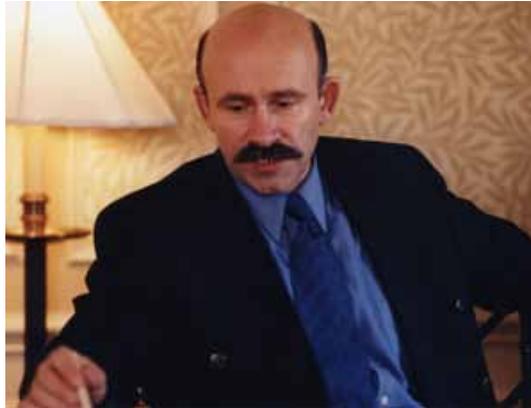


## An Introduction to Our 2009 Greiss Lecturer Pavel Ruslanovich Palazhchenko

by Nora Seligman Favorov

Our 2009 Greiss lecturer Pavel Palazhchenko writes, “I’ve been a translator and interpreter for almost 40 years now, and my fascination with ‘the untranslatable’ has been growing all these years.” This statement, which originally appeared in an article in *Russia Beyond the Headlines* (the English-language spin-off of *Российская газета*) and was republished on his website, accounts for one half of the reason he has been invited to speak to our membership in New York this fall. The other half of the reason is that this “fascination” has spawned so many insights that are, well, fascinating.



I first became convinced of this when I was given a copy of his rather non-traditional “dictionary” several years ago: *Мой несистематический словарь* [My Unsystematic Dictionary] (Moscow, 2003). (The gift, incidentally, was from assistant SLD administrator Elana Pick, another benefit of the “bilingual partnership” described on page 18.) Palazhchenko is not, of course, a lexicographer, at least not in the narrow sense of the word. He is a Russian<>English interpreter who has had a rich and varied career, including his long and ongoing tenure as interpreter for and now aide to President Mikhail Gorbachev. A 1972 graduate of Moscow’s Thorez Institute, Palazhchenko interpreted at the UN in New York through the late seventies before going to work at the Soviet Foreign Ministry. He went to work directly for President Gorbachev in early 1991.

The “unsystematic” dictionary takes some of the “untranslatables” from both Russian and English and explores the particular challenges they pose for the other language. In my personal copy there are a few pages that are particularly dog-eared. For example, I would be embarrassed to admit how many times I went back to his half-page discussion of the Russian word *конъюнктура* before I began to get the hang of it (as he explains, the term, which comes from the French *conjoncture*, refers to a short-term, immediate situation with a connotation of something that can be taken advantage of). The book also features a very useful and interesting section called “Practicum,” where he takes an official statement by President Putin and its official

translation into English and discusses some ways in which the translation falls short. This section (like the rest of the book) demonstrates his extraordinary command of the subtleties of English usage, to say nothing of his native tongue.

I would encourage any of our readers who know Russian even slightly to explore his website <<http://pavelpal.ru>>, which includes several English-language commentaries on language (including the one republished on page 10). I was particularly pleased to find both the Russian and English versions of a fascinating article coauthored by our 2006 Greiss lecturer, Michele Berdy, critiquing recent translations of Russian classics, which I first read in the Russian translation journal *Мосты*: <http://pavelpal.ru/node/311>.

Pavel Palazhchenko will be giving a preconference seminar in English geared primarily toward interpreters, but undoubtedly also useful for translators, on strategies for dealing with typological differences between languages (Seminar V, October 28, 2 PM). His Greiss lecture, entitled “Translation and Interpreting in a Pragmatic Age,” will be delivered Friday afternoon, October 30, at 2 PM.

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# SLD ELECTIONS: CANDIDATES' STATEMENTS

*For the first time in recorded history, we have a contested election. Elana Pick and Svetlana Ball are both running for Assistant Administrator, and we are publishing their statements to help you choose between these two qualified and motivated candidates. We are also publishing a statement by Becky Blackley who is running unopposed for SLD Administrator.*

*Since this is a contested election, voting will be conducted by mail ballot. Ballots will be mailed to SLD members on September 25. Ballots must be returned to the SLD Inspector of Elections by Friday, October 23, 2009.*

Please submit ballots by mail or fax to:  
American Translators Association  
SLD Inspector of Elections  
Attn: Jamie Padula  
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
Fax: +1-703-683-6122

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

### CANDIDATE FOR ADMINISTRATOR

**Ms. Becky Blackley**

[\(beckyblackley@gmail.com\)](mailto:beckyblackley@gmail.com)

I am a Russian to English translator, specializing in law, business/finance, and the arts. I have an MA from the Russian Language School of Middlebury College and an Advanced Certificate in Translation Studies from the University of Chicago's Graham School of General Studies. I have been actively translating since 2000 and a full-time freelance translator since 2006.

