcher with support of Russian collaborators to convince the U.S. IRB committee that 1) there was not a tradition of survey participation in Tatarstan so women would not likely complete such a complex survey on their own, 2) it was critical for interviewers to be able to assess the “quality” of interviews, so an interview assessment and involvement of interviewers were critical to the collection of quality data, 3) participants should have the option to choose if they wanted anyone else present as they completed the interview. Russian collaborators and pilot participants thought this issue of particular importance as they believed many women, particularly in rural areas, would find it inconvenient or impractical to take part in the interview alone with the interviewee, given their work and family life responsibilities. Although, as noted earlier, anonymity to government and other officials was critical to participation, personal privacy during the interview seemed irrelevant to Russian collaborators and pilot participants. Participants in the actual survey reaffirmed this view inviting family members and friends along for the interview and engaging in work and child care activities as they took part in the interview.

*The Interpersonal Layer of Meaning* explains the dynamics of style, intimacy, and roles played out in human interactions (Sharf & Kahler, 1996). At the interpersonal level, Wong-Wylie and Jevne (1997) cite five critical requirements for interactions between client and health care provider: 1) being known as a human versus a patient (equal partnership); 2) connecting versus disconnecting (providing active listening and support); 3) descriptive versus prescriptive (encouraging dialogue); 4) welcoming versus dismissing (provider’s accessibility and welcoming attitude towards clients); and finally 5) informing versus informing poorly (providing accurate and up-to-date information).
Case Example #5:
Approachability and Interpersonal Interaction as Key to the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey

Consistent with Wong-Wylie and Jevne’s (1997) critical requirements, the manner in which the Tatarstan Women’s Health Surveys were conducted led to personal contact between interviewers and interviewees that validated both parties as persons and led to strong, often enduring connections and friendships. Interviewers were invited into interviewees’ lives in a manner that led both parties to conclude that quality information was shared. Interviewers and interviewees were empowered to take part in the interview process at a time, place and manner that they deemed most appropriate. This flexibility and ability to tailor the process to the unique needs of each dyad led to a level of personal connection between interviewers and interviewees that was critical to the effectiveness of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey.

Women spent from 1 ½ hours to 8 hours together completing the interviews, often over tea, meeting neighbors, sharing food, shopping, or working together in the garden. Interviewers and interviewees, strangers to one another prior to this process, established a mutual respect and often friendships throughout the interview process. Interviewers reported being integrated into their interviewees’ lives which allowed them to gain greater insights into participants. Both interviewers and interviewees reported finding the interview process rewarding in a way that likely could not have happened had they been required to take part in a more formal, structured process. Time, often a critical factor for U.S. researchers, seemed largely irrelevant to study participants as they chose the most effective way to integrate the interview process into their lives.

COMMUNICATION TIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH COLLABORATIONS

Consistent with prior research and theory, and based on the experience of collaborators in the Tatarstan Women’s Health Initiative, basic tenets of effective international public health collaborations have emerged:

Quality international public health collaborations require:

- Willingness of all sides to learn from one another
- Respect for diverse viewpoints
- Desire to manage barriers to effective collaboration and communication
Willingness to compromise on nonessential issues
Willingness to negotiate essential issues
Patience in negotiating strategies to address identified issues / concerns
Context appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication

These strategies will result in:

Awareness and understanding of the beliefs, attitudes, and values inherent in the viewpoints and preferences of initiative partners
A consultative approach to research and public health intervention based on the interests and needs of target populations and infrastructure capacity
Culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate strategies and tactics for information collection and dissemination
Negotiation of tailored, culturally appropriate health research and health promotion initiatives

Conclusions

The purpose of this case analysis was to examine critical issues in cross-cultural collaboration as impacted by differences in cultural perspectives, communication, and health characteristics. The Culturally Sensitive Model (Sharf & Kahler, 1996) focuses attention on five important layers of meaning that needed to be negotiated to effectively develop and disseminate the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey. The collaboration was successful because layers of meaning, and the cultural assumptions underlying them, were unpacked and communication strategies were identified that allowed partners to hear one another and understand the basis of their differences.

Clearly, a multiplicity of content and context-based factors impacted both the negotiation and conduct of the Tatarstan Women’s Health Survey. Frustrations developed regularly for all collaborators, due largely to culturally different views on issues of importance. Quality communication and a persistent desire to understand differing perspectives were crucial in the successful negotiation of these differences. Through communication, an atmosphere of trust developed which led to a willingness to express frustrations, to reflect on their implications, and to patiently communicate opened the way to the management of basic differences and, ultimately, to the success of the initiative. This was not an easy process. The best possible outcome was not achieved in all areas, but fundamentally, through successful communication both sides were able to, at least at times, step outside their comfort zones, confront their basic assumptions, acknowledge that their
standpoints may or may not be relevant to their international partners and negotiate, where possible, outcomes that were beneficial to both sides.

The discipline of communication, through research and theory in intercultural and health communication, has the capacity to cut to the core of communication issues that will ensure a global public health. Communication is the central social process in the promotion of public health and the provision of health care delivery (Kreps, 1988). Communication research and scholarship offer frameworks, like the Sharf and Kahler (1996) Culturally Sensitive Model, that make it possible to negotiate diverse perspectives and communicate in an appropriate manner to both international collaborators and publics. The cultural framework is an appropriate approach for analyzing health communication practices because it helps examine the structure of health communication processes and behaviors, develop shared meanings about health-related experiences, and understand the grounds of ideological and power differences (Dutta Bergman, 2004, 2005; Villagran, Collins, & Garcia, 2008). By applying this framework and building effective intercultural competence, health promotion professionals and service providers can develop effective culturally-sensitive health promotion and care strategies that will promote effective international public health efforts.

In his book *America and Cosmic Man* (1949), Wyndham Lewis coined the term “global village” to refer to the way media brings cultures together. Marshall McLuhan (1962) in his book *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* elaborated on the term and others followed suit. The term is typically used today to refer to the global potential of the World Wide Web and Internet access, but the term can just as effectively be applied to the realities of global public health. As Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization wrote in her introduction to the 2007 World Health Report, “In a world characterized by high mobility, economic interdependence and electronic interconnectedness, traditional defenses at national borders cannot protect against the invasion of a disease or vector. Infectious disease epidemics, pandemics and other acute health events threaten the collective health of people internationally” (p. 2). Thus, the World Health Organization’s International Health Regulations (2005) identified the necessity of a global framework to prevent, detect, assess and, if necessary, provide a coordinated response to events that may constitute a public health emergency of international concern. Quality health and cross-cultural communication will play a fundamental role in any such coordinated response.
REFERENCES


The development of cognitive sciences, whose interdisciplinary connections constitute a necessary condition of their usefulness, depends on the interaction between psychology, physiology, linguistics, as well as logic and artificial intelligence (AI); the latter serves as the proving ground for experimental testing of scientific means for imitating rationality and productive thinking. Thus, it is very interesting to consider the phenomenon of the asymmetry of brain activity from the point of view of AI constructions and its logical means.

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence, intelligent systems, phenomenology of consciousness, structural cognitology

V.V. Ivanov (1978) systematically considered the phenomenon of the asymmetry of the brain and of sign systems and their connections with the investigations in the field of AI and robotics. In the proposed article, we juxtapose principles of AI and the phenomenology of consciousness. This juxtaposition is intended to be terminological and explicative, not experimental, and is an attempt to elicit “left-sided” and “right-sided” mechanisms of intelligent activity, as imitated in the main AI products — intelligent systems (IS).

The central idea of this article is the analogy between the structure of consciousness and the architecture of the IS; the latter imitates some aspects of natural intelligence
particularly its phenomenology. This constitutes the basis for the formulation of initial ideas of structural cognitology.

By looking at the structure of human consciousness, we understand the following correlation: consciousness = system of knowledge + thinking + person’s subjective world (PSW). Of course, each of these three subsystems requires certain characterizations similar to the specification of the corresponding ideas. We define consciousness as an emergent phenomenon generated by the three above-mentioned subsystems: knowledge, thinking, and PSW. Generally speaking, by consciousness we purport a function depending on knowledge, thinking, and PSW.

In our considerations we don’t intend to offer exact definitions of the ideas under discussion, which could transform these ideas into concepts (Finn, 1999b). Rather, we present a schema for understanding the rational aspects of consciousness, from the perspective of knowledge, about intelligent systems as imitators of a person’s conscious activity. Consequently, we intend to explain in particular, the differences between human and animal consciousness from the perspective of AI and logic, and will clearly specify the idea of productive thinking.

Let’s consider subtle distinctions between two conceptions of consciousness chez C.L. Frank (1995). According to Frank, consciousness, in the first sense, is the flow of actual experiences (Frank, 1995, p. 148) while consciousness, in the second sense, is understood as not only an actual experience, but also includes all content potentially available for the subject of consciousness. A connection between consciousness in the second sense and the idea of World 3 chez K.R. Popper (1979a) seems evident. This second conception of consciousness as defined by S.L. Frank will be considered here from the perspective of AI.

To understand the problems being solved in AI systems, we should specify the phenomenon of natural intelligence (NI). For AI, as a line of investigations is concerned with approximation to NI or, more specifically, to the aggregate of abilities which constitute it as a real phenomenon. These are:

1. the ability to single out the essential in available data and knowledge, and to arrange them (it is a necessary aspect of intuition);
2. the ability for goal-setting and action-planning — to generate the sequence “goal-plan-action” (Miller, Galanter, & Pribram, 1960);
3. the ability to select knowledge (premises of conclusions relevant to the goal of the reasoning);
4. the ability to infer conclusions from available facts and knowledge, i.e. the ability of reasoning employing both the plausible inferences used for advancing hypotheses and valid inferences (it means that reasoning is understood as a sequence of plausible and valid inferences);
(5) the ability for argumentative decision-making using ordered knowledge (knowledge representation) and the results of reasoning, which correspond to the goal;

(6) the ability for reflection, i.e. for the evaluation of knowledge and action;

(7) the presence of cognitive curiosity: the knowing subject must be able to ask the question “what is it?” and seek the answer to it;

(8) the need and ability to seek explanation (not necessarily deductive!) as an answer to the question “why?”;

(9) the ability for the synthesis of cognitive procedures which form the heuristics for problem analysis and solution; for example, such a heuristic is formed by the interaction of induction, analogy, and abduction (taking into account falsification of proposed hypotheses by finding counterexamples) with the subsequent application of deduction;

(10) the ability to learn and to use memory;

(11) the ability to rationalize ideas: the intention and aptitude to elaborate them into concepts;

(12) the ability to create a whole picture related to the object of thought, uniting knowledge relevant to the given goal;

(13) the ability for adaptation in the situation of changing living conditions which includes correction of “theory” and behavior.

It should be noted that characterization of “practical intelligence” in cognitive psychology (Sternberg, 2000) includes three capacities — goal-setting, adaptation, and evaluation (the ability to be critical of one’s own thoughts and actions).

In Cognitive Psychology (1991), R. Solso mentions uniquely human capabilities characterizing NI according to R.S. Nickerson, D.N. Perkins, and E.E. Smith (1985). Those are:

- the ability to classify patterns,
- the ability for adaptive change of behavior — for learning,
- the ability for deductive thinking,
- the ability for inductive thinking,
- the ability to develop and use conceptual models,
- the ability to understand.

Comparison between capabilities (1) to (13) (Finn, 2004a) and the set of capabilities in (Nickerson et al., 1985) shows that the former covers the latter except for the ability to understand. However capabilities (1) to (13), which are generated by AI’s need to imitate NI, are more informative.

The following traits are essential for NI characterization:
the ability to single out the essential in available knowledge;
the ability to set goals and plan behavior;
the ability to select premises of conclusions relevant to the goal.

the ability for reasoning including advancing of hypotheses ((4) — means for planning behavior), (9) - the ability for the synthesis of cognitive procedures (this ability provides formation of heuristics for the transition from ignorance to knowledge).

It is evident that abilities for deduction and induction, formulated (Nickerson et al., 1985) in isolation, are contained in above-mentioned (3), (4) and (9) which describe the mechanics of knowledge discovery formalized in AI systems as the synthesis of cognitive procedures. Whereas consideration of deduction and induction in isolation may contribute to the development of formal methods, it does not explain the mechanics of knowledge acquisition as an instrument of the rational aspect of consciousness.

It should also be noted also that the ability of understanding (Solso, 1991) is a consequence of the interaction of capabilities (1), (3), (4) - (12) as formulated above.

We now recall the structural schema that characterizes human consciousness: consciousness = system of knowledge + thinking + person’s subjective world (PSW).

The functioning of consciousness consists of the interaction of the three subsystems, but different states of consciousness are connected with the priorities of the actualization of these subsystems and of their possible combinations, e.g. actualization of a system of knowledge and thinking as reasoning realizing abilities (1) to (13), with the background participation of PSW, constitute intelligent activity — functioning of rational intelligence (priority of the left-hemisphere brain process (Ivanov, 1978)). Whereas actualization of a knowledge system (especially that stored in its subsystem of images) and of PSW, with the background participation of thinking, constitutes artistic activity with the predominance of intuition.

The inactive state of consciousness is a certain inner conversation the speed of which exceeds that of the transformation of its results into coherent speech (we may suppose that in this state of consciousness the right-hemisphere brain process has priority (Ivanov, 1978)).

Intuition (and insight or afflatus as its result) is a phenomenon of consciousness, that is difficult to explain and may be considered “mysterious”. It is a product of integrative psychical activity with obligatory influence of the system of knowledge and PSW.

It is extremely difficult to experimentally explore the part of intuition in man’s intelligent activity on account of its integrativity, i.e. its dependence on man’s psychical life as a whole. Henri Bergson (1911), in characterizing a person’s conscious life, identified the part of intuition: “…intuition is mind itself, and, in a certain sense, life itself: the intelligence had been cut out of it by a process resembling that which has generated matter.
Thus is revealed the unity of the spiritual life. We recognize it only when we place ourselves in intuition in order to go from intuition to the intelligence, for from the intelligence we shall never pass to intuition” (p. 268). American logician J. Myhill (1967) said that our formalizations correct our intuitions while our intuitions shape our formalizations.

The place of intuition in a person’s conscious activity can be represented by the “quadrangle of consciousness”:

```
Intuition → Reasoning
↑         ↑  ↓
PSW ← System of knowledge
```

Naturally, intuition is an emergent phenomenon of consciousness, belonging to PSW and dependent on the right-hemisphere activity of the brain.

We can try to explain the ideas of consciousness, intellect, and thinking from the point of view of architecture and functional characteristics of intelligent systems as representing artifacts of consciousness and imitating rational decision making.

Computer systems that imitate capabilities (1) to (13) on the basis of the architecture represented below are identified as an intelligent system (IS).

\[
\text{IS} = \text{information environment} + \text{Problem Solver} + \text{(user-friendly) interface},
\]

where information environment = base of facts (BF) + knowledge base (KB), Problem Solver = Reasoner + Calculator + Synthesizer. BF contains representations of relations that characterize the subject domain; elementary propositions correspond to these with the truth-values “factually true”, “factually false”, and “uncertain”.

KB contains two types of knowledge — declarative and procedural. Declarative knowledge characterizes the subject domain; procedural knowledge characterizes methods of transforming knowledge and facts (logical rules and computing procedures). Further, the creation of a KB depends on the use of conceptual knowledge to formulate principles of realization of the intellectual capabilities (1) to (13) that represent the phenomenology of NI.

The main subsystem of an IS is the Problem Solver, and its leading constituent is the Reasoner, which implements the synthesis of cognitive procedures (Finn, 1999a). This synthesis formalizes the process of new knowledge acquisition using BF and KB. Acquisition of new knowledge is performed by plausible reasoning containing ampliative inferences — induction and analogy.
An example of the synthesis of cognitive procedures in IS is provided by JSM-reasoning (Finn, 1999a) fulfilling two stages of knowledge transformation. The first consists of the consecutive application of induction and analogy, repeated until stabilization of generated hypotheses: no new hypotheses emerge at the \((n+1)\)st step, where \(n\) is the serial number of the stabilization step. The second stage of the JSM-reasoning consists of acceptance of generated hypotheses by abduction: hypotheses are accepted if the initial state of BF is explained by them. Such are hypotheses about dependencies of cause-effect type: from the relations “object — set of properties”, new relations, “the sub-object is the cause of the set of properties”, are generated.

Thus, JSM-reasoning generate hypotheses about causes: by means of these hypotheses JSM-reasoning, using inferences by analogy, makes predictions for the facts previously considered “uncertain”. The function of JSM-reasoning is used to extend the KB containing hypotheses about causes, as well as hypotheses predicting the presence (absence) of effects under investigation for objects from the BF, previously having truth-value “uncertain”.

A subsystem of IS, representing the interface, fulfills the following functions: natural language dialog, overview and demonstration of the IS’s functioning results (including graphic display), and learning to work with the IS. The interface maintains a connection between IS and its environment in an interactive mode, assessing IS’s openness and the choice by the user of the strategy of problem-solving by the Syntesizer — a subsystem of the Solver.

