Ukrainian for Postgraduate Research Purposes:
An Intensive Language Workshop
Robinson College, University of Cambridge, 15-16 March 2013

Introduction

A two-day Intensive Ukrainian Language Workshop for postgraduate students from CEELBAS network universities was held at the University of Cambridge on Friday 15th and Saturday 16th March 2013. The workshop was attended by 16 Masters and PhD students and offered intensive language instruction in two principal areas: cross-disciplinary reading skills for working with Ukrainian sources (including literature and archives), and a focus on oral communication (including conducting interviews).

The workshop was a joint initiative by the University of Cambridge and University College London. It was the first of its kind in the UK, and its aim was to bring together, from across the CEELBAS network, postgraduate students who wish to enhance their current Ukrainian competence, as well as those who need Ukrainian for their research but do not currently have access to training in the language.

Participants were divided into two groups:

* Elementary (for students who did not know Ukrainian but had competence in another Slavonic language)
* Advanced (for those with a B1/B2 level of competence).

Objectives

The workshop aimed to provide:

* language instruction, at elementary *or* advanced level, focusing on the skills needed for research and/or fieldwork in a Ukrainian-speaking environment;
* an introduction to *or* consolidation of the grammar and lexis required for effective reading and oral communication;
* an introduction to *or* consolidation of cross-disciplinary reading skills for working with Ukrainian sources (including literature and archives);
* an introduction to *or* consolidation of oral skills (including the conduct of interviews);
* a discussion of and practical advice on using Ukrainian for research;
* an introduction to the use of Ukrainian libraries and archives;
* a networking opportunity for participants engaged in Ukraine-related research.

Outcomes

Clearly, over the course of two days, only a limited amount of material could be presented to candidates. It was decided to prioritise those activities which would give students with no knowledge of Ukrainian (but with competence in other Slavonic languages) a useful introduction to research skills in the language, and activities which would enhance the research skills of the more advanced learners. At the conclusion of the workshop, participants had been introduced to the following:

Elementary	Advanced
- familiarity with the Ukrainian alphabet, its sounds and letter combinations; - social courtesies and introductions; - talking about studies and/or research interests in simple terms; - understanding the language of surveys and compiling simple questionnaires; - functioning in a limited number of key everyday situations; - understanding basic morphological issues, with focus on differences between Ukrainian and other Slavonic languages; - acquisition of strategies for comprehension of lexis, including cognates, loanwords etc.; - familiarity with Ukrainian dictionaries and their effective use; - accurate close reading of words, phrases and simple sentences from authentic general and study-related texts; - skimming texts for key information presented in straightforward terms.	- consolidation of intermediate-level grammar and everyday vocabulary; - awareness of more complex grammatical and lexical issues - acquisition of further research and fieldwork-related language; - talking about o research interests in a social/networking context; - giving a brief formal presentation on individual study-related interests and topics; - compilation of and practice in administering survey questionnaires relating to individual study; - functioning in a limited number of study-related contexts, e.g. archives, libraries; - enhancement of skimming, scanning and close reading of intermediate to advanced authentic texts to extract information, for summary and translation; - development of ability to follow and evaluate lines of reasoning and arguments in more complex texts; - awareness of register, style and Ukrainian language variants, including orthographical, historical and regional.

The Programme

Friday 15th March
14.00 – Arrival, registration and opening remarks: Olesya Khromeychuk
14.45 – Discussion panel: *The use of Ukrainian for postgraduate research purposes: concerns and challenges*: Rory Finnin, Uilleam Blacker
15.30 – Tea, coffee
15.45 – Ukrainian language instruction session 1: Advanced group: Speaking, Olesya Khromeychuk Elementary group: Reading, Marta Jenkala
16.45 – Ukrainian language instruction session 2: Advanced group: Reading, Marta Jenkala Elementary group: Speaking, Olesya Khromeychuk
18.00 – Buffet dinner / wine reception
19.00 – Screening of Ukrainian film.

Saturday 16th March
09.30 – Ukrainian language instruction session 3: Advanced group: Speaking, Olesya Khromeychuk Elementary group: Reading, Marta Jenkala
10.30 – Ukrainian language instruction session 4: Advanced group: Reading, Marta Jenkala Elementary group: Speaking, Olesya Khromeychuk
11.30 – Tea, coffee
12.00 – Session for all participants: *Using Ukrainian archives and libraries*: JJ Gurga
13.00 – Lunch
14.00 – Ukrainian language instruction session 5: Advanced group: Speaking, Olesya Khromeychuk Elementary group: Reading, Marta Jenkala
15.00 – Ukrainian language instruction session 6: Advanced group: Reading, Marta Jenkala Elementary group: Speaking, Olesya Khromeychuk
16.00 – Tea, coffee
16.30 – Plenary and feedback session for all participants: *Tackling the challenges of postgraduate research in Ukrainian*
17.30 – Buffet dinner, networking
19.00 – End of workshop.