I have served on the boards of directors and as an officer of several associations (local, county, state, and international) and have had experience overseeing association activities. I have developed various computer keyboard commands for Cyrillic, as well as other shortcuts, some of which were included in "At Your Command: Creating Customized Keyboard Shortcuts" (The ATA Chronicle, January 2006). In 2008, I was a presenter at the ATA Annual Conference in Orlando. I am SDL Trados Certified for Translator's Workbench and am an SDL Trados Approved Trainer.

I have been a member of ATA and the Slavic Languages Division since 2004 and have found this to be my primary source for developing and maintaining professional contacts with other translators and with language service providers and other clients. Having personally benefited from the services provided by ATA and the SLD and wanting to become more actively involved, I decided to run for SLD Administrator in 2007.

It has been a rewarding experience serving as a division officer, and, if re-elected, I hope to continue to serve the Slavic Languages Division in any way possible.

Becky Blackley (incumbent)

*Continued on page (*



## ADMINISTRIVIA

Becky Blackley, SLD Administrator

Greetings to everyone!

I hope you have had a good summer. It's beautiful here in the mountains of West Virginia as the leaves begin to put on their autumn colors.

It was a busy summer for me. I spent almost all my free time designing and creating my Web site. Since I knew nothing about Web site development, I had to read a couple of books and do a lot of research on the Internet, but I finally launched the site a few weeks ago ([www.beckyblackley.com](http://www.beckyblackley.com)). There were times when I wanted to pull my hair out, but most of the time it was exciting to learn something new, and I'm glad that I did it. There is a page of resources for translators that might be of interest to *SlavFile* readers. I plan to continue to add information to this page as often as possible. I have many other resources to add, but I knew if I waited until the page was complete, I'd never get the Web site launched.

Most of the focus of the SLD officers right now is on the 50th ATA Conference in New York in late October. It should be an exciting event for everyone, but especially for our division. I hope all of you get a chance to journey out of Manhattan to Brighton Beach in Brooklyn and visit the many Russian stores there, or to New York's other Slavic neighborhoods. Elsewhere in the issue you will find information about special discounts being offered to ATA members by Brighton Beach merchants during the conference. And, of course, the highlight will be the SLD banquet at the Samovar Restaurant, which is conveniently located near our hotel. Through the diligent efforts of our division's assistant administrator, Elana Pick, we are being offered a choice of tempting dishes at a very reasonable price for such a noted NYC restaurant. This should be an evening to remember. Elana also negotiated the Brighton Beach discounts.

You should also note that in order to make room for an additional SLD presentation, we have moved our annual meeting to the lunch hour. It is tentatively scheduled for 12:30–1:30 p.m. on Friday in the room in which the SLD presentations will be held. Check the program book for the location. Our morning session ends at noon, so you should be able to grab a take-out sandwich or salad and bring it to the meeting to eat during the session. The annual Susana Greiss lecture starts at 2:00 p.m., so it will be important to stay on schedule. This may not be a permanent change, but we wanted to have more presentations this year, and this was the only way we could do it.

### At Last: A Quality RU<>EN Electronic Dictionary

On another subject, I have some good news to share: There finally is an electronic (computer) Russian<>English dictionary that has excellent English. (No more made-up definitions like "fakement.") It's really no surprise that the

English is above par, for the new dictionary is none other than the tried-and-true companion to many RU<>EN translators, the *Oxford Russian-English Dictionary* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), now available from WordFinder.