We now juxtapose the two schemes of the structure of consciousness and of IS’ architecture:

\[
\text{consciousness} = \text{knowledge system} + \text{thinking} + \text{PSW}
\]
\[
\text{IS} = \frac{\text{(BF+KD)} + \text{Solver} + \text{interface}}{}
\]

We should notice that in the IS imitations of intellectual capacities (1), (3), (4), (5), (6), (8), (9), and (10) are identified. They form the “core” of an approximate representation of human cognitive capabilities in the IS automatic mode of operation, while capabilities (2), (7), and (13) can be imitated only in an interactive mode with the participation of a human using the possibilities of communicating with IS through a user-friendly interface. Construction of high-level ISs imitating and, possibly, amplifying the “core” of human cognitive capabilities, is governed by conceptual knowledge that is represented by the following principles (Finn, 2004b).
**Principle I (The goal of IS)**

For the creation of an IS a problem P1 must be formulated, which corresponds with a class of formalizable tasks, such that their solution are imitated capabilities from the “core”. This principle corresponds to the intellectual capability (2) — ability to set goals.

**Principle II (Types of worlds — Subject domains and presentation of knowledge about them in IS)**

IS have three types of subject domains (a), (b), and (c):

(a) subject domains (“worlds”) W specifies that facts belonging to them are chance events; accordingly, rules of inference, applied in reasoning about W, use the apparatus of probabilities theory (including various statistical methods of data analysis);

(b) subject domains W specify that facts belonging to them are causally determined; accordingly, rules of inference, applied in reasoning about W, generate hypotheses about causal dependencies and based on them generalizations;

(c) subject domains W specify that facts belonging to them can be both causally determined and chance events; it means that W is a union of “worlds” (a) and (b), and reasoning applied to the knowledge about W must use rules generating hypotheses about dependences of cause-effect type, taking into account probabilistic consideration.

The goal of IS P1 is formulated by presenting knowledge according to types (a), (b), (c) of W.

**Principle III (Adequacy of the subject domain of W and of the Solver to P1)**

Reasoner and Calculator must use methods of reasoning and computing corresponding to the types of W - (a), (b), (c).

**Principle IV (Condition of applicability of IS to W)**

Conditions of applicability of Solver to W must be stated clearly. IS that are created in accordance to Principle IV are applicable to subject domains W to the extent that knowledge about them is weakly formalized, and data (facts) are suitable for structurization and for establishment of similarity.
PRINCIPLE V (SYNTHESIS OF COGNITIVE PROCEDURES IN IS)

To achieve the goal of P1 we need the corresponding formalized heuristic for solving problems in the class P1, which should be a synthesis of cognitive procedures, whose application to the union of BF and KB generates new knowledge extending the KB.

An example of such an heuristic is JSM-reasoning based on the scheme “induction — analogy — abduction” (with possible consecutive application of deduction) (Finn, 1999a).

Principle V corresponds to the intellectual capability (9) — possibility of the synthesis of cognitive procedures, and forms heuristics for solving certain classes of problems.

PRINCIPLE VI (FALSIFIABILITY AND ARGUEABILITY OF THE RESULTS OF THE SOLVER’S WORK)

According to this principle, IS must contain means for falsifying the results of the Solver’s application to BF and KB. As such, assertions from the KB may be used, imposing limitations on acceptance of hypotheses advanced by the Solver, or automatically generated falsifiers derived from the negative examples in the BF and prohibiting some of the hypotheses advanced by the Solver.

Arguability of the Solver’s work results means that the hypotheses generated by the Solver have arguments for their acceptance and no counter-arguments against their acceptance. It is evident that principle VI corresponds to the intellectual capability (5).

PRINCIPLE VII (SYNTHESIS OF THE THEORIES OF TRUTH)

For IS, the approximating basic intellectual capability of Aristotelian theory of truth as correspondence, formulated by A. Tarski (1956) (see also Popper, 1979c) for deductive sciences by means of two-valued logic, proves inadequate. The fact is that hypotheses advanced by the Solver are either plausible, if they are generated by the Solver with the help of plausible reasoning (Finn, 1999a; 2004b), or have a certain probability, if they are generated by the Solver with the use by the Calculator of statistical methods (in both cases there are criteria for accepting of hypotheses on the basis of the BF and KB). Application of the Solver to the Union of BF and KB and the use of KB containing earlier advanced hypotheses generate estimations of newly received knowledge on the basis of its conformance with the knowledge present in the KB by employing rules of plausible inference (e.g. induction and analogy). Ergo, here it is used not as the correspondence theory, but the theory of coherence (Popper, 1979b) as the theory of truth to acquire truth-values containing indications of the degree of plausibility. Thus, truth-values of the propositions, corresponding to the facts of the BF (if they are empirical data) are ascribed
to these propositions according to Aristotelian theory of truth — correspondence theory (Popper, 1979c).

Lastly, the results of IS work may have practical usefulness even when their truth was not established. In this case we speak of the applicability of pragmatic theory of truth: true is what is useful.

Thus, the cognitive process of acquiring new knowledge by means of an IS, including the analysis of data from BF and advancement of hypotheses, may be characterized by three theories of truth — correspondence theory, coherence theory, and pragmatic theory (Popper, 1979b): the BF is formed in keeping with the correspondence theory, hypotheses are evaluated according to coherence theory, and the results of IS work can be justified according to pragmatic theory of truth. The use of this synthesis of the three theories of truth is conditioned in IS by automatic hypotheses generation and by the use of machine learning. This synthesis explains the complexity of a cognitive mechanism represented by intellectual capacity (6) — evaluation of knowledge and actions of the knowing subject.

**Principle VIII (Invariance of the Structure of Solver in Relation to the Variability of Subject Domains and Data Structures)**

If the Reasoner is used for solving a certain class of problems P1 by synthesis of cognitive procedures according to Principle V, then its structure is not changed on applying it to different subject domains W and to different data structures that satisfy Principle IV — conditions of applicability of IS. Thus, the varying W and data structure does not vary the type of the rules of plausible inference and of reasoning. For example, the synthesis of cognitive procedures of the type “induction + analogy + abduction” with consecutive application of deduction realized by JSM reasoning is preserved (Finn, 1999a). Principle VIII expresses the existence of formalized heuristics which are a means of productive thinking (Wertheimer, 1954). Naturally, the question arises: how are such heuristics related to the asymmetry of brain activity?

**Principle IX (Presence of the Meta-level of the IS)**

Let us suppose that a formal language L whose expressive power is not weaker than that of the language of 1st order predicate logic (Mendelson, 1964), present facts from BF and knowledge from KB. Let us assume that there are metamathematical means ML such that in ML it is possible to formulate a deductive imitation of the Reasoner and to perform analysis of algorithms corresponding to the Solver’s procedures.

Principle IX creates the possibility of investigating the functioning of IS, and therefore, it corresponds to intellectual capacities (2), (3), and (13); — formation of plans.
(strategies of IS), investigation - on the logical level - of reasoning, and correction of knowledge representations and of the strategies of problem solving.

Principle IX is another logical means for formalized imitation of reflexion — intellectual capacity (6) from the list of the phenomenology of intelligence (1) to (13).

We can suppose that metatheoretical activity of investigating and developing IS in its essential aspects is comparable with the left-hemisphere mechanism.

**PRINCIPLE X (ABDUCTIVE EXPLANATION OF IS RESULTS BY REASONER)**

For the open subject domains of types (b) or (c), reasoning pertaining to hypotheses generation and deductive explanation of IS results is not applicable (Hempel & Oppenheim, 1948). IS uses the refined idea of abductive explanation of BF (abduction) of Ch. S. Peirce (Josephson & Joesphson (eds.), 1994):

- $D$ is a set of facts.
- $H$ is a set of hypotheses.
- $H$ explains $A$.

\[
\text{All } h\text{'s belonging to } H \text{ are plausible}
\]

If $D$ is the BF, $H$ is contained in the set of the results of Solver, and relation “$H$ explains the BF” is formalizable in the metalanguage ML for IS, as mentioned in Principle IX, then abductive acceptance of hypotheses concludes the synthesis of cognitive procedures in accordance with Principle VI.

In IS, implementing JSM-reasoning application of abduction constitutes the second stage of reasoning. At the first stage, hypotheses from $H$ are generated by induction and analogy. Thus, Principle X concretizes Principle V — the synthesis of cognitive procedures. Evidently, Principle X is an imitation and a formalization of capability (8) — seeking answer to the question “why?”

There are two types of understanding, passive and active. Passive understanding is based on perceiving combinations of habitual meanings. Active understanding uses abductive explanation of perceived text or message as of an answer to the question “why” using the interpreter’s knowledge. According to C.S. Peirce, this means the construction of the interpretant (from the perspective of interpreter). In light of this, understanding (as an intellectual capacity) is a derivative of capabilities (1) to (13), as was noted earlier.

However, it should be noted that principle X is formulated in relation to IS, their BF and KB. Although, provisionally, we may discuss the understanding a BF from the perspective of the KB and of its subset — hypotheses H.
Principle X, being an imitation and a formalization of intellectual capability (8), is connected to Principles V and VI. It is an imitation of the final act of an argumentative acceptance of a solution on the basis of BF and KB, and because of this, it is an integrative and formal analog of interaction of the right-hemisphere mechanism (depository of meanings (Ivanov, 1978)) with the left-hemisphere mechanism connected with knowledge transformations.

The last principle of IS construction is:

**Principle XI (evolutionary epistemology of problem solving in IS)**

According to K. R. Popper (1979a), the schema of the growth of knowledge is $P_1 \rightarrow TT \rightarrow EE \rightarrow P_2$, where $P_1$ is the problem being solved, TT — tentative theory for its solution, EE — elimination of errors and correction of TT after its application, and $P_2$ — new problem emerging after analyzing results of the modified (and more correct) TT.

This principle is connected with all intellectual capabilities (1) to (13), and accumulates them. Indeed, $P_1$ corresponds to (2) — goal-setting, TT is achieved with the help of (1), (3), (4), (7), (9), (10), (11), (12), and EE corresponds to (5), (6), (10), and (13).

This scheme of the growth of knowledge in the context of functioning of IS receives the following interpretation:

$P_1 \rightarrow \text{Solver (BF, KB)} \rightarrow EE \rightarrow P_2$, where $P_1$ — class of problems being solved by IS (Principle I), TT corresponds to the application of Solver to BF and KB, EE — analysis of results of IS and correction of strategies of solving the problem in interactive mode of the man-machine system; and $P_2$ — new problem emerging after EE.

A sequel of Principle XI is the necessity to include IS into the real process of inquiry, control or decision making, and also an openness of the union of BF and KB, which means that IS is a man-machine (partnership) computer system. In this sense, Principle XI is “social”, presupposing interaction of IS with its users (realized in the interface subsystem of IS).

Previously, we established correspondence between the set of intellectual capabilities (1) to (13) and Principles I to XI; but the latter corresponds to functions of IS having the architecture $IS = (BF + KB) + \text{Solver} + \text{user-friendly interface}$. The architecture of IS is comparable with the proposed above structure of consciousness: consciousness = knowledge system + thinking + PSW. Architecture and functional content of IS are useful as an example of an imitation of productive thinking, which through imitation, we understand a formalized heuristic containing both means of advancing hypotheses and means of their acceptance. Productive thinking, systematically considered by M. Wertheimer, was characterized by traditional logical means (classification, inference, syllogistic, J. S. Mill’s
inductive methods) and specific operations of grouping, centering, and realization of the whole thinking material (Wertheimer, 1954).

The logic of productive thinking according to Wertheimer (1954) cannot, of course, serve as an apparatus of problem solving automation. Imitation of problem solving with the help of the computer became possible with the development of the ideas of AI and modern logic. This new understands in this field calls for the change of our conception of rational knowledge and behavior. Rationality, in this new sense, combines inductive procedures with plausible (ampliative) inferences, and the advancement of hypotheses and their abductive acceptance with consecutive deductive inferences. The sense of this wider concept of rationality of understanding problem solving heuristics as an object of formalization and automation in IS is that rational knowledge is knowledge acquired by a heuristic based on arguments; knowledge as a cognitive structure adequate to the task (problem) set in a given subject domain. An example of such a heuristic is provided by JSM reasoning which represents a synthesis of cognitive procedures — induction, analogy, and abduction with the consecutive application of deduction (Finn, 1999a). Thus, it is reasonable to suppose that we should regard the following schematic structure of rational consciousness as the object of cognitive sciences:

\[
\text{rational consciousness} = \text{knowledge system} + \text{productive thinking} + \text{PSW}
\]

The elaboration of the idea of productive thinking from the perspective of Principles I to XI that characterizes AI systems can be provided by heuristics formalizing intellectual capacities (1) to (13) whose automation are IS (that simultaneously serve as the experimental basis for the imitation of cognitive activity or knowledge discovery).

It is reasonable to regard, from the perspective of AI, the realization of capabilities (1) to (10) and (13) as an ideal type according to Max Weber.

The schema representing the structure of knowledge has several interpretations — (á), (â), and (ã).

(á) Common-sense consciousness with the priority of personal knowledge, immediate perceptions, associations, elementary inferences, and PSW. To the common-sense consciousness in Cognitive Psychology (Solso, 1991) corresponds a noetic knowledge limited in time by current situation. This type of knowledge enables man to orient himself in his environment, and to react to the given situation and to his own inner state (the latter is an autonoetic (“knowing about itself”) consciousness) in the sense of (Solso, 1991).

(â) Creative consciousness with the priority of productive thinking and the use of a knowledge system corresponding to K.R. Popper’s World 3 of the objective content of knowledge (Popper, 1979b).
To the creative consciousness in Cognitive Psychology (Solso, 1991) corresponds noetic consciousness, in the state of which man apperceives objects, events, their relations, both in their presence and in their absence. The knowledge system used by creative consciousness presupposes operating not only with ideas, but also with concepts (Finn, 1999b).

(â) unifying consciousness containing both states of consciousness (ã) and states of consciousness (â).

It is possible to trace similarity between the type of knowledge (ã) and the interpretation of knowledge by S.L. Frank as a stream of actual experience (Frank, 1995, p. 148). The type of consciousness (â) has a certain similarity to the understanding of consciousness (Frank, 1995) in the second sense. This understanding of consciousness supposes that it contains not only the actually given, but combines all the contents potentially accessible to consciousness; consciousness in this sense corresponds to the union of ) and (â), i.e. to the type of consciousness (ã).

Let us take note of the following circumstance which is an argument for the existence of the emergent phenomena of consciousness that cannot be produced by isolated subsystems of knowledge, thinking, and PSW. The fact is that it is plausible to think that intuition is a function of subject’s knowledge system and PSW, since a knowledge system alone, as well as PSW alone, cannot be a sufficient condition for intuition. It is true that in the subject’s knowledge system and in his PSW, the “imprints” of the previous work of thinking may be present, but intuition is not immediately derived from thinking.

IS, as formalized approximations of consciousness of the type (ã), use appropriate heuristics for solving problems (achieving goals) P1 as analogs of productive thinking. For IS implementing JSM reasoning (that formalize heuristic “induction — analogy - abduction”), the role of an emergent quality of transition from ignorance to knowledge is played by prediction, through analogy and abduction, of the presence (absence) of the effects in the objects under investigation (fact = object + effects). This emergent quality manifests itself in the automatic mode of IS work, and in the interactive mode of IS work emerges property P2 — new problem obtained by analysis of IS results in accordance with Principle XI: P1 ~ Solver (BF, KB) ~ EE ~ P2.

JSM-reasoning is based on the principle of agreement ascending to J.S. Mill (1865): similarity of facts entails presence (absence) of the effects under investigation and their recurrence. This principle of agreement is used in the rules of plausible inference — induction and analogy. It is natural to suppose that detection of similarity by inductive procedures is connected, for the knowing subject, with the psychophysiological mechanism of associations and, possibly, with the right-hemisphere recognition of similarity of objects...
and situations as *Gestalts*. Prediction by analogy using hypotheses about causes acquired by induction (Finn, 1999a) have, most probably, a left-hemisphere psychophysiological analog. Finally, acceptance of hypotheses by abduction represented as non-monotonic inference (Arsky & Finn, 2008) may be correlated with left-hemispheric psychophysiological analog, but using, as a means of explanation, hypotheses about causes, acquired by induction, denotes an indirect relation to the right-hemispheric psychophysiological aspect. Of course, procedural realization of JSM-reasoning in IS uses combined algorithms of comparing and enumerating variants. In light of this, we may say that functioning of IS (imitators of rational consciousness) contains “faint imprints” of intuition — search for premises relevant to the reasoning’s goal (intellectual capacity (3)). These premises are used in the plausible inferences (induction and analogy) of JSM-reasoning.

Characteristics of consciousness of the types (á) and (ã) were considered as ideal types in the sense of Max Weber (Weber, 1951). The real existence of these types of consciousness (as well as that of the type (ã)) presents a dynamic change of states constituting the current state of memory, perceptions, thinking, and PSW (including wishes, attitudes, efforts of will etc.). In Finn (1991), in connection with the ideas of V.V. Ivanov (1978), an effort was made to consider intelligence on the basis of “left” - “right” opposition.

In Finn (1991), we did not introduce the notion of structure of consciousness proposed in this article, and accordingly, the subject’s intelligence is regarded there as the result of interaction of subject’s thinking with the sphere of consciousness in accordance with his inner world.

