

RUSSISCHE GRAMMATIK. By *Erich Berneker* and *Max Vasmer*. 7th edition. Edited by *Maria Bräuer-Pospelova*. Sammlung Götschen, 4066. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1971. 149 pp. DM 7.80, paper.

INTERMEDIATE RUSSIAN: INTRODUCTION TO RUSSIAN SYNTAX. By *Valentine Tschebotarioff Bill*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972. xiv, 206 pp. \$6.95, paper.

The brief, excellent introduction to Berneker-Vasmer's *Russische Grammatik*, re-issued in a revision by Dr. Maria Bräuer-Pospelova, places Russian in the context of the Slavic world, traces the historical development of the literary language, and gives the most characteristic features of the language in comparison with Old Church Slavic.

The first and longest chapter deals with the sound and writing systems of Russian. Since the book is aimed at a German audience, points of difficulty in pronunciation that arise for speakers of that language are emphasized (for example, absence of vowel length in Russian, differences in division of syllables, and so forth). Chapters 2 through 5 are devoted to the declension of noun, pronoun, adjective, and numeral; chapter 6 treats the forms and classification of the verb, and chapter 7 the aspect. The final chapter covers all the rest and devotes some attention to syntax.

For those who can read German, this book, published in a soft-cover, pocket-sized edition, provides one of the most concise yet thorough treatments of Russian grammar available anywhere. One of its great strengths is its sound historical perspective, which makes it more of interest to the philologically oriented scholar than to the practical language learner. This occasionally works to its detriment, however, when the authors place undue emphasis on archaic forms. An example of this is the declension table on page 75 of possessive adjective *Petrov* "Peter's," instead of the more useful and similarly declined *-in* possessive, such as *Kolin* or *sestrin* (as in *Kolina kniga* "Nick's book" or *sestrin dom* "sister's house"). Similarly, too little space is given to the declension of last names in *-in* and *-ov* (*Nikitin*, *Ivanov*, etc.).

Only two serious errors were noted. On page 107 it is stated that a stress shift to the prefix of past-tense verbs or to the negative particle *ne* occurs *only* in the masculine form (for example, *né byl*, *príbyl*), whereas in fact the neuter and plural in such cases have the same stress as the masculine. In discussing the adverbial participles on page 111 (sec. 74) the misleading terms "Gerundium Präs. Akt." (present active gerund) and "Gerundium Prät. Akt." (past active gerund) are used, when in fact these forms have nothing to do with present or past actions, but rather with the simultaneity of two actions (the imperfective adverbial participle) or with two actions performed in sequence (the perfective adverbial participle). The authors have described the usage correctly; this reviewer only wishes to point out the misnomer in terminology. The book also contains an excellent six-page bibliography.

In the preface to *Intermediate Russian: Introduction to Russian Syntax*, the author states that the book's aim is to provide the intermediate student with a systematic presentation of Russian syntax in simple sentences in a one-semester course, after which "he can proceed towards a deeper understanding of compound sentences." The book has twelve chapters, each with five parts: (1) a brief reading selection followed by ten questions in Russian plus lesson vocabulary, (2) an ex-

tensive grammar section on syntax, (3) exercises in syntax, (4) stylistic problems and exercises, and (5) English-to-Russian translation sentences. The book contains two final vocabularies, the Russian-English one has about 2,800 entries, the English-Russian one about 800.

The reading passages are all excerpts, mostly from literary authors such as Bunin, Gorky, Sholokhov, Leo Tolstoy, and Pasternak; a few are expository prose selections, such as Khrushchev's de-Stalinization speech. Unhappily, the readings are almost uniformly too difficult for intermediate students to read without extensive recourse to the glossary, as attested by the fact that the author felt the need to gloss 25 percent of the words in each passage. Even more unfortunate is the grading and choice of selections, which are often static, dull, and overly descriptive. Although lesson 1 contains a relatively easy passage, lesson 2 has the hardest selection in the book.

Perhaps the best feature is the grammar section, which is well organized, detailed, and amply provided with examples, mostly drawn from the reading passages. The exercises that follow are good but difficult. One wonders if even the advanced student would not find it hard to cope with them, much less the intermediate student. The same thing holds for the section on stylistics, which contains good material but undoubtedly beyond the grasp of the intermediate student and even a challenge for the advanced student. A modest proposal to the author: in the next edition drop the words "Intermediate Russian" from the title and call the book simply "Introduction to Russian Syntax."

It is a pity that the publisher did not correct some of the poor English found in the text, for example, "He has a robust health" (p. 48), or "He offered me to take a rest" (p. 93).

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NEW GRAPHIC DESIGN IN REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA. By *Szymon Bojko*. Translated by *Robert Strybel* and *Lech Zembrzuski*. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1972. 156 pp. Illus. \$12.50, cloth. \$5.95, paper.

Interest in the Russian avant-garde movement continues to grow at a feverish pace. Yet so much ground remains uncharted, and as Szymon Bojko reminds us in his introduction, "there has hitherto been no systematic account of the history of applied graphic art in Russia during the period of the Revolution and immediately thereafter." Bojko, a Polish art historian who has often dealt with the topic, is particularly well suited to provide this account. Regrettably, in *New Graphic Design in Revolutionary Russia* he fails to do this.

The brief text includes subjects such as typography, prints, photomontage, and posters, which attracted nearly all leading artists in the 1910s and 1920s. There are more than one hundred illustrations, many of which are little known. The book also has a section of concise artists' biographies and a bibliography. But the comments are generally unoriginal, there is minimal coordination of text and illustrations, the chapters do not flow into one another, and there are annoying errors laced throughout the book. In short, Bojko provides little beyond what Camilla Gray told us in *The Great Experiment: Russian Art, 1863-1922* over