Unfortunately, this new version still has some drawbacks. The dictionary doesn't yet work the way that a computer dictionary should work in the RU>EN direction (the EN>RU works fine). The WordFinder dictionary software allows you to highlight a word in your document and have the software quickly look up the translation for you. Of course, this means that the dictionary has to recognize all word forms. If you select "said" or "says," it will display the entry for "say," because WordFinder recognizes all English word forms. However, if you select "главы," it will take you to "глагол," not "глава" because it doesn't (yet) recognize all the Russian word forms, so it takes you to the next alphabetic entry that *follows* the word you selected. If the main word form *precedes* the selected word or if there are other words that come between them, the software won't take you to the right entry. You will be close to the correct word, and it's easy to scroll down or up the word list column, so you can find most entries without any problem, but you do need to know what the main word form is. In other words, in the RU>EN direction, it works like a print dictionary where you have to know how to spell the main form of the word to look up the entry. And since verb translations in the Oxford dictionary are given only under their perfective form, you may have to hunt a bit to get to the translation of an imperfective verb. Once you find the imperfective listing, it will refer you to the perfective form. You'll then have to either scroll up or down the word list or type the perfective verb into the search box or use the Custom Search feature. But it's still a lot faster than using a paper dictionary.

However, these problems will not be permanent. WordFinder is aware of them and is committed to fixing them as soon as possible. Some things that I found in early testing have already been fixed. Other things will take longer. But they will be releasing update patches (free of charge) as more fixes become available. All the WordFinder features seem to work properly in the EN>RU direction. You can package the RU<>EN dictionary with two English references, the *Oxford Unabridged Dictionary* and the *Oxford Thesaurus*, as well as with bilingual dictionaries for other languages.

And, finally, there's good news for serious bargain hunters. Since the dictionary works with the WordFinder software in only one direction, Mike Kidd, the WordFinder sales manager for the U.S., Canada, and Latin America, is offering SLD members (in those locations only) a significant discount on the dictionary. You can download a trial

*Continued on page 4*

**CANDIDATE FOR ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR**

**Ms. Svetlana Ball**

([cyrillico@embarqmail.com](mailto:cyrillico@embarqmail.com))

I graduated from Izmail Pedagogical Institute, majoring in English linguistics. I worked as an in-house linguist from 1993 to 1995 and have been freelancing since 1995. I am ATA certified from English into Russian. I joined the American Translators Association in 1995 shortly after attending my first ATA conference in Nashville, Tennessee. I have always appreciated the benefits provided by ATA and its Divisions. Slavic Languages Division has proved to be especially useful to me. It has always been a place to go to for professional help and advice in my language pairs. I have always wanted to give back.

I feel now is the time for me to become more active in the life of Slavic Languages Division and more outspoken about its benefits.

My goals:

1. To help Slavic Languages Division to become more visible on the regional level.
2. To help make the ATA conferences a source of professional continuing education for members of Slavic Languages Division.
3. To contribute to the development of the Mentoring Program, for Slavic members.

I count on your support.

Svetlana Ball

**CANDIDATE FOR ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR**

**Ms. P. Elana Pick, Ph.D.**

([rulinguist@optimum.net](mailto:rulinguist@optimum.net))

I am a native Russian speaker, born and raised in the former Soviet Union. I came to this country 19 years ago. I have two master's degrees: in teaching English from Tbilisi Teacher's Training Institute and in journalism from Moscow State University. I also hold the degree of Candidate in Pedagogical Studies from the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. I have taught for over 40 years on both sides of the Atlantic, including teaching medical interpreting skills at the NYU SCPS and Center for Immigrant Health in New York. I am an ATA certified EN>RU translator and Court approved interpreter.

When I joined the ATA and SLD 10 years ago, I was very warmly welcomed by then SLD administrator and the editor of *SlavFile*, whom I feel fortunate to call my friends. Over the years, I have made more friends within the division and the ATA, have been a part of various translation teams, have been an editor and had my translations edited by my esteemed colleagues in ATA. Needless to say, this has helped me become a much better translator/interpreter than I was before joining. In short, I have benefited from both the ATA and the SLD, from the conferences, *SlavFile*, and *The ATA Chronicle*, as well as from personal networking and bumping heads and arguing over difficult or tricky terms with my colleagues. I would like to use my experience to benefit others and see more people take advantage of what the SLD has to offer.

The SLD is an excellent vehicle for raising professional standards in the Slavic T/I community, and I would like to see its role in spreading knowledge, skills and team work expand.

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**ADMINISTRIVIA** *Continued from page 3*

version from their Web site ([www.wordfinder.com](http://www.wordfinder.com)), but if you then decide to purchase the dictionary, *don't* order it online. Instead, send an e-mail to [mike@wordfinder.com](mailto:mike@wordfinder.com). Tell him which dictionaries you want to purchase (just the Russian-English dictionary or the unabridged dictionary and thesaurus, too). Be sure to mention that you are an ATA Slavic Languages Division member and ask for the discounted price. Mike will let you know what it will cost, and your order will be processed through him. WordFinder will have a booth at the ATA Conference, so you can stop by and talk with Mike in person.

