Language on Display: Writers, Fiction and Linguistic Culture in Post-Soviet Russia
Sociolinguistic change

linguistic and social change

“mutually constitutive processes” (Andrououtsopoulos 2014: 5)
Sociolinguistic change

linguistic and social change

Who participates in the language debates?
Who are the main users of particular varieties?
What are the main forums for linguistic debate?
Sociolinguistic change

linguistic and social change

institutions, groups, people

norm negotiation

linguistic practices & metalinguistic reflections
within a broad understanding of language culture
Sociolinguistic change

the concept of sociolinguistic change [...] urges us to ask broader questions, where the interest is less in discovering structural change in language systems and more in discovering changing relationships between language and society and their instantiation at the level of practice. Sociolinguistic change research carries the specific presupposition that whatever we identify as language change happens in the context of social change, and that these dimensions need to be handled integratively.

(Niklas Coupland 2014: 70)
Sociolinguistic change

discursive practices
language ideologies
social norms
cultural reflexivity
media(tisa)tion

(Niklas Coupland 2014: 74)
Metalanguage

reflexivity

metalinguistic dimension

practice

Linguistic practices
What is the role of writers with regard to ‘the language question’ in Russian society?

What kind of issues related to language and language change are of concern to contemporary Russian prose writers?

Which particular topics in the language debates do they respond to?

How do writers, and their texts, relate to official language planning?

What is the (changing) relationship between the language of literature and the standard language?

In what ways can fictional texts contribute to the language debates?
Introduction: sociolinguistic change and the response of literature

Part I. Post-Soviet language culture
   Chapter 1. Newspeak, counterspeak and linguistic memory
   Chapter 2. Challenging the standard

Part II. Language, writers and fiction
   Chapter 3. Languages and styles of post-Soviet Russian prose
   Chapter 4. The literary norm

Part III. Writers on language: telling and showing
   Chapter 5. Pisateli o iazyke: writers’ reflections on language
   Chapter 6. Abanamat: reactions to the ban on profanity in art (2014)

Part IV. Language on display
   Chapter 7. Confronting linguistic legacies: Evgenii Popov and Vladimir Sorokin
   Chapter 8. Language, time and linguistic dystopia: Tatiana Tolstaia and Evgenii Vodolazkin
   Chapter 9. Language ideologies and society: Valerii Votrin and Mikhail Gigolashvili

Conclusion: Towards a theory of performative metalanguage
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Ch 1. Newspeak, counterspeak and linguistic memory
Ch 2. Challenging the standard

iazyk padonkov  grammar nazi
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sociolinguistic change

литературный язык

язык литературы

sociolinguistic change
Part III. Writers on Language: Telling and Showing
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Conclusion: Towards a theory of performative metalanguage

performative metalanguage

Russian prose
Performative metalanguage amounts to statements about language communicated through a concrete linguistic practice, a display or representation of language.
Performative metalanguage

*Performative metalanguage* amounts to statements about language communicated through a *concrete* *linguistic practice*, a *display* or *representation* of language.

- quotation
- imitation
- stylization
- word play
- irony
- distorted idiom
- dialect word
- unexpected turn of phrase...
Performative metalanguage

*Performative metalanguage* amounts to statements about language communicated through a *concrete linguistic practice*, a *display* or *representation* of language.

Language as an object of representation, interpretation
Performativity

J. L. Austin
How to do things with Words
The William James Lectures delivered in Harvard University in 1955
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J. O. URMSON

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Performative metalanguage

* Performative utterances (Austin):
  to do something by saying something

* Performative metalanguage:
  to say something by doing something
Performative metalanguage

* Performative utterances (Austin):
  to act (perform) by speaking

* Performative metalanguage:
  to state by acting (performing linguistically)

* Performance
  artistic action
  artistic event
Language on display

representations (of styles, languages)
  +
linguistic practices (words, word forms, phrases)
  +
extPLICIT commentary
  \[\rightarrow\] characterizations of language
  \[\rightarrow\] laying bare of conditions for linguistic usage
  \[\rightarrow\] link to language ideology, language culture, language history, etc
Language on display
Language on display