REEEEC is glad to welcome Roman Ivashkiv, Lecturer and Language Program Coordinator in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. He received a B.A. and M.A. in English Linguistics and Translation Studies from the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, an M.A. in Russian and Comparative Literature from Pennsylvania State University, and a Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literatures from the University of Alberta.

Dr. Ivashkiv’s doctoral dissertation explored the concept of transmēsis (a portmanteau of “translation” and “mimesis”) which, in his words, “stands for the representation in fiction of translation, both as a process and a product, as well as for the portrayal of the figure of the translator in a fictional text.” In his dissertation, Dr. Ivashkiv looked at three contemporary postmodern novels – all of which feature the theme of translation – in their original Ukrainian and Russian and in English translation: Yuri Andrukhovych’s Perverziia (translated by Michael Naydan), Serhiy Zhadan’s Depesh Mod (translated by Myroslav Shkandrij), and Viktor Pelevin’s Generation “П” (translated by Andrew Bromfield).

According to Dr. Ivashkiv, looking at these works in translation raises questions of untranslatability: “How do translators render transmētic episodes in novels into English while operating from the position of ‘retranslating,’ or translating what allegedly already is a translation?” To explain the problem, he uses the example of Pelevin’s Generation “П”. From a translation perspective, even the title is challenging: “Generation” is already in English in the Russian title, and translating “П” as “P” doesn't quite do it justice, particularly in light of the fact that the novel is about translation. Generation “П” is written primarily in Russian, but it contains many instances of English usage – how can such instances be translated into English? For the translator, conveying a multilingual mode is a problem.

In addition to translation studies, Dr. Ivashkiv’s research interests include postmodern and comparative literature, literary theory, and second language acquisition. He has more than 10 years of language teaching experience, in various countries and contexts. At the University of Alberta, he taught Ukrainian, Ukrainian Culture, and English as a Second Language. In addition to coordinating the Slavic Language Program, he is currently teaching first- and second-year Ukrainian (UKR 101 and 201), an advanced Russian language course for graduate students (RUSS 501), and a Slavic languages pedagogy seminar (SLAV 591).

Matthew McWilliams is a REEES M.A. student and a FLAS Fellow for the 2015-16 academic year for the study of Russian.