Meanwhile, if you plan on attending the SLD banquet in New York, please send in your reservation, check and meal choice as soon as possible. This year, it will be particularly difficult to sign up at the last minute at the conference. You don't want to find that you're left out of the fun because you waited too long. You can find the sign-up sheet on our website: <http://www.ata-divisions.org/SLD/index.htm>.

I hope to see you at the conference!

Becky

Becky can be reached at [beckyblackley@starband.net](mailto:beckyblackley@starband.net).

The Editors would like to point out the magnitude of the contribution made to this publication by copyeditors Christina Sever and Jennifer Guernsey and layout and Russian copyeditor Galina Raff, and to publicly express their appreciation.

# EXTRACURRICULAR SLAVIC ACTIVITIES AT THE NY CONFERENCE

(BROUGHT TO YOU COURTESY OF ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR  
AND BRIGHTON BEACH RESIDENT ELANA PICK)

## I. Banquet information

When: Friday, October 30th, 7:00 to 10:30 PM  
Where: The Russian Samovar, 256 W. 52 Street (between 8th Ave. & Broadway)  
Why: Food, Old Friends, New Friends, Networking, Laughter, Conviviality, etc.  
Price: \$75 per person includes everything except alcohol  
How: Fill in this form and mail to the address below.  
Questions: [pick.ep@gmail.com](mailto:pick.ep@gmail.com)

Russian Samovar immediately became a favorite of many celebrities, and still today is visited by many theater people, dancers and writers as well as ordinary people looking for an excellent meal and good entertainment. Guests have included Ernst Neizvestny, Viktor Kogan, Alfred Koch, Edward Radzinski and Philip Roth. An episode of *Sex and the City* with Mikhail Baryshnikov and Carrie Bradshaw was filmed here. The restaurant displays a rich collection of rare samovars and a collection of paintings by modern Russian artists including Igor Tulpanov and Yuri Gorbachev, which belong to the restaurant's current—and by now longtime—owner, Roman Kaplan.

Now for the details. We are including a copy of the sign up sheet here, but the easiest thing to do is go to <http://tinyurl.com/lyo73v>, print it out, and send it in.

Every year we try to get you to sign up early with the threat that you otherwise might be closed out of our event. This year this is no empty threat. We expect a large Slavic turn-out in New York and can only accommodate 50 at the banquet. So mail in your check for \$75 per person (made out to P. Elana Pick) right away. You will receive notification of receipt that will serve as your ticket to the event.

*Mail to: P. Elana Pick  
125 Oceana Drive East, Apartment 3d  
Brooklyn, NY 11235*

The Slavic Languages Division has had banquets in day care centers, hotels, strip malls, tourist traps, and a few well established restaurants--usually with pretty good food and atmosphere--but never have we had a banquet in as classy a venue as New York's Russian Samovar Restaurant, [www.russiansamovar.com](http://www.russiansamovar.com). It is pricey (\$75 per person), but we believe it will be a night to remember.

We have booked a room on the second floor of the restaurant for Friday, October 30th, from 7 pm to 10:30 pm. A full-service cash bar will be set up in the lounge area at 7 pm for drinks between 7 pm and 8 pm (cash bar prices agreed on are lower than in most Manhattan bars). Appetizers will be served on the buffet tables starting at 7:30 pm (herring with potatoes, pickled veggies, vinegret, salad Olivier, green Russian salad, bliny with smoked salmon). The main courses will be preordered and served individually (beef Stroganoff, pelmeni, chicken Kiev, salmon shashlik or a vegetarian entree). Dessert and tea/coffee will be served after the main course.

If you have heard enough and want to sign up, you can find the sign-up sheet on the SLD website or below.

The Russian Samovar restaurant is located at 256 West 52 Street (between Broadway and Eighth Avenue), only a few blocks from the hotel, with a beautiful room for private functions on the second floor. The rooms here are often used to host receptions, literary evenings, New Year's Eve and Maslenitsa parties, not to mention celebrations of Joseph Brodsky's birthday. The room can accommodate up to 50 people, while the main part of the restaurant on the first floor seats 90.

