ONE DAY WITH EVA HAJIČOVÁ

This article was presented as an introduction to Professor Eva Hajičová’s anniversary lecture delivered at a joint session of the Prague Linguistic Circle (of which Professor Hajičová has been President since 1997) and the Linguistic Association of the Czech Republic, on 6 October 2005. Readers who seek a detailed description of her professional career and a bibliography of her publications are referred to Panevová (1995; 2005).

The Editor of Linguistica Pragensia would like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Hajičová for her work as a member of its Editorial Board. However marginal this work may seem, in view of her major interests and the almost inconceivably wide range of her activities, it has been invaluable for the Journal, and the Editor sincerely hopes that this will continue. Along with our thanks, Linguistica Pragensia joins the long line of those who have expressed their best wishes for Professor Hajičová’s personal life and future work, and look forward to seeing her many plans and projects successfully accomplished.

Editors.

It is a great honour for me to address the present audience and introduce Professor Eva Hajičová’s anniversary guest lecture. Though feeling unequal to the task, I will attempt to conquer my nerves just as I tried to cope with Professor Hajičová’s comment on the brevity of my first paper on a computational linguistics issue: "You could hardly have written it more briefly." I gather additional encouragement from the fact that I may now refer to the professor using her first name, Eva.

Let us imagine a hypothetical situation in which some visitors come to me with a request to acquaint them with Eva in the course of one day spent in Prague. I would answer, "With pleasure," and take them to Malostranské náměstí (Lesser Town Square), to the fourth floor of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics at Charles University. I would show them a notice board with Eva’s picture, and an interview with her, displayed in a prominent position. When I look at the photo, I experience a deep sense of calm normally only associated with a feeling of being at home. This is because Eva takes care of us in a very maternal manner, while at the same time granting us maximum freedom to do whatever we choose.

We would go to the second floor where I would show the visitors where Rooms 65 and 66 are and where we used to do our research before the building was renovated. The fact that we are now able to occupy eight and a half rooms is testimony to the victory Eva won against the whole School of Computer Science, for whom we are still ‘those linguists’.
We would walk from the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics to a street called Karmelitská. We would have to stop in front of the Ministry of Education building. Here I would point out that Eva was in charge of two projects financed by this Ministry and that the Minister awarded her a medal for her achievements in 2003. I would probably have to restrain myself from saying too loud that the Ministry clerks are very difficult to deal with at times.

We would hop on the 22 tram at Újezd, travel a few stops to Štěpánská and, from there, we would walk to Karlov where our Faculty building is. It might interest our visitors to know that, among other things, PhD thesis defences take place here. Since being accredited in 1993, the Mathematical Linguistics committee has granted 12 PhD degrees to graduates of the Institute of Formal and Applied Linguistics.

I would mention these points in order to emphasize the importance of a key field in each grant proposal where the number of young researchers under the age of 35 has to be specified. Eva pays close attention to this number and thus succeeds in pleasing not only us, but also the Ministry clerks.

Visitors would no doubt shake their heads in disbelief when hearing about an absurd incident five years ago: the former Dean wanted to suspend Eva from her Director's post because of her age. He probably had no idea how much he himself aged in our eyes at that moment. To dispel this dark memory, we would look at the Congress Centre across the Nuselské valley. This would remind me of Eva's great organisational abilities. She really is an impeccable organiser and hostess of international and national seminars, conferences and summer schools. It was in this Congress Centre that the largest linguistic event in the Czech Republic to date took place two years ago – the XVIIth International Congress of Linguists.

Lunchtime would probably be approaching by this point and we would be beginning to feel hungry. I do not know for certain where we would go for lunch, but I am sure the restaurant loudspeakers would fill the room with pleasant melodies. We could, for example, listen to Sinatra's *Singing in the Rain* because the same applies to Eva – she is laughing at clouds, so dark, up above, the sun is in her heart…

After lunch, on our way to the Faculty of Arts, we would pass the high street Národní třída, then Můstek, Old Town Square and the Fišer bookshop. Here our visitors would be able to buy Eva's monograph *Issues of Sentence Structure and Discourse Patterns* and see for themselves what an excellent academic she is.

Then we would come to the square named after the student Jan Palach where the Faculty of Arts is located. I would explain to the visitors that this is actually just across the river from the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics where we started out. However, Eva would be able to confirm that back in the 1970s there was still a wide gulf between the philosophers and the mathematicians/physicists.

For the evening, we would buy tickets for one of Václav Havel's plays, *The Audience*, performed at the Na Zábradlí Theatre. This play would be a deliberate choice to show our visitors what absurdities Eva also had to contend with.
We would probably not manage to get as far as the Crystal Hotel, not even as far as Prague airport. I would just like to briefly mention Vilém Mathesisus and the Prague Linguistic Circle and I would add that the Czech airlines love to have Eva on their flights.

Later in the evening, we would drop into a video shop. We would not select a popular prewar film called *Eva tropí hlouposti* (*Eva Makes Trouble*), but instead opt for *My Fair Lady*. This choice speaks for itself.

It would be almost midnight when the visitors would tell me they had fallen in love with Eva and I would reply that they were not the first …

*Barbora Vidová-Hladká (Prague)*

**References**


**TROIS QUARTS DU SIÈCLE: PROFESSEUR VÁCLAV VLASÁK**

Le retour d’un anniversaire nous surprend à nouveau par la rapidité du temps fugace. La mémoire s’efface et nous tenons de notre devoir de rappeler quelques chapitres quasi-oubliés de l’histoire. On oublie beaucoup, parfois on veut oublier.

Václav Vlasák est né le 29 avril 1931 à Nusle, quartier pauvre de Prague, dans une famille modeste. A l’âge de trois ans, il a perdu père. Sa mère a dû faire des sacrifices pour assurer la survie et l’avenir de son fils unique. Il a passé ses études secondaires avec succès à Prague. Choisi comme boursier au lycée franco-tchéque de Nîmes (1947–1948), il dut interrompre ses études en France après les changements politiques de 1948. Le rideau de fer s’est abattu sur l’Europe Centrale. Les jeunes Tchèques avaient déjà acquis une riche expérience historique: ils ont vécu la première République Tchécoslovaque, l’occupation nazie, la deuxième guerre mondiale, la Libération et le renouveau de la République, ensuite la prise du pouvoir par le régime communiste et les bouleversements qui s’en suivirent. L’Université de Prague comme toute la vie publique en furent profondément touchées. La liberté académique (parfois excessive) fut remplacée par l’organisation stricte. La Faculté des Lettres s’est transformée en la Faculté de Philologie et la Faculté de Philosophie et d’Histoire. Les études et les examens étaient répartis en cinq années avec deux matières obligatoires. La base de toutes les études et de toutes les sciences était la philosophie marxiste-léniniste, la seule admise, obligatoire, la seule salutaire dont les formules dogmatiques étaient remâchées