Let us specify the features of the intelligence formulated according to Finn (1991), also called capabilities to:

1. reasoning, including capability for reflexion;
2. assimilation of extra-personal knowledge;
3. generation of personal knowledge and accumulation of experience;
4. obtain superevaluations from the perspective of “higher values” of the world of spirit of the assimilated culture;
5. self-organization of the subject’s knowledge by falsification and verification (including the detection of paradoxes of investigation, i.e. divergence between theory and experience);
6. cognitive curiosity — setting goals and putting questions with intent of lessening uncertainty in the knowledge;
7. multi-aspect consideration of situation (i.e. to use knowledge in various directions of inquiry);
8. intuition.
It is evident that such an understanding of intelligence is neobergsonian, because it includes intuition into the set of intellect’s capabilities (according to Bergson (1911) intuition is not reducible to intellect).

According to Finn (1991), on the basis of known conceptions of brain’s asymmetry and of corresponding left-hemisphere and right-hemisphere psychophysiological mechanisms (Ivanov, 1978; Springer, 1989; Maslov, 1983), the following opposition of cognitive mechanisms “left - right” was presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Left”</th>
<th>“Right”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logical inference and proof</td>
<td>Reasoning and induction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical contradiction</td>
<td>“Paradox of inquiry”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical foundation of theoretical construction</td>
<td>Aesthetical beauty of theoretical construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axiomatic theory</td>
<td>Quasi-axiomatic theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation of cognitive mechanism</td>
<td>Strengthening of cognitive mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isomorphism of data structures</td>
<td>Similarity and analogy of data structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>Substantiation and prognostication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-personal knowledge</td>
<td>Personal knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assuming closedness of the world of computer systems</td>
<td>Openness of computer systems (Hewitt,1985)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By “quasi-axiomatic theory (QAT) (Finn, 1991) we understand that the structure of knowledge consists of a set of axioms, only partially characterizes the subject domain, is an open set of facts and hypotheses, and is a set of rules of plausible and valid inference.

By “strengthening of cognitive mechanism” we understand the use of formal means of reasoning, the implementation of which is practically impossible without computer systems.

By “substantiation and prognostication” we mean acceptance of some assertions on the basis of argumentation with the use of hypotheses generated by formalized heuristics (including abductive acceptance of hypotheses in accordance of Principle X).

It is to be noted that uniting of the “left” and “right” cognitive means corresponds to Principle XI — evolutionary epistemology of problem solving in IS.

Capabilities 1 to 8 from Finn (1991), as cited above, are covered by capabilities (1) to (13), but we need to specify the relation of intuition to capabilities (1) to (13). Thus, we must establish the connections between ideas of natural intellect, consciousness, and thinking from the perspective of AI; this enables us to put some order into the terminology of cognitive sciences (supposing recognition of logic as necessary means of cognitive sciences).

Through thinking, we understand reasoning, its preparation and organization; we search for premises, form of plan for achieving the goal, and react to the received results (reflection). A necessary condition for the process of thinking is realization of intellectual
capabilities (2), (3), (4), (5), and (9). By natural intelligence (NI), we shall understand an emergent structure formed by subject’s knowledge system, intellectual capabilities (1) to (13), and intuition, i.e. NI = (subject’s) knowledge system + \{1\) to (13)\} + intuition, where intuition is a function F of knowledge system and PSW: intuition = F (knowledge system, PSW). We should note that realization of intuition in a certain state of consciousness presupposes influence of the knowledge system and PSW on the condition of functioning of capabilities (1) (singling out of the essential in available knowledge of the subject) and (2) (ability to select knowledge). Naturally, NI is an ideal type.

Previously, we characterized the subject’s consciousness as an emergent phenomenon with the structure: consciousness = (subject’s) knowledge system + thinking + PSW, where through thinking is understood the process of birth, organization and effectuation of reasoning.

Through the phenomenology of consciousness from the perspective of the natural principles of AI, and having simple experimental realization, we understand the result of interaction between NI and PSW, that is, the phenomenology of consciousness = NI + PSW.

Thus, manifestation of consciousness depends on the knowledge system, capabilities (1) to (13), and PSW, because intuition is a function of the knowledge system and PSW. Specification of PSW is the task of psychology whose inquiries must explain the influence of the personal qualities of a subject on his cognitive possibilities and his productive thinking. In particular, it is interesting to define typologies of different interactions of “left” and “right” mechanisms for various heuristics of problem solving.

It is easy to understand that the specifications of the ideas of consciousness, thinking, and NI are obtained by constructing and investigating IS (as AI systems) of the type

\[ IS = (BF + KB) + (Problem) \ Solver + \ user-friendly\ interface. \]

Analogy between the concept of IS and ideas of consciousness, phenomenology of consciousness, and NI helps to formulate goals, on one hand, of “humanizing” IS, and, on the other hand, of creating an experimental basis for the imitation of NI. The specification of the idea of NI gives us the possibility of classification of intellectual capabilities (1) to (13) from the perspectives both the Principles I-XI (principles of constructing IS) and of brain mechanisms’ asymmetry. Ideas of synthesis of cognitive procedures (Principle V), invariance of the Reasoner’s structure (Principle VIII), and evolutionary epistemology of problem solving in IS (Principle XI) lead to the conclusion that aside from intellectual capabilities of “left” and “right” types there exist capabilities of integrative type. Thus, intellectual capabilities of “left” type are (4), (5), (8), (9), and (11); intellectual capabilities of “right” type are (10) and (7); and intellectual capabilities of integrative type are (1), (2), (3), (6), (12), and (13).
Psychology singles out three stages in the development of behavior — instincts, training, and intelligence (Vygotsky, 1993), these are applicable both to animal and to human behavior. In the proposed system of terminology as elaborated on the basis of analysis of theory and practice of IS application we marked out the ideal type of NI on the assumption of the specification of the idea of a person’s subjective world (PSW) — perception, emotions, wishes, volitions, attitudes.

In this terminology, it is proposed to speak about animals’ consciousness and their pre-intellect, because, of course, it is senseless to think that animals have capabilities (4), (5), (8), (9), and (11). They have instincts, a capability for learning and for using memory (training (Vygotsky, 1993)), capability of extrapolation (Krushinsky, 1974), and the formation of images (but not concepts). Because animals lack symbolic knowledge systems and the capability of creating abstract generalizations and enumerating possibilities, and their cognitive apparatus is primitive compared to human (L.V. Krushinsky (1974) calls it “elementary reasoning activity”), it is reasonable to speak of their having pre-intelligence, but not of intelligence in the sense defined above (i.e. NI).

An important consequence of the notions of IS and consciousness is the planning of the development of intelligent robots theory (Dobrynin & Karpov, 2006). The robot constructed by D.A. Dobrynin and V.E. Karpov, as the Problem Solver, has a simplified version of an IS realizing JSM reasoning (2006). This version of JSM reasoning employs rules for induction and analogy, but lacks the subsystem of abductive explanation of BF. Expanding robot’s Reasoner in order to employ the heuristic “induction — analogy — abduction” will strengthen its “intellectual capabilities” for making decisions with the aim of adaptation to the environment.

Intelligent robots may be regarded as cognitive systems having the possibility of action after making a decision. And cognitive system (Gergely, 2004) is an IS with the subsystem of receiving information in the BF by monitoring the environment (i.e. mechanisms of perception).

Thus, the structure of intelligent robot has the following schema:

\[
\text{AI-robot} = \text{subsystem of perception} + \text{IS} + \text{subsystem of action (motion, manipulator, etc.)}
\]

The development of intelligent robots depends on the imitation of intellectual capacities (1) to (13), of a subsystem of perception, and of mechanical subsystem of actions.

Asymmetry of “left-hemisphere” and “right-hemisphere” brain activities has a significant investigative material in psycholinguistic (Ivanov, 1978). However, presently, there are no corresponding investigations of psychological or neuropsychological mechanisms of the synthesis of cognitive procedures, the combining generation of inductive
generalizations, analogies, and abductive explanations in acceptance of hypotheses, as well as deductive inferences from knowledge formed by plausible reasoning. Investigation of such structures of non-elementary reasoning, analogous to the investigations of the genesis of elementary logical structures by J. Piaget (1959), may serve as a stimulus for the development of psycho-logic — a necessary aspect of cognitive investigations. Contemporary logic creates possibilities for the formalization of a heuristic and, consequently, generates problems of their psychological investigation.

The characterization of NI and of the idea of productive thinking from the perspective of AI, as well as establishing connections between the structure of rational consciousness and the structure of IS creates an ideological basis for the formulation of tasks and principles of structural cognitology that includes psycho-logic and experimental possibilities of AI. IS — the product of AI — provides a testing ground for imitation and strengthening of AI through plausible reasoning, because it formalizes capabilities (1) to (13) in accordance with principles I — XI of constructing high-level IS.

By structural cognitology we shall understand the direction of investigations which explore the phenomenology of consciousness from the point of view of AI, i.e. taking into account juxtaposition of the structure of consciousness (knowledge system + thinking + PSW) and the architecture of IS ((BF + KB) + Solver + Interface). This juxtaposition becomes more informative if we consider the structure of rational consciousness: knowledge system + thinking + PSW.

Artifacts that emerge as the results of the investigations of structural cognitology are cognitive systems (i.e. IS with the subsystem of receiving information in the BF by monitoring of the environment, including using AI-robots).

The principal content of structural cognitology is the correlation “subject of cognition — knowledge systems — result of cognition,” where by the “subject of cognition” can be understood both as a person and a man-machine (partnership) system. The epistemological counterpart of this correlation completes the schema of evolutionary epistemology (Popper, 1979b) by including the subject of cognition: subject of cognition P1 → TT → EE → P2; imitations of this schemes are cognitive systems that include IS.

Let us note that IS are not only imitations of rational aspects of the phenomenology of consciousness (NI + PSW), but they also provide the strengthening of man’s intellectual possibilities due to automation of the synthesis of cognitive procedures (Principle V) (Finn, 1999a), computer’s speed and memory. Due to this, it is possible to create computer-aided heuristic for IS, the implementation of which is impossible without computer. Thus, it can be said that IS may be amplifiers of man’s intellectual abilities (Ashby, 1956). This may be realized also in AI-robots.

The influence of PSW on NI and imitation of NI in IS, cognitive systems, and AI-robots, interdisciplinary character of investigations in structural cognitology seems evident.
as the object of investigations in structural cognitology; their realization demands interaction of the ideas and methods of logic, AI, psychology of thinking, psychology of person, psycholinguistics, and neurophysiology. It seems that a structural schema of this interaction can be used the above-proposed “quadrangle of consciousness” that includes intuition. Of course, at the present state of our knowledge we may speak only of the imitation of conditions conducive to the nascence of intuition (such are the imitations of capabilities (1) and (3) from the list of capabilities (1) to (13) constituting the phenomenology of NI). Uniting axis of interdisciplinary investigations should be the extended scheme of the growth of knowledge:

subject of cognition P1 → TT → EE → P2.

Without presuming to completely cover the problems of structural cognitology, let us formulate a list of its problems and tasks.

1. Explanation of the success of solving problems (P1) set by the subject of a certain typology of person (type of PSW).
2. Explanation of influence of the subject’s person on the success of solving the problem (P1) in the context of man-machine (partnership) IS.
3. Determination of user-friendliness of IS interface for different types of persons (users with corresponding PSW).
4. Empirical investigation of synthesis of cognitive procedures in problem solving (e.g. induction, analogy, abduction, and deduction) by children or adults.
5. Investigation of non-two-valuedness of reasoning in the process of making decisions (e.g. with the use of three- or four-valued logics).
6. Investigation of the persuasiveness of argumentation on the condition of knowing or not knowing the means of logics of argumentation.
7. Investigation of the cognitive cycle of the growth of knowledge for different types of people
8. Empirical description of the “quadrangle of knowledge” from psychological and logical perspectives, and the comparison of its functioning in human subject and in IS while solving the same problem P1 (will new problems P2 emerge in both these cases, and will they coincide?)
9. Investigating boundaries of man’s possibilities for problem solving and their corresponding extensions in IS for those cases where solving of the problem by a human subject is impossible.
10. Formulation of heuristics for solving in IS the problems not meeting in man’s research practice.
11. Construction of a new theory of statements about beliefs of the type “John thinks that P” (Carnap, 1956) which would take into account John’s decision-making
mechanism (knowledge system, Problem Solver). Is a psychological extension of this theory, including description of John’s PSW, possible?

12. How is it possible to imitate the psychology of AI-robot, to endow it with a “mood” in relation to the information received by it from the environment?

13. Investigation of possibilities of imitation (and strengthening) of the totality of capabilities (1) to (13) constituting the phenomenon of NI.

14. What are the neurophysiological characteristics of:
   a. keeping and using knowledge by the subject,
   b. each of cognitive procedures constituting reasoning (e.g. of induction, analogy, abduction, and deduction)?

15. Is the neurophysiological inversion of reasoning — bringing about of the neurophysiological state of the brain generating the reasoning — possible? (Without an answer to this question, John Searle’s theory of consciousness (1992) remains a hypothesis without the decisive argument).

According to Searle (1992), mental phenomena are causally conditioned by neurophysiological processes in the brain, and are themselves properties of the brain. The well-known Turing’s test of establishing difference between man’s and computer’s behavior (Turing, 1950) is discussed in Searle’s (1992) *The Rediscovery of the Mind*. Turing’s test uses the ambiguity in understanding the term “to think” and, consequently, is formulated in behaviorist style, without specification of NI’s capabilities constituting its phenomenon. From the perspective of contemporary AI and nascent structural cognitology instead of asking: “Can machine think?” we should ask: “Which of the capabilities (1) to (13) can be imitated by IS?” With this question another question is connected: “To what degree can be approximated the capabilities admitting of imitation by IS?” From the perspective of this article, capabilities (1), (3), (4) to (6), (8) to (10) can be imitated in IS according to the problem P1, even in the automatic mode. Capabilities (2), (7), and (13) can be partially imitated in the interactive mode of partnership with IS. Capabilities (11) and (12), correspondingly, - rationalization of ideas being transformed into concepts (Finn, 1999b), and the ability to create a whole picture of the object of thinking, uniting knowledge relevant to the goal, are super-creative; presently, there are no adequate means for their imitation in IS.

In *The Rediscovery of the Mind*, J. Searle (1992) introduced two conceptions of AI: “strong AI” and “weak AI”. Correspondingly, “strong” AI identifies brain with a program, and “weak” AI admits the possibility of imitating mental processes: perceptions, convictions, wishes, decision making, etc. Searle prefers “weak AI”, but, unfortunately, he does not discern rational mental phenomena from mental phenomena generated by PSW. While considering phenomenology of consciousness from the point of view of AI, using the connection between structure of consciousness and construction of IS, provides the
possibility of a realistic approach to the imitation of mental processes regarded as capabilities (1) to (13) and as manifestations of PSW, determining the subjectivity of consciousness. J. Searle justly considers consciousness as an emergent phenomenon of brain activity, but it is more informative to regard this emergentness as generated by the interaction of a knowledge system, thinking, and PSW, because a knowledge system and synthesis of cognitive procedures form the initial basis for understanding the specificity of the “human consciousness proper”.

J. Searle’s conception of consciousness regards it as a phenomenon analogous to digestion and to other biological processes. However, he recognizes the social character of consciousness (Searle, 1992), and this puts his conception out of the bounds of a purely biological understanding of mental processes. Sociality of consciousness is explained in a natural way by the use of knowledge and language, and their connections with thinking and mental states (including convictions, attitudes, wishes, aggressiveness, etc.). In the structure of consciousness proposed by this article its sociality can be represented in the subject knowledge system and his PSW.

It is to be noted that an important characteristic of consciousness — its intentionality, considered (Searle, 1992) in this article is represented in the totality of capabilities (1) to (13) by (2) (“goal — plan - action”), (5) (making decision on the basis of arguments), (6) (reflection), (8) (search for explanations), (11) (rationalization of ideas).

J. Searle (1992) considers the only type of reasoning — deduction, as a “principal means of weak AI”. This view on AI is obsolete, because the principal product of AI are IS that realize by reasoning the synthesis of cognitive procedures, including induction, analogy, abduction and deduction. Contemporary IS are partnership man-machine systems that effect learning and acquire new knowledge with the help non-deductive (ampliative) inferences. In light of this, understanding consciousness on the basis of wishes, convictions, and perceptions without preliminary detailed description of the functioning of productive thinking (synthesis of cognitive procedures) proves to be of little informativity (only descriptive, and unconstructive). We can hardly “rediscover the mind” (Searle, 1992), if we reject the use of contemporary ideas and methods of AI in the context of investigations of nascent structural cognitology having as its experimental base AI and AI-robots.

ENDNOTES

1. According to Alfred Binet and Theodor Simon (1916), goal-setting, adaptation, and evaluation constitute the core of intelligence. These capabilities correspond to the above-mentioned characteristics of phenomenology of NI: (2), (13), and (6) as formulated in (Finn, 2004, Vol. 1).
2. Intuition may be also present in case of functioning of rational intellect, although not as a means of reasoning, but as a certain stimulus or conjecture. In this sense intuition is an emergent phenomenon, incident to consciousness, but not reducible to the system of knowledge and to thinking.

3. BF in the IS for pharmacology contains facts of the type "chemical compound - set of biological activities", BF in the IS for medical diagnostics contains facts of the type "case history - diagnosis", etc.