Russian Samovar, which is more than twenty-two years old, is the oldest Russian restaurant in Manhattan. In its previous incarnation it was the home of an American bar, Jilly's, to which Frank Sinatra used to descend from his apartment upstairs in the buildings. During a renovation the current owners discovered a piece of the wall with some unique and valuable old drawings. Originally founded and owned by Joseph Brodsky and Mikhail Baryshnikov, the

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Choice of entrée (circle one)</b>	Beef Stroganoff, Pelmeni, Chicken Kiev, Salmon Shashlik or a Vegetarian Entrée
<b>Additional Name(s)</b>	
<b>Choice of entrée (circle one)</b>	Beef Stroganoff, Pelmeni, Chicken Kiev, Salmon Shashlik or a Vegetarian Entrée
<b>Email(s)</b>	
<b>Cell phone (optional)</b>	
<b>Address (to which we will mail you a ticket)</b>	
<b>Amount enclosed (number attending times \$75)</b>	_____ x \$75 = _____ (Make check out to P. Elana Pick)

# EXTRACURRICULAR SLAVIC ACTIVITIES AT THE NY CONFERENCE

## II. Brighton Beach Tour for Book (and Food) Lovers: Discounts Offered

A trip to Brighton Beach (BB) is definitely worth taking should you be interested in lugging home a suitcase full of books, CDs, t-shirts, candy, sausages, freshly baked bread, caviar and some other exotic and not so exotic samples of what BB residents consider staples.

So if you have at least 4 to 5 hours to spare, walk a couple of blocks to the Times Square subway station and look for yellow lines. Hop on a Q-train (make sure it's going toward Brooklyn) if you want to enjoy a 50-minute local train ride to Brooklyn. If you want to save about 10 minutes (but only before 9 pm on weekdays and not at all on weekends) you can walk to Rockefeller Center (on 6th avenue with entrances between 47th and 50th streets) subway station and get on an orange express B-train. In either case you will get off at the Brighton Beach Station. The fare is \$ 2.25 one way. Of course you can always take a yellow cab, but be aware that most cab drivers will not be eager to go to Brighton Beach (since locals there prefer car services, and the cabs will have trouble getting a return fare). The fare should be slightly more than that for a car service. To use a **car service** yourself, call **718 646 6666** (one of the most popular local car services, based right on the corner of BB and Coney Island Avenue, is next to the Black Sea Book Store) and ask them to pick you up. They might have cars in Manhattan and will be happy to drive you to BB (the fare will be \$35 + \$5.50 for tolls whatever the number of passengers) or you might have to wait for them to come from Brooklyn and get you (you pay only one way, make sure the dispatcher understands you, a Russian accent is very helpful...).

The Brighton Beach station, where you get off, is the last one on the B line, but the Q line continues on. Walk down a flight of stairs (closest if you are in the last car), make a left and walk down one more flight. You'll find yourself at the corner of Brighton Beach Avenue and Coney Island looking at the **Black Sea Book Store** right opposite you across Coney Island Avenue. This store, which carries only books, is offering our members a 10% discount.

If you are hungry and want to get some lunch, coming out of the Black Sea Book Store, make a right and you'll see Nora Favorov's favorite lunch spot when she comes to visit me in Brighton. It's called **Glechik** and is very good, if not exactly dietetic. You can even take home a few (or not so few) bags of frozen pelmeni of about 5 different kinds. Nora and I both recommend them.

If you want to take a walk on our famed **Boardwalk**, cross BB Avenue and walk past Chase Bank towards the ocean and in one block you'll find yourself on the Boardwalk. If the weather is nice (we'll try to arrange this during the conference, but can offer no guarantees), you'll certainly enjoy it very much. You can even practice your Russian

with fellow strollers and/or your simo interpretation skills if you are a Russian speaker and your ATA companions are not.

After you have filled your lungs with fresh air, return to BB Avenue and make a left, pass Chase Bank and keep walking. On both sides of BB Avenue you'll see stores, grocery stores, delis, a number of pharmacies (some very good herbal medicines can be found here, as well as inexpensive and good cosmetic products from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Russia).

Walk on Brighton Beach Avenue in the direction of smaller street numbers and on the right hand side of the street at 421 (the corner of Brighton and 5<sup>th</sup> Street) you'll see the huge store **Mosvideofilm** (you can't miss it even if you want to: [www.mosvideo.com](http://www.mosvideo.com)). This place has two floors of books, and also carries CDs in Russian (and some in Ukrainian). The store owners are offering ATA conference participants a 20% discount on all their regular prices. We'll have coupons for you to present at check out.

