New Approaches to Grammar in Foreign Language Instruction

Indiana University
Ballantine Hall 006
Bloomington, Indiana
Friday, June 29, 2012
2-5 pm

In this workshop for pre-service and in-service teachers of foreign languages in both pre-college and university/college programs, participants will explore alternative approaches to the teaching of grammar. We’ll try to move away from the explicit presentation and practice of grammatical rules, with its emphasis on production and on accuracy, and instead consider some other dimensions of grammar teaching: grammar as understanding; grammar as options; grammar as puzzle; grammar as play; and grammar as personal.

The workshop will be conducted by Bill Johnston, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Indiana University and a leading specialist in methodology for instruction of less commonly taught languages (LCTLs). Together with Louis Janus, he founded the summer institute Developing Classroom Materials for LCTLs which has been offered continuously at the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA, University of Minnesota) since 1999. He also has led workshops at CARLA, the International Conference on Language Teacher Education, and the TESOL Convention, while also serving for many years as a trainer for teachers of the Lakota language in North and South Dakota. Johnston’s publications in the field of foreign language pedagogy include Developing Materials for LCTLs (University of Minnesota, 2007) and, with co-author C. A. Buzelli, The Moral Dimensions of Teaching: Language, Power, and Culture in Classroom Interaction (RoutledgeFalmer, 2002). He is also a prolific translator of Polish poetry and fiction.

Travel fellowships are available to pre-college Russian teachers who wish to attend the workshop. The fellowships will cover the cost of transportation between the teacher’s home and Bloomington, one night’s accommodation, and a small per diem to offset the cost of meals. We encourage all interested teachers to apply; however, preference will be given to applicants who currently teach Russian in Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio, or Michigan and/or those who have not received such a fellowship in the past five years.

To apply for a travel fellowship, please write to Mark Trotter at martrott@indiana.edu. Deadline for applications is Friday, May 25, 2012.

Sponsors: Russian and East European Institute and Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center