4. Elements of KB correspond to semantic and procedural memory and to analogous types of consciousness, which constitute noetic consciousness according to Solso (1991), whose content is perception of relations and interconnections of objects and events (cf. (Bergson, 1911): establishment of relations is an innate quality of intelligence).

5. Synthesis of cognitive procedures is a means of productive thinking in the sense of Wertheimer (1954).

6. A fact is called negative if elementary proposition representing it has the truth-value "factually false".

7. A simpler formulation of this idea: a text is meaningful, if it is abstractable. Its abstract explanation of the text - is its interpretant from the point of view of interpreter.

8. Mathematical logic is mentioned in Wertheimer (1954) as apparatus useful for investigating thinking.

9. From the semiotic point of view creative consciousness uses signs-symbols in the sense of C.S. Peirce.

10. In IS analogs of QAT are KB, BF, and Problem Solver with Reasoner, formalizing a heuristic - for example, JSM reasoning with induction, analogy, and abduction.

11. This principle possibly correlates with Köhler's law of structure (Vygotsky, 1993): perception and action (as processes of behavior) are not sums of disjunctive elements, but constitute a certain whole by whose properties are defined function and value of every separate part contained in it.

12. J. Searle (1992) adduces a witty objection to A. Turing, known as situation in the "Chinese room".

13. However, understanding of the nature of intuition will demand investigation of the influence of PSW on the knowledge and rational procedures being used.

REFERENCES


Logic Questioned: The Communicative Act of Interrogation in a Distorted Poetic Space of Brodsky’s “Homage to Yalta”

Ekaterina Schnittke

The paper examines communicative devices that contribute to a distortion of the poetic space in Brodsky’s Homage to Yalta. First, it is shown that the effect of distortion builds up in the introduction by logical and semantic manipulations. The primary focus of the paper is to examine how the distorted perspective of the introduction is sustained throughout the poem by constructing a communicative act of interrogation that frustrates reader’s expectations. The study is carried out within the conversational-analytic framework. It analyzes sequencing of question-answer adjacency pairs in presenting the testimonies of different witnesses. The textual data is evaluated against the background of question-answer strategies in real-world institutional communication along two axes: that of answering strategies, specifically turn and role allocation in answers, and that of questioning strategies. It is argued that choosing one strategy over another in signaling the interrogator’s question--who never shows up in the interrogations except in reverberations of his questions in the witnesses’ answers--is an important tool in establishing power configuration patterns. Moreover, questioning strategies are shown to progressively diverge from what we expect to see in the interrogation reaching the level of communicative inadequacy in the last testimony.

Ekaterina Schnittke is an adjunct professor at the Pasadena City College in Pasadena, California, USA (eschnitk@gmail.com).
Brotsky’s Homage to Yalta is a poetic report of a police interrogation concerning the murder of a Yalta resident. The poem consists of seven parts, five of which are numbered 1-5. Parts 1-4 are the interrogations proper: four witnesses who turn out to be interrelated are being directly examined. Part 5 is a conversation between unidentified interlocutors about the crime and the suspects. These five parts are framed by unnumbered and untitled sections: an introduction in which the narrator, the lyrical I, explains the “methodology” he plans to apply to his recounting of the events, and a coda which closes the poem, albeit not hermetically.

In the introduction, the narrator claims the story to be truthful (правдива) and yet speculates on the regretful status of truth in the atomic age as an inevitable final inference of deductive reasoning. An intricate system of oppositions between life, Art and truth\(^1\) highlights this conflict. Losev (1978 and 1986) has shown that Homage to Yalta is Brotsky’s argument *ad absurdum* against the positivistic idea of causal necessity and traced its origins to the philosophy of Lev Shostov.\(^2\) Examining the philosophical origins of the poem, however, goes beyond the scope of this present paper.\(^3\) Instead, I focus on the linguistic analysis of the crafty moves which the poet uses to vacuum the reader into a universe with a distorted, Escheresque perspective; a universe filled with impossible objects. It is in this universe that the central communicative act of the poem, viz. the interrogation, is set.\(^4\) The multi-perspective system of the interrogation is maintained through distinct communicative strategies that serve to redirect or refocus the perspective and contribute to building the identity of the characters. Among these strategies is the sequencing of question-answer adjacency pairs (Schegloff, 1972) in presenting the testimonies of different witnesses. This paper examines such strategies.
I. DEFINING THE POETIC UNIVERSE: SETTING THE OPPOSITIONS

The introduction stands apart from the other parts of the poem in several respects. First, being unnumbered, it is typographically marked. Second, unlike the conventional prologue, it is not a part of the story line (fabula). Rather, it constitutes a non-diegetic frame in which the narrator shares his thoughts with the reader. Third, it stands out for its one-participant (although quasi-dialogic) mode of speech: the speaker is the narrator and poet’s alter ego, whereas the addressee is an imaginary reader referred to as either чтец ‘gentle reader’ or with the first person inclusive pronoun мы ‘we’. By addressing the reader, the narrator approximates the effect of a real communicative situation, thus reversing the reader’s conventional willing suspension of disbelief into trust based on personal relationship. It is argued here, that along with his assurance of the story’s truthfulness, the narrator tries to lure the reader into the trap of logical fallacies and paradoxes.

At the first mention, truth appears in a blurred focus. According to Ozhegov’s dictionary (1977), the adjective правдивый ‘truthful’ is polysemic: правдивый1 is defined as “Содержащий, выражающий правду” ‘containing, expressing truth’, whereas правдивый2 is “Любящий говорить правду, стремящийся к правде” ‘loving to tell the truth, seeking the truth’. The two meanings are subjects to some combinatorial preferences. Правдивый1, having the semantic feature of corresponding to facts, is most commonly collocated with such nouns as история or рассказ ‘story’, whereas правдивый2, having the semantic feature of disposition, is collocated with nouns that have the semantic feature ‘person’, e.g. правдивый2 человек ‘truthful person’ or, metonymically, правдивый2 характер ‘truthful personality’. The two distinct meanings are most vividly actualized in the antonyms. The phrase правдивая история ‘true story’ is opposed to вымышленная история ‘made-up story’, whereas правдивый2 человек is semantically opposed to лживый человек ‘dishonest person’. Both ложь ‘lie’ and вымысл ‘fiction’ have the meaning of non-correspondence to facts. But unlike ложь, which implies a “conscious distortion ‘of truth’… with the purpose of achieving something for oneself” and “presupposes a deviation from the moral norms” (Apresjan, 2003, p. 669), вымысл and its synonym выдумка, “presuppose a play as their motivation without implying the person’s dishonesty” (ibid.). Вымышленная история ‘made-up story, fiction story’ does not pretend to correspond to facts except by the process of suspension of disbelief.5
By juxtaposing truth and lie right after claiming the truthfulness of the story (1a-b) Brodsky achieves two things. First, he undermines the objectivity of truthful by crossing two distinct meanings of правдивый and bringing up the speaker’s intentions (truth vs. lie) instead of the objective “corresponding to facts” (truth vs. fiction). Second, truth is being presented from two incompatible perspectives. One is the regrettable perspective of “nowadays” where truth, like lies, is not obvious and is in need of compelling argument and sound corroboration. From this point of view, the truth is a matter of opinion with which one can agree or disagree (1h-i). The other perspective implied is that of “other times”. From that perspective, truth was presumably seen as an obvious absolute or as one accepted by faith. Without yet subscribing to any of these standpoints, the narrator exposes the logical inconsistency of the first one (1f-h).

A syntactic shift in (1h-i) is another linguistic manipulation that disorients the reader even more. According to the rules of Russian grammar, the terms contrasted by means of the conjunction a ‘but/and’ should be of the same syntactic order, and the negative operator не should immediately precede the term being contrasted. Consider (2a), (2b), and (2c):

(2a) *Я не люблю Бродского, а Рейна. ‘I do not love Brodsky but Rein’

(2b) Я люблю не Бродского, а Рейна. ‘It’s not Brodsky that I love but rather Rein’
I love-lsg. not Brodsky-acc.sg. but Rein-acc.sg.

(2c) Я не люблю Бродского, а обожаю. ‘It’s not that I love Brodsky, I adore him’
I not love-lsg. Brodsky-acc.sg. but adore-lsg.

In the poem, the contrasted terms, i.e. я верю ‘I believe’ and согласен ‘I agree’, are the complements of the verb говорят ‘they say’. Therefore, the negative particle should precede the negated term: Но теперь говорят не «я верю», а «согласен» ‘Now one says not “I believe”, but “I agree”’. The shift of the negation scope further creates an uneasy feeling that something is going wrong in the space of the poem.

This feeling continues to build up in the next stanza as a result of a similar logical manipulation of parallelizing nonparallel items. Speaking about modern man’s
preoccupation with the structure of objects, rather than the objects proper, the poet brings up an analogy between us and a child:

(3) И как ребенок, распатрия в куклу, рьдет, обнаружив в ней труху, так подоплеку тех или иных событий мы обычно принимаем за самые события.

Like a child who clobbers dolly, then wails on finding the debris inside, we tend to take what lies in back of this or that event as nothing less than that event itself.

For an analogy to work, it must be comprehensive, i.e. the elements of the source (antecedent) must map onto the target, preserving the relations of the antecedent (Holyoak et al., 2001, p. 8). In the poem, the source has the following scheme:

(4) a child (having clobbered a doll) wails (having found the debris)

Some elements of the source map onto the target elements: a child maps onto we; a doll maps onto events; debris map onto what lies in the back of the events. Others map only partially, by inference, or don’t map at all: thus clobber a doll could have been mapped onto analyze events, but the latter is not found in the target part of the analogy; wails should map onto an element with a similar semantic load, e.g. be disappointed, but is formally mapped onto usually take as the event itself; find has no corresponding element. The perfect isomorphic analogy would run roughly in the following manner:

(5a) LIKE a child (having clobbered a doll) wails (having found the debris)

THUS we (having analyzed the events) are disappointed (having found what lies in the back)

or

(5b) LIKE a child takes the debris for a doll

THUS we take what lies in the back of events for the events themselves

However, the actual analogy found in the text states:

(6) LIKE a child (having clobbered a doll) wails (having found the debris)

THUS we take what lies in the back of events for the events themselves

The twist lies in substituting the predicate take for wails: while a child clobbers a doll, finds debris, and wails (because she expected to see something more interesting, and because she sees the disappointing difference between the doll and what’s inside), we analyze events, find what lies in the back and take what lies in the back of the events for the events
themselves. Not only is the analogy incomprehensive due to juxtaposing non-isomorphic elements, but, if one wants to make any sense of it, it states that UNLIKE a child who is disappointed by the mismatch of the object and its insides, we take the insides for the object itself. As we are prone to analytical thinking, we are, in fact, more gullible than a child. The child at least manages to be disappointed, while we fail to notice anything disappointing in the inference from our analysis. Thus it turns out that we are inferior to children in judgment capacity. The argument, however, is twisted so artfully that instead of leading to this conclusion, it leaves the reader confused and with a growing sense of uneasiness.

In the next move, the narrator sets up the relationship between truth and life, indirectly as before.

(7) В этом есть
своё очарование, поскольку
мотивы, отношения, среда
и прочее — всё это жизнь. А к жизни
нас привучили относиться как
к объекту наших умозаключений.

To which there is a kind
of fascination, inasmuch as things
like motives, attitudes, environment,
et cetera—all this is life. And life
we have been trained to treat as if it were
the object of our logical deductions.

Life, like truth, is claimed to be a result of some logical operations. Here again the subject of the narrative adopts two incompatible yet simultaneous points of view: that of some outside omniscient observer,\(^6\) to whom all positive statements are attributed, and that of the “modern man” who is trained to a certain way of thinking (expressed by the use of inclusive first person plural pronouns). On the one hand, motives, attitudes, environment,/ et cetera—all this is life (the omniscient observer); on the other hand, life/ we have been trained to treat as if it were/ the object of our logical deduction (the modern man’s perspective). The speaker goes on to clarify (thereby confusing the reader once again) that the modern man’s perspective is erroneous, thus identifying with the omniscient observer:

(8) And sometimes all it seems we have to do/ is interweave them—motives, attitudes,/ environment, and problems—and events/ will then take place. But no.

The potential counterfactuality of seems is reaffirmed in but no. The atomic age man is disappointed (No event, alas, takes place) that his construct didn’t work (like the child from the metaphor), whereas the omniscient observer is relieved at admitting that life does not work that way: On second thought, thank God.

Having just started to define his own position in favor of the “holistic” point of view, the narrator frustrates (Jakobson’s term about what poetry in fact is: a constant frustration of anticipation) the reader’s expectations and assumes conclusively the point of view that has just been discredited: Of course, I’ll make an effort to comply with / the view of truth I mentioned earlier— / that is to say, I plan to disembowel / that dolly. The narrator
apologizes for his intent to compensate for the inadequacy of this approach by appending to truth an element of Art (9), thus finally disclosing what in reality the base (основа) of all events is and again undermining the perspective just subscribed to, according to which it is the motives, relationships, etc. that are the rationale (подспла) of all events.

(9) Но да простит меня
чтите добрый, если кое-где
прибавлю к правде элемент Искусства,
которое, в конечном счёте, есть
основа всех событий (хоть искусство
писателя не есть Искусство жизни,
а лишь его подобье).

[But may you forgive]
me, gentle reader, if I here and there
append to truth an element of Art,
which, in the last analysis, lies at
the heart of all events (though, to be sure,
a writer's art is not the Art of life,
it only forms a likeness).

By making the distinction between the capitalized Art of life and the lower case writer’s art the narrator sets his last trap. The writer’s art is said to be a mere likeness of the Art of life and is thus reduced to the rank of a skill. What should supposedly serve as an illustration of the primacy of the Art over truth (10), of how art depends on Art), or how the image (the product of the writer’s art) depends on the original (the product of the Art of life), turns out to be an illustration of how truth depends on art (11).

(10) Testimony / of witnesses will follow in the order/ in which it was obtained.
(11) Herein lies an/ example of how truth depends on art./ and not of art's dependence
on the truth.

In this way, with one hand Brodsky establishes the hierarchy, where truth is a tertiary product of the Art of life: truth depends on art which depends on Art. This is in line with our view of truth as the sum of proofs, a result of a subjective argument. Yet with the other hand he destroys the first link of this hierarchy: had the writer chosen a different order of presentation, not only would the truth have been different, but also the dependence of the writer’s art on the Art of life would have been violated. Thus what is being appended to truth is not an element of Art, as promised, but rather an element of art.

With this last logical trap Brodsky closes the sphere of the poetic space of Homage to Yalta. The almost-visual playing with perspective brings to mind the aesthetics and techniques of Escher’s graphics with its “impossible objects”, repetitive images flowing one into another, upward stairs that lead downward, parallel lines that converge, as well as non-parallel ones that never intersect, distorted reflections etc. Having opened with introducing such a universe, Brodsky begins his truthful story.

Below I examine how the distorted perspective is sustained throughout the poem with particular attention to the presentation of the communicative act of interrogation.
2. THE COMMUNICATIVE ACT OF INTERROGATION

Police interrogation and the language of questioning have been the focus of numerous studies in forensic linguistics and, more generally, sociology of language (Shuy, 1998; O’Barr, 1982; Philips, 1987; Yeschke, 2003; Heydon, 2005). In this section I present some of the findings of these studies with the purpose of examining the poetic “data” against their background.

As an institutional communicative act, interrogation is a structured question-monitored discourse with asymmetrical participant roles and distinct communicative goals for each participant. The goal of the interrogator is to elicit information, whereas for the witness/suspect it is to furnish information without causing self-harm. The question-answer format sets up a sequence of adjacency-pairs (Schegloff 1972) in which the first pair part (a question) compels and to a great extent, determines the second pair part (an answer). Interrogation is typically characterized by a rigidly regulated turn allocation according to the participants’ “institutionally assigned roles as questioners and respondents” (Ilie 1999, p. 978). As an institutional official, the interrogator is higher in status and, therefore, has the power to ask questions, introduce and change topics, and interrupt his interlocutor (Shuy, 1998, p. 7).

The analysis of question use in anglophone interrogation and courtroom cross-examination has shown questions to be a tool of power manifestation and manipulation by both sides, the dominant (Shuy, 1998; Walker, 1987; Ilie, 1999) and the weak (Harris, 1989) alike. Moreover, some question types were found to suggest more control than others or to be more effective in information elicitation. The relevant distinctions are made along two axes: (i) the propositional structure of the question and (ii) the type of information a given question is seeking.

The two classes of questions based on structural criteria (axis i) are defined according to whether or not the question contains a set of possible answers:

(i) Closed (yes-no) questions contain a complete proposition and take as an answer one of the polar opposites—the proposition expressed either in the question or in its negation, e.g. Did Brodsky write the poem ‘Homage to Yalta’?

(ii) Open (wh-)questions contain an incomplete proposition with a variable term expressed by a question word, e.g. What did Brodsky write? They accept as an answer a completed proposition where a question word is replaced with a specified term. Although open questions do not provide a set of ready answer options, the answer options must be members of a conceptual domain or domain of interpretation of that question (Belnap & Steel, 1976; Padučeva, 1985). For example, the conceptual domain of the question Who wrote the poem “Homage
The two major classes, based on the type of information the question is seeking (axis ii) are the unbiased questions (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002) asked with the intention of eliciting unknown information and the biased questions that show “that the speaker is predisposed to one answer over another” (ibid., p. 872).