Keep walking. In a couple of blocks down the road there is yet another store, the **RBC book store** ([www.bukinist.com](http://www.bukinist.com)), which carries a large collection of Russian books, music, video and CDs. They are offering us a 10% discount on everything in the store being sold at regular price, and we'll have their coupons as well.

Well, if you still have time, energy and are interested in checking out one more book store, keep walking and here it is, **St. Petersburg Book Store**, at 230 Brighton Beach Avenue. The owners are offering us a 20% discount on all their regular price items. St Petersburg, which has been in existence for 15 years, claims to be the largest chain of Russian book stores outside that country. They are very proud of having been described by the New York Times as a "book, video, and music emporium." And a casual perusal of the website shows very high ratings on the part of customers. The range of their products can be inspected on the web at [www.RusKniga.com](http://www.RusKniga.com) or [www.FromRussia.com](http://www.FromRussia.com) for those who do not speak Russian. It is unlikely that the discount applies to mail order items.

Well, your journey to "Russian America" (aka "Little Odessa" aka "Little Russia by the Sea") is almost over. If you have been moderate in your purchases, you can climb the stairs to the Ocean Parkway subway station and get on a Q-train that will take you back to Times Square. Or if you are simply too burdened with packages to handle the subway, call a car service.

Hope you've had a great time!

Questions? Contact Elana, who did all the leg and pen work to make this article and these events possible, at [rulinguist@optonline.com](mailto:rulinguist@optonline.com).

# SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone



As some of you may remember, I devoted a good deal of last issue's column to what I claimed was a benign piscatory obsession on the part of those born in the ex-Soviet Union. Despite my trepidation, I received no offended remonstrances from this group (possibly testifying to how few readers I have), but did get the following note from Elena

Morrow, clearly a regular reader and one of my favorite correspondents.

*Thank you so much for your article on Russians and fish in the current issue of SlavFile. Indeed, what is it with the Russians and fish? It seems they have an innate desire to know the name of every kind of fish swimming in their rivers and seas. Even elementary-level Russian language books for schoolchildren mention and illustrate at least five species of fish. I find it difficult to explain to the parents of my Russian-language Saturday students why this knowledge is needed in 1st grade. "Yes, we're making every effort to make learning Russian fun for your kids. No, I don't know why current textbooks from Russia focus on fish." The children themselves don't seem to mind, as long as I don't ask them to memorize the fish names! I too have a "fish story" to share. Back in 1990 when I was a college student in my native Ukraine, a group of American college students visited my hometown through a sister-city exchange program. I hosted one of them (my future husband) in my parents' apartment for two weeks. In the best tradition of Slavic hospitality, my parents racked their brains over the question of what gift to send to this young man's parents when he returned home. They could not come up with a better choice than a giant smoked fish. So, as he was leaving for the U.S, my future husband packed a full Soviet military uniform (his idea of an exotic trophy, which still hangs in our closet today) in which one of the boots (кирзовый сапог) contained a special present for his parents: a giant, smelly, smoked fish, leaking fats and oils. Finding and purchasing this extra-special fish (дефицит) through connections (но блату) took many bribes and a lot of effort on my mother's part. We will never know what my future in-laws thought when their son, upon returning from his trip to the much-dreaded Evil Empire, pulled a fish out of a boot in his suitcase! Of course, we did not know at the time that giving fish as a present was a mafia sign of imminent death at one time in the U.S. mafia wars. To this day, my in-laws have not spoken of this incident, and I dare not ask any questions!*

I (Lydia) had not meant to say anything more on the topic of fish names for a while until I read an article in the *Washington Post* about overfishing of certain species. Implicated as a major causal factor was the change in the common name of these edible species as a marketing device to increase their attractiveness to the public. Thus the *slimehead* became the *orange roughy* and the *Patagonian toothfish* the *Chilean seabass*, allowing "trash" catch that fishermen used to have trouble giving away to command high prices at the fish counter and eventually threatening their continued existence. What's in a name, indeed! Perhaps my Russian editor was right to be concerned over the potential dire consequences of calling a *карась* a *carp*.