Speakers and language trainers:

Dr Uilleam Blacker
> *Memory at War* Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Cambridge

Dr Rory Finnin
> Lecturer in Ukrainian Studies, University of Cambridge

Dr JJ Gurga
> Postgraduate Teaching Assistant, UCL SSEES

Ms Marta Jenkala
> Senior Teaching Fellow in Ukrainian, UCL SSEES / Lector in Ukrainian, Cambridge

Dr Olesya Khromeychuk,
> Lector in Ukrainian, University of Cambridge.

The Detailed Language Training Outline

Friday	Elementary	Advanced
Session 1	**Reading** • alphabet/pronunciation, shape/sound of words • reading strategies at the word/phrase level (recognising cognates and loans) • starting to use authentic materials (contents pages of books, words and phrases on web pages, lists etc.) • vocabulary work: reading and overview of relevant research topics/periods/places and associated grammar). •	**Speaking** • revision of main pronunciation issues; • revision/consolidation: social courtesies and talking about oneself in a social context; • talking about interests and research • preparation for Session 3: brief presentation (3 mins) on previous studies and current research interests.
Session 2	**Speaking** • introduction and practice of main pronunciation issues (e.g. non-flattening of unstressed «о»; е/є; и/і etc.) • introductions and social courtesies • saying, in simple terms, what you are studying/have studied, when and where • preparation of points (incl. functional use of verbs e.g. вивчати, досліджувати etc.) for brief presentation about oneself and one's studies in Session 4.	**Reading** • register, orthography, historical and regional language variants • false friends • question words and structures • reading authentic examples of surveys/questionnaires • revision/overview of tenses (with a focus on functions necessary to access academic profiles/CVs) • reading authentic academic profiles /CVs.
Saturday		
Session 3	**Reading** • using knowledge of other Slavonic languages to support reading in Ukrainian (principal syntactic and morphological similarities and differences, some false friends etc.) • skimming for gist • extracting key information from short cohesive texts • dictionaries and their use.	**Speaking** • courtesies when greeting colleagues at work/university • brief presentations on individual research (prepared yesterday) • study-related situation/ role-playing e.g. formalities in library/archive etc. • talking about future academic plans • preparing questionnaires and surveys (for use in Session 5)

Session 4	**Speaking**	**Reading**
	• presentation of brief CV/academic biography, as discussed in Session 2 • basic everyday situation (e.g. shopping for food / eating out / formalities of various kinds) • talking about future study plans (presenting a small number of future verbs only functionally).	• skimming/extracting key facts from authentic texts • effective summary (using cohesive devices, textual markers etc. for comprehension of points/arguments) • some lexis for interpreting statistical analysis • reading survey outcomes and analyses
Session 5	**Reading**	**Speaking**
	• reading simple survey questions • question words/phrases for basic surveys • simple cohesive devices and their use in slightly longer texts of general interest • introduction to reading simple texts reflecting individual interests	• situation/ role-playing e.g. registering for a conference or workshop • drafting a questionnaire • division into 2-3 groups, according to interests: simulation of focus group/survey on a topic of general interest (participants to prepare questions and conduct brief survey)
Session 6	**Speaking**	**Reading**
	• basic everyday situation (e.g. shopping for food / eating out / formalities of various kinds) • role-playing: drafting simple survey questions on a general topic and using them as a whole-group activity to simulate a survey/focus group.	• Ukrainian dictionaries and their effective use • introduction of basic lexis for working with archives • overview of main translation issues • advanced grammar issues: multiple subordinate clauses, word order, passivisation etc.) • following and summarising an argument etc. • reading and translation of brief texts relating to individual research topics.

Feedback from workshop participants

- "… thank you for a splendid teaching course … I learned a huge amount in a short space. You seemed to have organised it brilliantly. I hope you do it again - I will be recommending it to others! "
- "[…] enjoyed and benefited from the workshop immensely …"
- " … after the workshop I feel more confident that I will be able to work with Ukrainian-language documents."