One type of biased question is the conducive question which displays either an epistemic stance of the questioner or prompts for a specific answer. Conducive questions can be asked in a variety of ways. For example, a negative question You weren’t married, were you? suggests a presumably shared knowledge that needs confirmation, rather than the establishment of fact, as in the less biased Were you married? Likewise, the choice of a closed constituent question over an open question displays control of answer possibilities. For example, in the poem, one of the interrogator’s questions concerns the way in which the wounded victim reached the witness’s place. Rather than asking How did he get to your door? the conceptual domain of which would include all the different ways of getting from one place to another, the interrogator narrows down answer possibilities by asking a closed Did he crawl? with the conceptual domain reduced to a single constituent of crawling.

Another type of biased question seeks meta-communicational information. This type includes (i) follow up questions that summarize and/or confirm the information obtained previously and (ii) echo questions that repeat the question of the other interlocutor with the intention to confirm a proper understanding of it. Interrogation, as a discovery procedure, is expected to pursue predominantly information-elicitation rather than information manipulation. Indeed, manuals that circulate in US police departments recommend avoiding yes-no questions in interrogations as an ineffective technique for information-eliciting (cited in Shuy 1998, O’Barr 1982). In practice, however, interrogations are known to exercise coercive methods that include, among others, the methods of linguistic coercion.

The general controlling power of questions (as described in Schegloff 1972) is increased in institutional settings which, by definition, feature power imbalance and manipulation. Ilie (1999) observes that in courtroom examinations “there is usually an ulterior motive in the interrogator’s follow-up of the defendant's answer, which is used as a way of pursuing a particular line of argumentation” (pp. 983-984). According to Walker (1987), in the courtroom examination, which “is not so much about truth as it is about winning or losing” (p. 77), control over witnesses is achieved by manipulating the form of the question: wh-questions (open questions) are asked when new information is desired by the official; yes-no (closed) questions are asked when the official desires to narrow answer
choices. In both cases, conducive questions are instrumental in directing the witness to the desired answer.

The purpose of the following analysis is to examine the use of the different question types in *Homage to Yalta* against the background of what we know about the pragmatic functions of questions in real life settings with similar communicative goals.

### 3. Participants of the Communicative Acts in Homage to Yalta

The testimonies in the poem revolve around two major themes: the history of the relationship of the witness with the victim and the witness’s activities at the time of the murder.

In addition to the five participants of the interrogation, the interrogator and four witnesses (suspects), there are also two participants of the conversation on the ship. All the participants are anonymous, though for different reasons. The anonymity of the five interrogation participants reflects the impersonality of the legal system, where “people are often referred to only by the name of their role” (Gibbons, 2003, p. 76) in a given institutional activity, e.g. “the witness,” “the suspect,” etc. In contrast to this, the two participants of the conversation on the ship are nameless because their identity remains unknown to the reader. For easier identification, I will refer to the witnesses with their made-up code names: *the chess player, the actress, the captain,* and *the boy* (in the order they were interrogated). Letters X and Y will stand for the participants of the conversation on the ship.

All the participants of the interrogation turn out to be interrelated. *The actress* is a former lover of both *the chess player* and the victim. In addition, she is a present lover of *the captain,* and there is a hint to a similar relationship with *the interrogator,* toward the end of the actress’s testimony. *The captain* was acquainted with the victim and knew of his relationship with *the actress.* *The chess player* was a friend of the victim. *The boy* is a son of the captain.

X, the leading speaker of the conversation on the ship, is evidently conversant with the details of the investigation, which gave ground for Losev (1978) to take for granted the identity of this speaker as the interrogator. Although the text does contain some clues to such identity, the reader is left mystified as to the character of X's relatedness to the investigation.
4. **ANALYSIS OF QUESTION-ANSWER ADJACENCY PAIRS IN “HOMAGE TO YALTA”**

Analyzed against the background of the real-life communicative act of interrogation, the data from the poem show that different communicative strategies of questioning and answering are crucial in engineering the speaker’s identity as well as in maintaining the oppositions of *life*, *truth*, and *art/Art*. The textual data has been evaluated along two axes: that of answering strategies, specifically turn and role allocation in answers, and that of questioning strategies.

*Answering Strategies.* Interestingly, the dominant figure of the interrogator never shows up in the poem except in reverberations of his questions in the witnesses’ answers. Thus, answers play a double role of answering proper and question-signaling, the choice of one strategy over another becoming an important tool in establishing power configuration patterns.

The three techniques of question signaling are as follows:

(i) The “Yes/no, echo answer” technique, whereby the contents of a closed question are echoed in the witness’s answer. The answer begins with one of the function words of verification or disagreement such as да ‘yes’, нет ‘no’, верно ‘true’, etc. The question undergoes pertinent changes, such as sentence type transposition (from interrogative to affirmative) and transformation of second person pronouns and verbs into the first person. For example, the utterance *Yes, of that I’m very certain* signals that a question *(Are you certain of that?)* has been asked (hereafter the conjectured question is enclosed in angle brackets).

(ii) The “Question echo, Answer” technique, whereby the witness echoes the question back to the questioner before answering it, e.g. *Was he aware of it? Most likely not; What do I know about his family? Why, absolutely nothing.*

(iii) The “Answer” technique, whereby the presence of a question is signaled without making its contents known. The question can be restored contextually rather than textually, e.g. *besides, he knew that now I had become … /<I: involved in a new relationship?> Why, yes.*

All of the above question-signaling techniques may be prefaced with a question/statement of misapprehension, e.g. *What’s that? That’s right, he didn’t sound at all distraught; [Pardon? I didn’t get it]: does/ the name mean anything to me? It does.*

As the case with most pragmatic phenomena, there are no hard rules for the choice of that or another strategy. For example, question-echoing may be dictated not only by the desire of power manipulation but also by physical constraints, such as hearing or
understanding problems. Whatever the reason, question-echoing invariably results in an answer delay. In a situation with an asymmetrical power configuration any answer delay, even one due to physical constraint is likely to be interpreted as a deliberate refusal to cooperate, a talk against time, or a power manipulation device.\textsuperscript{15} Echoing is the regular device for signaling an open question in the poem. However, going beyond the automatic technique and echoing a closed question provides the opportunity for the witness to temporarily challenge the current power configuration by switching his preassigned role of respondent to that of questioner.

Analysis of the distribution of the question-signaling techniques over different speakers (cf. figures and A-D in Appendix) in the poem reveals the following patterns.

The communicative behavior of the chess player, displays the least conformity to the role-allocation: while he is at the lower end of using the "Yes/No Echo answer" technique (56\% of closed questions compared to the 74\% of the actress, 86\% of the captain, and 90\% of the boy), he is at the highest end of the "Question echo Answer" (33\% of closed questions compared to 0\% of the boy, 5\% of the actress, and 7\% of the captain). Moreover, the chess player tends to preface his answers with requests to clarify the question more than other speakers (31\% of all questions compared to 16\% of the captain, 13\% of the actress, and 11\% of the boy). All these strategies portray a witness who takes advantage of all the opportunities to ask questions, thereby attempting to challenge the legitimacy of the preassigned power configuration.

The actress on the other hand, is depicted not as challenging the constraints of a given discourse situation by using manipulative answering techniques but rather as ignoring them. She takes the lead in topic control. She feels free to switch the preassigned role of respondent to that of questioner: the number of questions she asks the interrogator equals the number of questions he asks her. She shortens the communicative distance by switching from \textit{вы 'you-formal'} to \textit{ты 'you-informal'}, as well as by making offers and demanding empathy. In addition, she tends to signal the question’s presence without making its contents known (the “Answer” strategy) more often than other speakers (21\% of closed questions as opposed to 7\% by the captain, 10\% by the boy, and 11\% by the chess player). In short, the actress disregards the rules of institutional communication and abides by her own rules.

The communicative behavior of the captain is characterized by the extensive use of the least "challenging" technique of echoing the question in the answer without tossing it back to the questioner: 86\% of closed questions are signaled in this way. At the same time, the captain tends to echo not the actual question, but rather his own interpretation thereof. For example, his words Д{\text{а}}, слепота возможна ‘Yes, blindness is a possibility’\textsuperscript{16} (12) are rather a \textit{de re} rendition of a question that expressed skepticism, e.g. <Maybe you just weren’t noticing?>, than a \textit{de dicto} repetition of interrogator’s question <А слепота возможна?> ‘<Is blindness a possibility?>’.
(12) But/I knew. One didn’t have to be a Sherlock/ like you to know it. Average concern/ Was really all it took. Especially since… <…> / ‘Yes, blindness is a possibility’
It is also likely that there has been no question at all, but rather only a comment or a non-verbal expression of skepticism at the captain’s credulity.

These question-answering strategies portray the captain as a compliant witness who is aware of power configuration patterns and willing to disclose personal information. Yet he also suggests evasive tactics in answering the interrogator's questions.

The boy's testimony is characterized by the highest percentage of closed questions signaled through echoing in the answers (87%). He tosses back only one question, and the percentage of answers prefaced with что? ‘what?’ is the lowest among the four witnesses. Like his father, the boy rephrases some of the interrogator’s questions. However, while the captain’s rephrasing is a result of his interpretation, the son translates the questions into his own substandard idiolect even when the question is echoed back, e.g. the question «Про что (была передача)?» ‘What (was the show) about?’ is transformed into Про чего? 'What-substandard about?'; её дом ‘her house’ into её-средний дом ‘her-substandard house’; бабушка ‘Grandmother’ into бабка ‘old woman’. These strategies testify to the boy's simple-mindedness rather than to his desire to challenge the interrogator’s authority, which is in contrast with the testimonies of other witnesses.

Questioning strategies. The interrogator is portrayed as one who applies distinct strategies to each witness (contact author for details). The vast majority of the interrogator’s questions are closed (yes-no) questions: 69 %, 79%, 78%, and 74% in the chess player’s, the actress’s, the captain’s, and the boy’s testimonies, respectively. Moreover, a large portion of the closed questions are conducive questions that offer a ready answer. The number of conducive questions increases with each testimony: ranging from 22% of closed questions in the interrogation of the chess player to 37%, 43%, and 66% in the actress’s, the captain’s, and the boy's interrogations, respectively.

Although pragmatic devices of this sort are multifunctional, closed and conducive questions are not only considered to be ineffective for information-elicitation, they are also notorious for their ability to manipulate information rather than elicit it. In some testimonies conducive questions do function as controlling devices in that they limit answer options for the witnesses. In other testimonies they function almost like a rescue prompt for an indolent student – of the kind of Isn’t Paris the capital of France? This interpretation may be called for in the testimonies of the actress and the boy, for they stand apart from other testimonies in that they are marked for a different type of relationship in addition to that of interrogator-to-witness, i.e. a man-to-woman and adult-to-child, respectively.

There is another aspect to conducive questions. By planting ready answers in the interrogator’s questions, the author creates the image of an omniscient investigator who is using his knowledge effectively to corner the witness. This picture is sustained in the
Ekaterina Schnittke  Logic Questioned: The Communicative Act of Interrogation

testimonies of the chess player, the actress, and, up to a certain point, the captain, after which it gets abruptly suspended. The closed question about the type of weapons the captain had in his possession ("Is it a Stechkin gun?") at first appears to be the last “fatal” blow to the witness, since the question is asked by a person who definitely knows from which gun the victim has been murdered. Even if we leave open a possibility that the interrogator’s intent was just watching the witness’s reaction and testing his reliability, the captain’s denial, No, no, it’s not a Stechkin; only my/old trophy from the war—a Parabellum, proves it to be a false move: whether because the murder has not been committed with the captain’s weapon or because the captain did not provide any reason for mistrust. Typically, such a situation would result in a communicative gap and require repair, yet in the poem, the interrogation continues as if nothing had happened.

With a growing number of conducive questions missing the target in the interrogation of the boy, the illusory image of the omniscient, clairvoyant investigator is replaced with that of an interrogator who is either bluffing or being irrelevant. At times, the interrogator seems to know every minute detail about the boy, e.g. that he was watching TV with his grandmother (13), that the boy went out in a jacket (14), that he put the gun in his pocket, that the victim was smoking when the boy met him (15) (the relevant questions are in bold). Yet, other questions miss the aim: he is misinformed as to which jacket it was (14), how the boy got hold of the gun, etc. (the relevant questions that miss the target are underlined).

(13)  "Вы смотрели телевизор?
‘Aga, мы с ней смотрели телевизор./
‘Were you watching TV?’ Uh-huh, the two of us watched television.’

(14)  "Ты был в куртке?
‘Aga, был в куртке. ‘В этой?‘ Нет, совсем не в этой, а в той, что с карманами. ‘На молнии?‘ Да, она/на молнии.
‘Did you wear a jacket?’ Yeah, I wore a jacket. ‘This one?’ [No, not this,/ but that,] my hooded one. ‘The one with a zipper?’ [Yes,/ it’s got a zipper.’

(15)  ‘Да, у нас… ‘Он курил?‘ Ага, курил. ‘И ты попросил?‘ Ну да, я попросил, / а он мне не дал и потом…
‘Yes, at the entrance./ ‘Was he smoking?’ [Yeah,] he was smoking. ‘And you asked for one?’ Sure, I asked for one, but he refused and then…’

Another device for topic control is interruption. The highest number of interruptions is found in the interrogation of the most authority-challenging witness, the chess player. All attempts on his part to take control over the conversation topic by asking questions or launching into details of his own character or habits are immediately recognized as violations of role-allocation and are cut short, e.g. That simply doesn’t fit distraught behavior!/ Take me: when I’m distraught, for instance... <interruption> What?/ the tenor of our conversation? With other, more compliant, witnesses the interrogator uses less
aggressive techniques of topic control that aim at ensuring topic continuity rather than cutting off the speaker.

Analysis of the questioning techniques portrays the interrogator as an ambivalent figure. He is shown as ineffective in information elicitation, yet skillful in power manipulation; knowing all the answers, yet asking off-target questions.

5. SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS

Combined, both sides yield a dynamic picture of a communicative act that increasingly deviates from the typical institutional act of interrogation. The first testimony by the chess player still adheres to the expected patterns of power configuration and information elicitation. Although he makes covert attempts at challenging the interrogator’s authority by bouncing his questions back and asking questions of his own, the interrogator maintains the due power pattern by controlling the topic through interruptions. With the chess player the interrogator is largely engaged in information elicitation: 9 out of 13 of his questions (69%) seek information, with only 2 out of 13 (15%) being conducive questions. The picture changes in the testimony of the actress who asks as many direct, non-echo questions as her interrogator, thus maintaining control over the topic of the interrogation, and establishing a personal relationship with the interrogator. The number of conducive questions grows in this testimony to 7 out of 24 (29%). The testimony of the captain starts as a normal interrogation and builds the suspense as we learn that the captain hated the murdered as his rival in love. The interrogator reveals a great deal of knowledge maintaining the image of an omniscient investigator; the number of conducive questions that express the interrogator's epistemic stance grows to 6 out of 19 (32%). Ironically, the omniscience of the interrogator appears to be illusory: according to one reading, his gravest assumption that the murder has been committed from the captain’s weapon turns out to be wrong. The meaninglessness of the interrogation keeps on growing in the boy’s testimony in which the roles are reassigned according to an adult:child relation rather than that of interrogator:suspect. Conducive questions constitute 51% of the total number of questions, and yet part of them misses the target. A high number of conducive questions in the captain’s interrogation prepared the reader to regard the Stechkin gun as a possible murder weapon, yet the boy could fire only from his father’s Parabellum. As a result, the reader is left with two conflicting co-premises that lead to the impossible contention that the boy is in fact the murderer.

The analysis thus shows that the picture of distorted logic drawn in the introductory part of the poem is enacted in the communicative structure of the interrogations. As in the introduction, the author builds a world with distorted perspective by subtly provoking the
reader to use common sense to form his/her expectations – and then frustrating them all with the actual picture drawn in the poem. Both techniques, the semantic and the communicative distortion, are combined in the conversation on the ship described in the next section.

6. Conversation on the Ship and its Participants, X and Y

This conversation can be clearly divided into two uneven parts. The first part is a philosophical exchange about the meaning or, rather, meaninglessness of the investigation. This part spans over 56 lines; it includes 8 conversational turns by X and 7 by Y. The second part concerns the immediate setting of the conversation and the physical condition of one of the participants. This part is 14 lines long and consists of 11 short turns by each participant.

X and Y are fellow passengers, probably newly acquainted strangers, engaged in a conversation about the murder. The conversation takes place after the investigation has been completed but before the trial. It starts with X reading (or dictating, as the English translation suggests) some form that includes information about the victim’s personal data, the circumstances around the finding of his body, and the number of suspects. We are offered only the headings of the identifying rubrics without the information filled in, thus the anonymity of all the participants involved in the previous parts is preserved:

Although the conversation differs as a communicative act from both the interrogation and the “monologic dialog” of the introduction, it shares structural and poetic features with both. As in the introduction, the effect of disturbingly distorted space is created by means of manipulating logical concepts and structures. Two examples will illustrate this. The surface of the narration begins to ripple right after presenting the “personal data” of the murdered, when the speaker suspends the modality of his utterances: In this passage, Brodsky, whether knowingly or intuitively, plays with some of the key concepts of modal
logic and logical semantics, viz. those of possibility, necessity, and possible worlds. The reader’s expectations are once again frustrated by the speaker’s wobbling between an epistemic possibility as a construct based on our limited knowledge (17a), a dynamic possibility based on capability (17b and d), and a necessity of a fact (17c, e, f). Finally, the logically possible worlds transform into physically possible alternative worlds (17g) which are reminiscent of the multiple world interpretation of quantum mechanics (cf. Ivanov 1983/2004). By silent transition from a mere possibility to a necessity and, consequently, to a fact Brodsky brings the idea of causal necessity to the absurd.

Another example involves a logical manipulation with the membership in the fuzzy set of suspects. First, we know that the set of four witnesses turned into a set of three suspects. The previous example (esp. 17f and on) implies that the murderer is one of the three suspects. Then, through a chain of logical deductions, the speaker concludes that the murderer must be outside the set of suspects, which is immediately confirmed by a fact (Yes, that’s the way it happened this time). Once again a logical necessity inevitably turns into a physical necessity. The speaker himself is shocked by the absurdity of his deductions.

(18) Видел это — апология абсурда! 
Апофэоз бессмысленности! Бред! 
Выходит, что тогда оно — логично. 

It is one of the suspects, namely the boy, who is claimed to be the murderer. And yet, the captain’s testimony has shown that the murder had not been committed from his gun and, therefore, the boy, who shot from his father’s gun, could not have been the murderer. The conclusion X reaches is that such a murder can hardly be labeled a crime. The boy cannot be considered a criminal ‘преступник’ whatever the premises are: whether because what he committed cannot be considered a crime but is the implementation of the meaning of life, or because he has not committed the murder.

The allusion to Shestov’s *The Apotheosis of Groundlessness* (1905) (cf. 17) — which invalidates logic as philosophy’s instrument — gracefully closes the vicious circle of logical deductions and supplies the key to its interpretation.

The logical distortion is concurrently intensified at the communicative level of the conversation. As in the testimonies, we learn about Y’s contributions only from X’s reactions to them. While some of these contributions fit perfectly into the logic of the question-answer sequence (stimulus comment-response comment) and are easy to restore, others are presented as missing links and are practically impossible to restore. For example, <2> in (19) is easy to restore because it is signaled with the regular technique of X repeating the question before answering.
Comment <1>, on the other hand, is disturbing because of lack of continuity between this missing link and the succeeding argument. Impossible to restore, it serves the purpose of perplexing the reader, twisting his/her brain.

Finally, the three parts of the poem are unified by the likeness of the narrator's and X's voices on the one hand and a probable referential identity of X and the interrogator on the other (Losev 1978). Among the textual indications to the speculated identity of X and the interrogator is the shift from the general indefinite you (20a) to the we (20b and c) that may be interpreted as either a generic personal we (i.e. “everyone including me”) or as a personal collective we (i.e. “members of some group that includes me”). It is the interpretation of we as personal collective that supports the hypothesis of the referential identity of X and the interrogator. However, the generic we of (20d) suspends this interpretation.

Another consideration that may support the hypothesis of X’s identity as the interrogator is of a structural character. The “deictic” part of the conversation functions as a mirror image of the interrogation in which X acts in the role of the interrogated witness. Eight out of eleven conversational turns of X begin with either yes or no, mimicking a question-answer sequence, although only four of them are responses to Y’s questions. All of Y’s questions are genuine requests for information: <Is that Yalta?>; <Over there?>; <Do you know, how long they will convict him for?>; <Where is Livadia?>. This is in clear contrast with the interrogator’s strategy in his own interrogation. A mirror image is not an exact copy neither in the real world, nor in Brodsky’s poetics. Besides being reversed, its parts enter relations that differ from those in the real world in just about the way a gaze / encountered in a mirror differs from / a gaze directed at another person... Placing X in the
position of an interrogated witness iconically represents his empathy toward the witnesses from the murder case and concludes the diegetic part of the poem.

The poem closes with the familiar voice of the narrator describing the picture of the ship leaving the shore. The rolling of Yalta replicating the ship’s heaving and a foamy, hissing wave left astern suggests that the narrator is located on the ship. The dynamic description of leaving the shore with its perfective aspect verbs (21a-c and e) frames a maxim with its gnomic present (21d), shifting to the slow motion shot of the receding Yalta with its imperfective verbs (21f-h), and is concluded with the gnomic present of another maxim (21i).

The reference to a geographic map appears here as the author’s last wink at us, the readers. It alludes to the outside perspective of a distanced observer which the narrator has supposedly endorsed in the beginning. Now this last resort objective point of view is undermined: one can see the boundaries of a given phenomenon from a distance but will inevitably miss its contents. As Losev (1978) put it, “и она ‘карта’ может представительствовать жизнь, но лишь в сгущающейся тьме и на возрастающем удалении от земли.’ ‘it [the map] can also represent life, but only in the thickening dark and with increasing distance.’ (p. 130). Thus, the birds-eye view turns out to be just another imperfect way of acquiring knowledge of an object.

**Conclusion**

This paper attempted to analyze the devices used by Brodsky for creating a poetic universe with distorted perspective. In the introduction, the poet achieves this by means of masked logical mismatches, semantic crossing, syntactic shifts, and mixing oppositions. Then, he constructs a communicative act of interrogation that deviates from the expected patterns in a number of ways.
First, the dominant figure of the interrogator is presented out of focus by rendering his questions only through their reverberations in the witness’s answers. The different question signaling techniques function as a tool for constructing power relations. For example, the “Yes/no, echo answer” technique is used to portray a speaker who complies with his role as respondent. The “Question echo, Answer” technique provides the witnesses with an opportunity to ask questions and thus to temporarily suspend their preassigned status as respondents. The discourse function of the “Answer” technique is putting the questioner farther in the background while foregrounding the respondent, whereas its communicative function is directed towards the extra-diegetic participant, viz. the reader, who is left perplexed by the missing links.

Second, questioning strategies progressively diverge from what we expect to see in the interrogation: ranging from information elicitation in the first testimony to offering ready answers through conducive question in the next two, they reach the level of inadequacy in the last testimony.

Finally, the conversation that follows the testimonies combines devices of logical distortion of the introduction with those of communicative distortion of the interrogation. All the absurdist maneuvers are carried out by the author in a matter-of-fact tone increasing an uneasy feeling of dissonance while obscuring its source. As a result, the reader is brought to accept all the impossible solutions offered by the author including the identity of the murderer.

ENDNOTES

1. Sic – Искусство is capitalized, правда is in lower case.
2. The epistemological oppositions of art||reason and reason||faith as different ways to get at the knowledge of truth are central to the philosophy of L. Shestov, who used them to frame his critique of the totalitarianism of positivistic rationalism.
3. An analysis of the life-long impact of Shestov’s philosophy on Brodsky can be found in Losev, 1978, 1986; Polukhina, 1989; MacFadyen, 1998; see also Rančin, 1997 about Brodsky’s divergence from Shestov.
4. Based on multiple perspectives, the interrogation naturally results in what in social and cognitive sciences is known as the “Rashomon effect”. Labeled after Kurosawa’s eponymous film (1950), the term is used to refer to producing conflicting, but equally credible, accounts of the same events. Interestingly, it is Kurosawa’s film along with its literary sources, viz. the stories “Rashomon” and “In a Grove” by Akutagawa, that has reportedly inspired Brodsky’s Homage to Yalta (Losev, 1978).
5. The real language situation is more complicated. Both лживая история and лживый рассказ do occur in speech, meaning ‘a false story/story based on lie’ and having the semantic component of the speaker’s malevolent intentions. The combinatorial characteristics mentioned above are not a matter of absolute restrictions, but rather a matter of preference. A simple Google search yielded 3,309 results for phrases лживая история and 822 results for лживый рассказ and their declensional forms vs. 12,541 results for лживый человек ‘dishonest person’ and its declensional forms. A relatively high occurrence of
ldinaya  istoriya  is explained by the fact that it refers to both ‘untruthful, misleading story’ and ‘untruthful, false history’. These observations are of a tentative nature.

6. Cf. Losev’s metaphysical “sight from above” as the alternative to both analytic and synthetic approach to truth. (Losev, 1978, p. 130).

7. The term  interrogation defined in this manner is used here in a non-technical sense. Legal systems of both Russia and the US practice intricate, strictly defined and regulated procedures of police investigation and courtroom questioning, including precognition, interview, interrogation, deposition, direct and cross-examination, etc. An argument over the terms can be found in the following works: Shuy, 1998; Yeschke, 2003; O’Hara and O’Hara, 1989.

8. In my assumption that an extrapolation of findings in anglophone setting to the Russian data is legitimate I rely on several cross-cultural studies arguing that certain pragmatic and social aspects of questions stem from deep principles of human communication and social relations and, therefore, are possibly universal. For example, performative multifunctionality of questions has been shown to work in genetically unrelated languages (Goody, 1978). Likewise, social constraints on the use of direct speech acts and preference for indirect ones (via questions) in a face-threatening environment (Goffman, 1967) have been described for such diverse languages as English, Tzetlal, Tamil (Brown and Levinson, 1978), and Hongot (Rosaldo, 1982). Along the same lines, it will be assumed here that questions are cross-culturally a powerful tool for authority manipulation in institutional settings.


11. Alternative term is  standard  questions (Hintikka, 1978; Paduèeva 1985; Ilie, 1999, inter al.)

12. The term  echo-question is often used to refer to questions with non-standard syntax and necessarily an attitudinal charge of challenging the contents of the echoed utterance (McCawley, 1987; Blakemore, 1994; Iwata, 2003), as in  You bought WHAT for Debby?  In this paper, the term is instead used with a functional continuum in mind, in accordance with Ilie’s observation that “[t]he less repetition-eliciting the echo question is, the more argumentatively it tends to function” (1999, p. 980).

13. This technique is apparently borrowed by Brodsky from both Akutagawa’s story “In a Grove” and its screen adaptation in Rashomon by Kurosawa. In the film, the witnesses repeat the magistrate’s questions while recounting their stories facing the camera. The magistrate’s point of view becomes, thus, that of the audience, imposing on the viewer the role of the judge (Crittenden, 1995, p. 92).

14. When speaking of a choice of devices available to the participants it should be remembered that it is the author who is the real orchestrator of all the choices made by the participants. What the reader gets is the product of the author’s choices, his shaping of the audience’s perception.

15. Cf. Перестать  токать! ‘Stop what-ing at me!’; a typical command by Russian teachers addressed to reluctant responders.

16. This phrase is missing in the English translation by Barry Rubin.

17. Ironically,  fuzzy set  is another technical term from the fields of mathematical logic and logical semantics.

18. “(21). Philosophy must have nothing in common with logic; philosophy is an art which aims at breaking the logical continuity of argument and bringing man out on the shoreless sea of imagination, the fantastic tides where everything is equally possible and impossible." (Šestov, 1971 p. 49).

19. Losev (1978), who took this identity for granted, claimed the interrogator to be the author’s  alter ego.

20. In this Brodsky appears to be a faithful exerciser of Shestov’s recipe: “The best, the most effective way of convincing a reader is to begin one's argument with inoffensive, commonplace assertions. When suspicion has been sufficiently lulled, and a certainty has been begot that what follows will be a
confirmation of the reader’s own accepted views - then has the moment arrived to speak one’s mind openly, but still in the same easy tone, as if there were no break in the flow of truisms. The logical connection is unimportant. Consequence of manner and intonation is much more impressive than consequence of ideas. The thing to do is to go on, in the same suave tone, from uttering a series of banalities to expressing a new and dangerous thought, without any break. If you succeed in this, the business is done. The reader will not forget — the new words will plague and torment him until he has accepted them.” (Šestov, 1971, p.48).

REFERENCES


**NOTATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS**


[ ] my own translation of the original text in the English-language quotes

< > a conjectured question

<<,>> textual omissions

* ungrammatical/unacceptable utterances

1sg. first person singular

acc.sg. accusative case singular

impfve imperfective aspect

pfve perfective aspect
Appendix

Figure 1. General data of question distribution over participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>participant’s role</th>
<th>code name</th>
<th>length of conversational contribution (in lines)</th>
<th>no. of interrogator’s questions signaled</th>
<th>no. of speaker’s questions signaled</th>
<th>question frequency (in question per no. of lines)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the interrogator</td>
<td>the interrogator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspect №1</td>
<td>the chess player</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspect №2</td>
<td>the actress</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5.5 (2.75**)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspect №3</td>
<td>the captain</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspect №4</td>
<td>the boy</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversation on the ship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaker 1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaker 2</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The suspects follow in the order they were interrogated.
** The frequency of the total number of questions, including the speaker’s questions.

Figure 2. Distribution of question-signaling strategies in the testimonies.

A. The chess player

- QUESTIONS (13)
  - Closed (9; 69%)
    - Y/N, echo A. (5; 56%)
      - Preface Q (1)
      - No Preface Q (4)
    - Echo Q, A. (3; 33%)
      - Preface Q (0)
      - No Preface Q (2)
  - Open (4; 31%)
    - A (1; 11%)
      - Preface Q (2)
      - No Preface Q (2)

B. The actress

- QUESTIONS (24)
  - Closed (19; 79%)
    - Y/N, echo A. (14; 74%)
      - Preface Q (0)
      - No Preface Q (14)
    - Echo Q, A. (1; 5%)
      - Preface Q (1)
      - No Preface Q (3)
  - Open (5; 21%)
    - A (4; 21%)
      - Preface Q (2)
      - No Preface Q (2)
    - Echo Q, A. (4; 80%)
      - Preface Q (0)
      - No Preface Q (1)
C. The captain

QUESTIONS
(19)

Closed
(14; 74%)

Open
(5; 26%)

Y/N, echo A
(12; 86%)

Echo Q, A
(1; 7%)

Echo Q, A
(1; 7%)

Δ

Preface Q
(1)

No Preface Q
(0)

Preface Q
(0)

No Preface Q
(1)

Preface Q
(2)

No Preface Q
(3)

D. The boy

QUESTIONS
(37)

Closed
(29; 78%)

Open
(8; 22%)

Y/N, echo A
(25; 87%)

Echo Q, A
(1; 3%)

Δ

Echo Q, A
(3; 10%)

Echo Q, A
(1)

Δ

Preface Q
(2)

No Preface Q
(1)

Preface Q
(0)

No Preface Q
(3)

Preface Q
(22)

NoPreface Q
(3)

Fig. 3. Distribution of biased vs. unbiased closed questions in the testimonies.

A. closed
unbiased
(5; 56%)

biased
(4; 44%)

follow up
(2)

condusive
(2; 15% of the total no. of questions)

B. closed
unbiased
(11; 58%)

biased
(8; 42%)

follow up
(1)

condusive
(7; 29% of the total no. of questions)

C. closed
unbiased
(8; 57%)

biased
(6; 43%)

follow up
(0)

condusive
(6; 32% of the total no. of questions)

D. closed
unbiased
(8; 28%)

biased
(21; 72%)

follow up
(2; 10%)

condusive
(19; 51% of the total no. of questions)
Forum

A VIRTUAL RESEARCH SEMINAR:
TOWARD ANALYZING SIMILARITIES AND
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND
INTERNET-BASED RESEARCH COMMUNITIES

Irina N. Rozina and Victoria I. Tuzlukova

In spite of obvious success of face-to-face communication in encouraging academic dialogue, developing academic culture, enhancing the exchange of best practices and experiences, the idea of Internet-based communication has been enthusiastically supported by the academic and professional communities in Russia. This enthusiasm is rooted, first of all, in familiar contexts and principles of communication of researchers in Russia, which are applied in innovative media. Let’s consider some similar features of traditional and Internet-based communities, which partially made them attractive to the academia.

Firstly, both traditional and Internet-based research communities are based on the community of interests. The members of both communities share common goals, values, interests and quality of relationships. They are characterized by the same identity as researchers. The members of both communities are often connected by personal relationships. As a rule they are motivated by the need to openly exhibit their research findings and procedures as well as to communicate them to the community and to the public.

Secondly, both traditional and Internet-based research communities are created and supported for and by researchers. Thirdly, types of the research communities on social and cultural levels support their practices, needs and demands, while on the institutional level;

Irina N. Rozina is a professor in the Department of Information Technology at the Institute of Management, Business and Law in Rostov-na-Donu, Russia (rozina@iubip.ru). Victoria I. Tuzlukova is a language lecturer at the Language Centre at Sultan Qaboos University, Oman (victoria@squ.edu.om).
they focus on present day aims and goals. Fourthly, on the individual level, the research communities of both types provide information for every individual member within the community.

Meanwhile there are a number of features which differentiate the traditional and the Internet-based based communities. For example, in case of the Internet-based research community that manifests itself as a technical system, the objectives on both user-centered and system-centered levels appear to be different. In our opinion this type of the research community is more user-centered. It is also more focused on each individual member of the community and his/her needs, especially information needs. Moreover, we think that the Internet-based research community is much more efficient. It is very quick in supplying its members with information. It can also provide the access to a greater amount of information and the procedures of searching, browsing, navigation, and interacting within and outside the community as a system. This inevitably leads to cost-effectiveness that can be viewed as another positive feature of the Internet—based research community.

The Internet-based research community as a new type of interaction, namely symbolic interaction (Voyskunsky, 2000, p. 106; Barnes, 2003, p. 154) or computer-mediated communication (Wood & Smith, 1992), also differs from a traditional research community in the communication skills of its members. They include a skill to manage interactions in virtual (internet-based) communities and to contribute to its functioning (Rheingold, 1996; Barnes, 2003, p. 226; Thurlow, Lengal, & Tomic, 2004, p. 107).

Computer-mediated communication as the principal media of interaction among the members of the Internet-based research community widens the area and sphere of communication. The possibilities of interactivity not-previously encountered appeared to be especially favorable for scholars for many reasons. Among them are:

- free, voluntary and spontaneous communication in space and time;
- stimulation of constant interaction;
- connection of researchers, who are increasingly distributed across countries and even continents;
- elimination of “time-outs”;
- contribution to rapid distribution of information, exchange of the results of research and practice;
- support of intercultural contacts with peers;
- provision of worldwide accessibility, flexibility of time, place and projects using such applications as web-site, email, mailing list, forum, discussion;
- reduction of travel costs and time spent away from home and classroom activities
- variety of autonomous contributions by the community members and variability of the activities.
To exemplify the last point, we’d like to present one activity that was successfully conducted by the Russian Communication Association. The activity in question is the virtual research seminar, which was organized and carried on by the research seminar team, which included a seminar manager/facilitator, technical consultants and coordinators, representing all small groups.

The first objective of the virtual research seminar was to define the range of problems (content-based, terminological, methodological, and conceptual) in the field of intercultural communication as a new knowledge area and new educational domain in educational, social and cultural context of Russia. It was also aimed at uniting the intellectual and scientific potential of small groups of researchers and discussing some theoretical and practical issues in the field of communication research.

The tasks that were formulated by the seminar leader and facilitators included a wide range of issues. Among these issues were the achievement of the goals of the research seminar on the basis of active participation of the leading researchers and personalia; consolidation of the efforts of the participants of the seminar; organization of the active exchange of opinions, views and approaches via email; exchange of e-materials, links, documents, research results on the announced topic (e.g. Communication Studies with the Issue of Connection Between Communication and Culture); support of the discussion on communication issues (e.g. Writings About Communication); compilation of the mini-dictionary based on the research seminar results and its posting on the RCA web-site and dissemination of the most interesting results of the research seminar among the members of RCA via mailing list.

The virtual research seminar which followed a usual form of a professional discussion (Vasilik, 2003, p. 501) consisted of several parts:

1. beginning of the discussion of the research topic (attracting attention to the topic of the discussion, the interest awakening);
2. presentation of some additional information and ideas on the topic of the discussion (the list of relevant issues, opinions exchange) either in explicit or in implicit form;
3. argumentation and feedback to statements (the introduction of some opinions, approaches, suggestions);
4. refutation of the arguments (differentiation of some opinions, neutralization of remarks);
5. end of the discussion (detailed resume with the emphasize on the main conclusion, the list of suggestions for further discussion, acknowledgements).

The research seminar helped in solving a range of important terminological, conceptual, content-based, methodological issues in the field of communication, as well as
in getting practical experience to conducting distant (virtual) research seminars and organizing a virtual research community. Among the discussed topics of the modern civilization communicative dimension were: communication functions and communication principles; communicative phenomena; intercultural; pedagogical; media; organizational, political; professional, business; speech communication, etc. Interestingly these issues were further explored in discussions, workshops, seminars and conferences conducted by the association.

The feedback that the virtual research seminar organizers received from its participants was very positive. They were especially happy with its atmosphere and procedures, which were friendly, warm, open, well balanced and goal-oriented. The list of reasons for active involvement in the research discussions (compiled by the participants) included items such as the interest in the discussion, messages that contained adequate and competent statements, interesting and clever questions, suitable remarks, a chance to get some information of theoretical and practical use, and helpful suggestions. The members of the seminar also mentioned some qualities and conditions that had a favorable impact on the virtual research atmosphere. These were expressed both verbally (e.g. use of informal style, colloquial words and expressions, metaphors, comparisons) and non-verbally (e.g. by punctuation, chosen register and formatting, highlighted blocks in text), and included sincerity, openness, friendly wishes, addressing others by names, connection of the reply to the other messages, sympathy, praise, etc. The fact that the seminar supported their own ideas taught them to search for and find consensus with peers, express new ideas and opinions; though sometimes contradicting their traditional views was met with great enthusiasm by the participants of the virtual research seminar. It also contributed to their better understanding of the value of the research community and their new roles as its members and contributors.

REFERENCES


BOOK REVIEWS


**Reviewed by Ellen Carnaghan**
Political Science Department, Saint Louis University

Following a brief period of relative freedom after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian television has increasingly come under the control of the government. Some television stations have been taken over directly by the state; some are controlled by major government allies like the natural gas giant, Gazprom. Wholly independent television stations with nationwide broadcast coverage no longer exist. As a result, the news presented on television tells the story the government wants told and gives the impression that neither disagreement nor regime opponents exist. Planted stories, designed to serve the interests of those who pay for them, are not uncommon. Ellen Mickiewicz’s latest book, *Television, Power, and the Public in Russia*, raises the intriguing question of whether all this effort is worth it.

Mickiewicz wonders what happens on the other side of the screen. Are Russian television viewers the passive recipients of pre-digested pieces of information, easily swayed by one-sided reports, and blind to efforts to manipulate their reactions?

Dr. Mickiewicz’s answer is that Russian television viewers “have an array of mental shortcuts, salient experiences, and traditions of expending effort to enlarge the context of the news” (p. 194). Russians are savvy consumers of television news programs, sensitive to broadcasters’ efforts to deceive them or to prime them to think a certain way. They respond to one-sided stories by adding in information gleaned from their own lives. For instance, given a story about the wonders of a new oil pipeline, viewers can raise their own concerns about environmental degradation or whether ordinary citizens will see any benefits. Mickiewicz concludes, “This suggests that the power of the media assumed by Russian political and economic elites is far less than they are paying for and that controlling the message of television news to exclude tradeoffs is likely to stimulate among viewers a larger universe of tradeoffs than a Western-style ‘balanced’ story with only two sides might ordinarily produce” (pp. 119-120).

Mickiewicz bases her findings on 16 focus groups conducted in January 2002 in Rostov, Volgograd, Nizhny Novgorod, and Moscow. One group in each city was devoted
to participants under 30; one group devoted to people with no more than a high school education; and two groups devoted to people with a university education. The focus groups watched clips from Russian news broadcasts and discussed them, under the direction of a seasoned Russian facilitator.

Mickiewicz argues that “Focus groups are particularly helpful in the analysis of viewers’ construction of meaning from political messages” (p. 12). On the whole, the results of the study bear out claims about the usefulness of the method. For instance, where standardized surveys tend to finish with the conclusion that Russian viewers “trust” state-controlled television, Mickiewicz is able to decipher what that trust entails. It turns out that her respondents trust the facts that they are given, having no alternative source for the kinds of statistics that fill Russian news broadcasts. However, respondents do not imagine that these facts tell the whole story or make any sense without context. As a result, they do not believe the story even though it is built on the foundation of trustworthy facts.

Focus groups have the advantage that they allow respondents to hear the comments of other participants, as they would in real-life conversations about news broadcasts. In Mickiewicz’s study, focus group participants often started a conversation about the closing of TV 6, which occurred in the middle of the period in which the study was conducted, with the observation that it hardly mattered whether an independent station closed. However, as the conversation progressed, respondents became more animated in decrying the limiting of the diversity of available opinions as a cost to free speech. Indeed, some of the respondents were not concerned about the impending fate of TV 6 because they simply did not believe that the government would close down the station. One respondent argued, “Come on, the power will not go against society” (p. 162). Where a standardized survey might indicate a lack of popular concern about the closing of independent stations, the focus group discussions uncovered the thinking behind the short answer.

Nonetheless, some elements of these focus groups raise concerns. Young people and well-educated people are overrepresented in the sample. About 50 percent of the 158 participants were under 30. Half of the focus groups were devoted to people with college education. There are reasons to think that young and well-educated people would be more likely to have the tools to read between the lines of state news programs. In the analysis of focus group responses, Mickiewicz tends to emphasize similarities across age and education levels, and systematic comparisons between demographic groups are not as well-developed as they might be.

Most troubling is the time period in which the focus groups were conducted. As Mickiewicz points out, at the beginning of January 2002 Russian viewers still had ready access to an independent television station, TV 6. They still remembered NTV, which had been forcibly taken over by Gazprom in 2000. As the years have passed since then, Russian television viewers may have become less able to fill in missing pieces of information, if only
because they have to work harder to locate that information. It would have been worthwhile to conduct additional focus groups after the media environment had tightened up.

All in all, the book shows some evidence of having been hastily assembled. The three stronger chapters of the book were previously published elsewhere, in *Slavic Review, Political Communication*, and as a chapter in *The Post-Soviet Russian Media*. They are not as seamlessly integrated into their new format as one might hope. Arguments can jump around in an unhelpful way, with odd insertions and omissions. In addition, the translations of the focus group participants’ statements are sometimes awkwardly literal, and translations vary even when quotations are repeated within pages of each other (pp. 72 and 81; 183 and 191). There are some seeming mistakes in the presentation. For instance, two different Viktors, one a 62-year-old pensioner and the other a 47 year-old computer technician are both quoted as calling Soviet television “something warm but far away” (pp. 144, 145). It seems unlikely that this odd locution was used by two people.

Despite these limitations, the book contains quite a bit of unique information and useful insights. One of the most interesting chapters examines how Russian television viewers process and interpret stories about elections. According to Mickiewicz, her respondents lump all election stories into the same template. Unfortunately, for government efforts to influence how citizens think about elections, respondents dislike this template: they find it confusing and unreliable. They lack the kind of information that might help them assess the veracity of election stories, partly because their own experiences do not enable them to fill in the information that televised stories omit. Character assassination, a common tactic in Russian elections, only confuses viewers and diminishes trust in any information about the election. The end result is a group of discouraged would-be voters. One of Mickiewicz’s respondents said, “You know, the more you hear such information, each time, connected with each election, the less you want to go to vote in general” (p. 72). Another commented, “I personally did not get satisfaction from these stories. Honestly speaking, I want to turn off the television” (p. 73). Since the primary purpose of elections in Russia seems to be to legitimate the regime through popular acclamation, the focus groups are not telling Russia’s rulers what they want, or are paying, to hear.

Though Mickiewicz stresses the ability of Russian viewers to see behind the news, she also describes a context in which the lack of information can work to the government’s advantage. While respondents could fill in missing information on the oil pipeline story, they were less able to do so in stories that related less directly to their personal experience. This includes stories about elections and also stories about corruption, a significant problem in Russia. In these contexts, where respondents had too little of the necessary information and no way to relate the story to their own lives, they gave up. While they may not have believed the televised story, they did not have the tools to improve it. Though state control over television in Russia appears not to have exactly the effect that the government wants,
neither is it conducive to the creation of an informed and engaged citizenry. In the face of government efforts to control what they know, and in regard to some important questions, many of Mickiewicz’s respondents appear to feel, simply, helpless.

Reviewed by Stephen M. Norris  
Associate Professor of History, Director of Film Studies, Miami University  
norriss1@muohio.edu

As Stephen Hutchings points out in his introduction to this volume, no work exists that examines both Russian cinematic representations of the Other and the Other’s view of Russia. *Russia and Its Other(s) on Film* attempts to fill this gap and it does so admirably. Movies make for an ideal case study in intercultural dialogue. As Hutchings establishes in the introduction, the volume is informed by Iurii Lotman’s semiotic account of intercultural dialogue. For Lotman and other advocates in his Tartu School, cinema follows the four steps of how one culture enters into a dialogue with the Other. In stage one, a text (in this case, a film) “keeps its strangeness” after importation. In stage two, however, a receiving culture’s texts are adapted as a result of the imported culture’s texts. In stage three an “imported culture assumes that the imported texts ‘will find their true home over here (6),’” while in the final stage, the receiving culture becomes a transmitting culture. Cinema has always acted in this manner and the relationship between Hollywood and Russian national cinema has been at the heart of an intercultural dialogue for over 80 years. Moreover, as the essays make clear, cinema serves as an ideal space where definitions of Self and Other can be articulated, negotiated, and disseminated.

The volume is split into two sections. In the first, five scholars delve into the process through which Russian directors defined the Other in their works. Julian Graffy usefully surveys the representation of foreigners in Thaw cinema and concludes that the films of this relatively free period in Soviet culture “continued to show an anxious distrust of their foreign characters (28).” While Thaw culture may have focused on “unvarnished reality” and “authenticity” (as Josephine Woll characterized it), in its depiction of enemies it remained Stalinist. David Gillespie’s insightful chapter on the influence of Italian cinema and ideas of Italy in late Soviet culture reveals that for directors such as Andrei Tarkovsky, Italy could offer “an alternative history, culture, and spirituality that help to shape Russian identity by reminding him of all the things Russia is not (48-49).” Cinematic giants such as Nikita Mikhalkov and El’dar Riazanov continued Tarkovsky’s Italian exploration: for the former, as a means to reveal Russian cultural superiority; for the latter, as part of a complex cultural interrelationship that might offer a way out of Cold War stereotypes. Alexander Etkind’s concept of Russian cultural discourse as one where a “man of power and culture”
and a “man of the people” encounter a “woman of beauty” informs Mark Lipovetsky’s excellent chapter on Aleksandr Rogozhkin’s 2002 The Cuckoo, where he argues that the film is best read as “a postmodern wondertale about shamanism, the miracle of mediation, and about the truth that all are the other, and are only related through this otherness (68).” Although scholars have already written a great deal about Aleksandr Sokurov’s Russian Ark, Isabelle de Keghel usefully situates it as part of an intercultural dialogue, one where the Hermitage “stands for Russia’s creative appropriation of the Western cultural tradition” while simultaneously serving as “a point of crystallization for national identity (91).” In the last chapter—one of the best in the volume—Seth Graham situates the representation of Americans in post-Soviet Russian cinema amidst the near collapse of the Russian film industry in the 1990s. Many post-Soviet Russian critics saw Hollywood as a renewed threat and Russian cinema in the 1990s seemed trapped in chernukha (“dark naturalism”). Graham explores the multiple means through which Russian directors engaged with America in the 1990s and early 2000s, whether by incorporating American characters on screen or adapting Hollywood-style techniques to combat the perceived cinematic threat.

In the second section, “The Other Represents Russia,” six chapters focus on how foreign films have represented Russians and how scholars might usefully adapt cross-cultural approaches for exploring intercultural dialogue within film. The section is conceptually more innovative than the first, but also more of a mixed bag. Jeremy Hicks reminds readers that the exportation of Soviet cinema did not end with the silent era and explores how Nikolai Ekk’s 1931 Road to Life (the first sound film in Russia) and Grigorii Aleksandrov’s 1934 Jolly Fellows (Veselye rebiata) enjoyed some successes abroad. Both Birgit Beumers and Karin Sarsenov explore the representation of Russians—particularly Russian women—in foreign cinema. Beumers’s excellent chapter surveys a host of films from the 1990s and 2000s and uses Lev Gudkov’s concept of a “Russian victim complex” to reveal how American and European directors have repeatedly cast Russians as victims in post-Cold War cinema. Sarsenov’s chapter builds on Beumers’s and focuses on how Russian women have tended to be cast as prostitutes or mail-order brides in foreign cinema (although she does mistakenly identify the protagonist in Jez Butterworth’s Birthday Girl as an American, and not English, geek). Both chapters situate the foreign representation with Russian self-representations of Russians as victims to reveal how Self and Other are often mutually reinforcing concepts within cross-national cinema. Irina Sandomirskaia “restricts” herself to two films, 1959’s North by Northwest and 1949’s The Third Man in order to argue that “there was no Russia to be found (130)” in Cold War Cinema, the sort of conclusion one can reach when you only examine two films that have no Russian settings. One wonders whether Russia could be seen as a negative, ghostly factor in American Cold War culture had Sandomirskaia written about films such as Josef von Sternberg’s 1957 Jet Pilot, David Lean’s 1965 Doctor Zhivago, Sylvester Stallone’s 1985 Rocky IV, or any number of others
with Soviet settings. Stephen Hutchings’s admirable attempt to explore similarities in two Regis Wargnier films, 1991’s *Indochine* and 1999’s *East-West*, do feature Russian settings in the latter, but Hutchings stretches cinema’s significance when he argues that *East-West* also functions as “an ideal screen upon which France might seek to project, and thereby to exorcise, the inner demons of its continuing postcolonial identity crisis (157).” Finally, Mark Lipovetsky and Daniil Leiderman make an equally admirable attempt to draw parallels between three films that do not easily lend themselves to comparison: Steven Spielberg’s *The Terminal* (2004), Aleksei Balabanov’s *Brother 2* (2000), and Sacha Baron Cohen’s *Borat* (2006). Their attempts to argue that the protagonists of the first two films are essentially the same character are not nearly as convincing as their arguments about Borat’s intercultural importance.

In his conclusion, Hutchings writes that he hopes this volume will inspire future research into the ways cinema engages in intercultural dialogue. Good edited volumes such as this one should act as a springboard for future works, particularly when the topic is as innovative and important as the one *Russia and Its Other(s) On Film* covers. I support Hutchings’s view and encourage anyone interested in Russian cinema to read the essays within and engage with their arguments further.

**Reviewed by Kirsten Lodge**
Lecturer in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and the Core Curriculum at Columbia University
klb57@columbia.edu.

Early Gospel manuscripts, property maps of the late 17th century, early 19th-century playing cards, Tatlin’s new Soviet stove, a portrait of Lenin on a Turkmen rug, Tarkovsky’s *Solaris*: these are just a few of the widely diverse topics, encompassing both high and low culture and ranging from the 11th to the 21st century, that are investigated in *Picturing Russia*. Many of the volume’s fifty articles are written by well-known scholars, such as Richard Stites, Josephine Woll, and Laura Engelstein, to name just a few. Each article is short and has a clear, well-supported thesis and minimal footnotes, which makes the book both enjoyable and especially accessible not only to advanced scholars, but also to students. Thus, the book could serve as a useful supplement to a course on Russian history or culture. As the editors point out, visuals are becoming more and more important in teaching, yet all too often they are shown without sufficient commentary: one purpose of this volume is to help instructors better integrate visual materials into courses. It also offers scholars a model methodology for incorporating images into research and presentations.

The authors of the various articles share a similar approach: they focus on an image or object, then broaden their argument to achieve deeper insight into Russian culture. Donald Ostrowski, for instance, takes a very close look at a woodcut illustrating three Muscovite mounted cavalrymen of the mid-16th century. Examining their arms, armor, and equipment, he observes that they derive from Mongolian sources, thus persuasively disproving the traditional Russian claim that Mongol weaponry and tactics had no impact on Muscovite cavalry. Applying an analogous approach, James Cracraft scrutinizes the 500-ruble note of 1912, noting its elaborate classicist architectural and decorative design in the mode of the fashionable *style moderne*. He concludes that the “message” of this design was that the government was as elegant and modern, and therefore as strong, as its paper money, which may help explain why Russians refused to relinquish it for so long after the collapse of the tsarist regime. Reading these visual documents, these scholars, like others in the volume, make arguments about Russian cultural history based on information that could not be gleaned by studying written texts alone.

Almost all of the visual artifacts discussed in this volume serve to construct identity in some way, whether that identity is religious, imperial, national, class, gender, individual,
or ideological. David M. Goldfrank, for instance, reveals how an illustration in the 15th-century *Radzivill Chronicle* links Russians to Christianity inherited from the Byzantine Empire by symbolically depicting a Russian house as a Byzantinesque structure. Interpreting Fyodor Vasiliev’s landscape painting *In the Crimean Mountains*, Christopher Ely testifies that 19th-century images of the more “exotic” realms of the Russian empire created an imperial identity insofar as Russian elites enjoyed a sense of ownership over their imperial domains. Daniel Rowland, analyzing an icon from the Dormition Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin painted in the 16th century to celebrate the victory of Ivan IV over Kazan, establishes how a Muscovite identity was forged by depicting the Russian army as part of a holy struggle of good against evil, led by St. Michael himself. According to Stephen M. Norris, peasants became patriots through the distribution of popular prints (*lubki*) during both the Napoleonic War (1812-14) and the Russo-Turkish War (1877-78). David L. Ransel demonstrates that the merchant estate, from the late 18th to the mid-19th century, preferred to have their portraits painted in what he calls the “plain painting” style, a simpler, non-academic style contrasting with the European academic style used by the nobility. The appropriation of this specific genre, Ransel argues, was a sign that they saw themselves as a distinct social estate. Focusing on a popular picture of the effeminate film star Ivan Mozhukhin, Louise McReynolds discusses masculinity on the eve of the Revolution, suggesting that ineffectual and physically weak intellectuals were idealized at that time, while strength was associated with the peasantry. On the other hand, she also discusses the studio photograph of an unknown man who, although somewhat effeminate, appears more assertive than Mozhukhin in projecting a sense of individual identity. It is notable that this is one of very few examples of the construction of individual identity in the entire volume. Examples of creating an ideological identity, on the other hand, are (not surprisingly) the most common. Evgeny Dobrenko, for instance, elaborates on how the creators of the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition of 1939 attempted to reinforce a sense of Soviet identity in viewers through a monumental display of progress and abundance.

These articles also indicate that images and objects are always closely associated with power relations: they exert, subvert, or simply reflect power. Most often, they are used to exert power. Douglas Northrop, for example, elucidates the power struggle surrounding the unveiling of Central Asian women by the Soviets beginning in 1927. While photographs of smiling, unveiled women were published to portray the Bolsheviks as liberators, unveiling often led to murder by men in the woman’s own family, and refusal to unveil became a sign of resistance against Soviet power. Joan Neuberger expounds on how Eisenstein’s *Ivan the Terrible*, which was supposed to glorify Ivan, and through him Stalin, and justify the use of mass terror, subverted the official narrative through parody, comedy, and montage. Michael Kunichika’s description of the White Sea-Baltic Canal Gulag in various states of ruin today neither subverts nor exerts power, but reflects its abuse in the past, resulting in an
incongruity between knowledge of what once happened there and the present natural beauty of the site. Just about every image and object is implicated in power relations, although how exactly it relates to power is often ambiguous.

If there is anything specifically Russian about Russian visual culture, the editors maintain, it is what they label “seeing into being”: the idea that the visual can create a new reality and summon it into being. By my count, at most nine of the fifty chapters support this thesis, and many of them concern the Soviet era. However, this is indeed a significant proportion, and I do think we should recognize this phenomenon without denying its existence in other cultures as well—for instance, in many advertisements. As Richard Wortman has shown elsewhere, Peter the Great made extensive use of ceremony and imagery representing his ideal vision of Russia in his effort to westernize the nation. Here he relates how official texts, ceremonies, and lubki under Alexander II depicted the tsar as effecting reforms out of love for the people, portrayed as grateful and loving in return. These images, he affirms, taught the peasants how they were expected to respond to the Emancipation and other reforms. A third example is the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition, whose organizers believed that their joyous display of fertility and production would inevitably lead to the actual revitalization of Soviet agriculture.

Another concern shared by many of the scholars is the ambiguity of the visual image. Karen Petrone, for instance, treats posters whose purpose was to mobilize the population for war. In a World War I poster, a soldier stands before a seated embodiment of Mother Russia, but does not meet her gaze. Why not? Is this a sign of respect? Or is he detached, or unwilling? And is Mother Russia vulnerable, or commanding? Ambiguities are clearest in Soviet film, including Savchenko’s film-musical The Accordion, Eisenstein’s Ivan the Terrible, Romm’s Ordinary Fascism, and Tarkovsky’s Solaris. Finally, there is the wonderfully ironic paradox that the Cap of Monomakh, symbol of Russia’s Christianity and Western heritage, is in fact of Mongol origin!

This theoretically sophisticated and well-organized volume retells Russian history from a new point of view—through visual culture, illustrating how identity and power relations have been formed and transformed since the 11th century, as well as how the examination of images and other visual media may illuminate our understanding of Russia. Moreover, not only do its contributors find and decode meaning in visual sources that could not be found in written sources, some, as the editors point out, open up new fields of inquiry by studying seeing practices within their historical context and the relation of such practices to historical experience. William G. Rosenberg’s article, “Visualizing 1917,” which probes the influence of experience, memories, and perception on the Revolution, exemplifies this novel approach. Regardless of specialization, any scholar or teacher of Russian culture or history is certain to find this book an accessible and invaluable resource.
In this well-researched monograph, Tricia Starks analyses early Soviet hygienists’ message of public health: healthy bodies produced “politically enlightened, productive, and happy populations” (p. 4); illness could be avoided and broader revolutionary triumph was certain if citizens would lead properly ordered, sanitary lives. Like the hygienists she studies, Starks casts her net broadly, addressing matters from bathing to spitting, from house-cleaning to child-rearing, and from smoking to physical exercise. While some readers might be disappointed that more is not said about the situation in Russia’s smaller cities, villages, and outlying territories, the wide-ranging features of her discussion means that Starks’s decision to concentrate on the experience in Moscow is prudent. As she observes, resources devoted to public health were most concentrated in the capital. If the hygienists’ efforts to improve public health failed here, there could be little hope that they met much success elsewhere.

According to Starks, from the revolution through the late 1920’s, there was great consistency in the recommendations made “on most hygiene questions,” whether the advice emanated from Bolshevik leaders, Narkomzdrav (The People’s Commissariat of Health), or the various authors of sanitary enlightenment material (p. 57). Thus, a wide range of institutions and publications communicated highly-consistent recommendations about sanitary standards in the new Soviet state. Hygienists offered Muscovites opportunities to learn about improved sanitation and health through museum exhibits, agitational trials, treatment centers, clubs, vacation homes, health inspectors, physicians, nurses, newspapers, brochures, posters, and more.

Despite a myriad of these activities, Soviet hygienists were never able to communicate their recommendations as thoroughly or effectively as they hoped, partly because their aims for public health were more ambitious than similar efforts in the West, and partly because their resources were limited. An economy of scarcity compelled hygienists to employ frugal means: posters over physicians, prophylaxis over treatment clinics. As Starks puts it “Propaganda, not institutions, became the foundation of Narkomzdrav’s work” (p. 39). In Starks’s view, hygienists’ counsel was frequently misplaced. For example, whereas most Muscovites in the 1920’s lacked ready-access to running water, posters assumed that indoor plumbing made cleaning the home and body effortless; just one of many convincing indications that propaganda failed to take the actual difficulty of daily life into consideration. Further, significant portions of the population rejected hygienists’
recommendations in any case. In certain quarters, workers’ soiled garb was invested in with pride, while “filth” was reserved for bourgeois ideals; other citizens preferred “unhealthy” dancing or drinking to the “healthy” leisure promoted in clubs. Starks is also critical of hygienists’ paternalism. Her discussion of hygienists’ efforts to privilege the “scientific” knowledge of male physicians over “traditional” knowledge of female midwives is one especially prominent instance of this.

Starks’s analysis of the messages contained in health propaganda is astute. Her detailed scrutiny of key public health posters is especially welcome; not only were posters the most ubiquitous form of health communication, but visual communication was critical to reaching Moscow’s newly literate population. Starks’s skill in deconstructing these images, locating them within the broader context of Russian visual culture, and setting them in their historical context is exemplary. The task of establishing how health propaganda was understood, utilized, and dismissed by Muscovites is more difficult, as Starks realizes. Given what we already know about cultural life in early Soviet Russia, it certainly is not difficult to accept Starks’s general argument that propaganda failed to speak to the practical difficulties of implementing health recommendations, that hygienists were often overly paternalistic and disparaging toward the lower classes and women, or that citizens failed to completely revamp their lives thanks to the scientific information hygienists presented to them.

However, I do wonder if Starks’s frequent criticisms of hygienists and their efforts is always warranted. Her concluding remark, which brings the narrative up through Russia’s recent demographic crisis, ominously intones: “decades of propaganda on hygiene and rational living had not achieved its intended outcome” (p. 210). While literally true, it is a long way from the 1920s to the late 1970s, when the indicators of public health began to plummet. As Stark notes, between the 1920s and the 1960s, the age of mortality increased, and citizens learned to use the rhetoric of health to their benefit. Health communication was not a dead-end street. Additional attention to how hygienists’ messages were received might make the situation in the early Soviet period a little less bleak. Indeed, Starks’ evidence occasionally suggests a more fluid situation or alternate interpretations. For example, statistical data shows that 90 percent of Muscovite births in 1927 occurred in maternity homes (p. 160). Similarly, according to a 1922 survey, following home visitations by nurses, mothers’ “improper” feeding of infants reportedly declined by 62 percent, improper bathing declined by 12 percent, and improper use of suckling dummies (the soska) by 6 percent. Even if these numbers are inflated, it seems dubious to characterize them all as “low” (p. 160). Why did hygienists apparently have greater success with certain health messages than with others? Was the population sometimes convinced by masculine science? Did citizens see hygienists’ genuine concern for them and their children, despite the embedded paternalism?
These questions linger, but they do not detract from Starks’s overall accomplishment. Indeed, it is a credit to author that The Body Soviet leaves us wanting to know much more about how health communication was adopted, dismissed, and shaped by its target audiences.

Reviewed by Hedwig de Smaele
Professor in journalism studies, Hogeschool-Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium
hedwig.desmaele@hubrussel.be

Titles can be misleading, or revealing. The Post-Soviet Russian Media. Conflicting signals is a revealing type of title. It does not only tell you that the book deals with Russian media. It also tells you that Russian media are considered ‘post-soviet’: though not ‘soviet’ any more, the media does not fully transcend their predecessors, and persist in bearing their traces. The title also tells you that the picture is not unambiguous. Signals are ‘conflicting’ at every level: within fields (e.g. the contradiction between the market and censorship within journalism or television), between fields (e.g. variable levels of freedom between television, newspapers or Internet) and among commentators (also within this volume perceptions about media freedom and state control differ). Russia is not so much grey as indeed black and white.

The editors of this volume do explicitly have not the ambition “to provide a comprehensive account of media developments in Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union” (p. 2). The introduction comes nearest to this kind of overview. A handy ‘glossary’ at the end of the book summarizes in a nutshell some key data and names of headsman of radio and television channels. But to our feeling, the ‘unknown reader’, unfamiliar with Russia or its media and looking for an introduction to Russian media is not well served with this book. The foremost audience of the book seems to be those people with some background knowledge on Russian media already. In the introduction, the editors refer to other books on post-soviet Russian media and situate the book within the rapidly growing (?) field of post-Soviet media studies.

An outspoken ambition of the editors is “to avoid reductive over-simplifications and cosy consensus” (p. 2). This might have been an ambition from the first moment, and a deliberate choice, or an observation afterwards, resulting from the lack of focus of the book and the heterogeneity of its contributors. The book covers all media — television, radio, internet, newspapers, and in the margin mobiles and text messages as well — and some media types (eg. series and serials, interviews). Media are covered from different angles — political sciences, linguistics, cultural studies — and by scholars from both West and ‘East’ (of the Iron Curtain). Interdisciplinarity, though a feature of the whole volume and not of the individual chapters, is legitimized by the vast link between culture and politics in Russia. The editors make use of the opportunity to warn for the loss of “area studies” in university
programmes which endangers this interdisciplinarity. The book makes a plea for the discipline of ‘Russian Media Studies’ (p. 5). Both the series in which the book is published, Routledge Series on Russian and East European Studies, and the series editors’ organization, the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES), are firmly rooted in the area studies. The editors’ names are familiar to those in the field, and so are most of the authors’ names.

“The book explores developments in the Russian mass media since the collapse of the USSR in 1991” reads the cover, while according to the introduction the primary chronological frame of reference of the book is the Putin-presidency (2000-2008). Focus is on Putin indeed although many contributions extend this period to the earlier Yeltsin, Gorbachev, or even Soviet periods and into the post-Putin period as well. The cover expresses a discontinuous view on history, suggesting a disruption between the Yeltsin period, as a period of though limited independence, and the Putin period as the ‘effective return to state control’ — the good-guy-and-the-bad-guy version of history and a reductive over-simplification of the kind the editors wanted to avoid. Luckily, this kind of simplifications is found only on the cover, while most of the contributions do not support this view at all. Instead they stress that the impact of the presidency is not the sole important factor. There are lots of other, and divergent factors. There are the global media environment, technological developments and economical logic, which often work against the political influences. There are the audience, the elites, the journalists, who do not suffer one-dimensionally from political pressure but have their own agendas, ideas, and ways to influence developments as well. For example, the audience likes serials more than politics. And media fail to communicate with the audiences, even without political pressure (counterexample is the samizdat literature which was literally created by those who demanded it, within the readership). The elite accommodates with power, not only under pressure but out of self-interest. As Samuel Greene puts it in his contribution: the media are not only the dependent variable but also an independent variable.

Within the broad time frame, the approach is thematic rather than chronological. That is not to say that within contributions dealing with a specific theme a chronological order cannot be followed. This is the case, for example, in the discussion of the interview style from the pre-Revolutionary tsarist period to Putin, or in the development of serials in Russia. The volume is organized into five sections, each containing two chapters (except the first one which contains four chapters): media, politics and state; the language of the media; the media and memory; culture, state and empire in television serials; new media, censorship and identity. The recurrent theme is the relation between media and power although this is more self-evident within the sections dealing with media and politics or new media and censorship. An overall conclusion is somehow missing except for the ‘conflicting signals’ indeed.
The volume is a must read for anyone interested in the development of Russian media nowadays, or indeed in the development of ‘Russian Media Studies’. One of the advantages of an edited volume is that you are invited to read contributions outside your own, narrow discipline but indeed closely related with your subject of interest. Interdisciplinarity really is fruitful. A lot of stimulating and refreshing thoughts and ideas are worth read and heard. To cite only one: “To present Russia’s media-owning elites and their holding companies as a group of political dissidents fighting for freedom of speech against an authoritarian state is simply unrealistic and lacking in complexity” (Tina Burrett, p. 73). It is a pity, after all, that these thoughts remain limited to the narrow circle of ‘Russian Media Studies’ while the ‘cosy consensus’ in the broad and popular press remain untouched by this kind of research-based conclusions.