Recently I picked up a Dover Thrift Edition of *The Cherry Orchard*. This series reprints literary classics at a pitance and allows unlimited reproduction and performance rights. A laudable enterprise one might say. However, they are able to offer the price and reproduction rights by dint of reprinting only classics whose copyright has run out; and in the case of classics in foreign languages—whose translation copyright has run out as well. I cannot speak about other DTE books, but in this case the English translation was reproduced from a 1929 one-volume Chekhov and the translator's name is not given anywhere—not on the cover, not in any of the fine print. (BTW, it is neither the Garnett nor the Julius West 1916 version obtainable on the Web.) Now I know I harp on subjects like this in these pages, but truly this kind of thing does an enormous disservice to translation in general as well as to the cause of enabling English speakers to appreciate classics written in other languages. First, anyone who has produced even a flawed translation of a classic has done an enormous amount of work and should get credit for it. Perhaps this was not the practice or the understanding in 1929, but it should have been when Dover put out this edition for the first time in 1991. Second, failing to prominently feature the name of the translator of a published work implies and endorses the idea that translations are indistinguishable or at least not worth distinguishing. No translator, literary or otherwise, is likely to benefit from a general belief that this is true. Finally, selection of a translation solely because it is in the public domain is likely, at best, to present readers with a considerable quantity of old-fashioned language. And at worst to pervasively or sporadically distort the nature of the original classic, possibly disaffecting readers with this work, works by this author or in this original language, or even with all so-called classics.

Was the *Cherry Orchard* pervasively distorted in the Thrift Edition translation? Well, probably not, but there were a fair number of infelicitous or inexplicable renderings that detracted from true appreciation and understanding. Some examples:

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Original Russian	Thrift translation	More appropriate translation*	Comments
Варя, ее приемная дочь, 24 лет.	<b>Barbara, Elderly daughter of Madame Ranevsky</b>	<b>Varya, peasant girl raised as part of the family by Ranevskaya, 24 years old</b>	Not exactly a translation error— <i>elder</i> evidently inferred from the ages of the two girls and then misrendered as <i>elderly</i> , which is grossly misleading. The cues that Varya is not the real daughter are likely to be missed and to mystify modern readers and should thus certainly be made explicit in the cast list.
Завтра утром встану, побегу в сад.	When I wake up in the morning, I shall run out into the <b>garden</b>	<b>Orchard</b>	Said by Anya on her return home. The whole play is about this cherry orchard and, although garden is a legitimate translation of the word used, clearly the family's involvement with the orchard is what is being emphasized here.
Ваш брат... говорит про меня, что я <b>хам</b>	Your brother... says I am a <b>snob</b>	<b>Lout, boor, philistine</b>	Attributed to Gaev by Lopakhin. This is the exact opposite of the name the impoverished gentlemen Gaev would call the upwardly mobile, but slightly uncouth Lopakhin. A complete mistranslation.
Предмет неодушевленный, а все-таки как-никак <b>книжный шкаф</b>	It's only an inanimate thing, but for all that it's an <b>historic cupboard</b>	<b>Bookcase</b>	Said by Gaev, who is a windbag but does not talk absolute nonsense. He justifies his overblown panegyric by the fact that the <b>bookcase</b> is associated with learning and philosophy. Cupboard may be the correct translation into British or early 20 <sup>th</sup> century English, but is misleading to today's U.S. audience.
<b>Недотепа</b>	<b>Job lot</b>	<b>Clod, nincompoop</b>	"Job lot" is inexplicable, bizarre, and completely incongruous coming from the rural, feudal Firs.
<b>Дача, дачники</b>	<b>Villas, villa residents</b>	<b>Summer cottages, summer people, vacationers</b>	Said by Lopakhin about the future fate of the orchard. Gives today's readers a mistakenly elegant impression of who is likely to move in to the site of the former orchard. The supposed crass nature of the new residents is what causes the family to recoil from the plan.
<b>Ярославская бабушка</b>	<b>Grandmother in Yaroslavl</b>	<b>Your great aunt in Yaroslavl</b>	The woman is Gaev's aunt and thus Anya's great aunt. The Russian word can refer to either great aunt or grandmother, but this mistranslation is likely to confuse modern audiences as to why a grandmother is willing to help so little.
<b>Облезлый</b> барин	<b>Moldy</b> gentleman	<b>Shabby</b> gentleman	Not a terrible mistranslation, but still an unlikely epithet for the woman to have used and suggestive (to me at least) of bad smells.
<b>Она у меня из простых</b>	<b>She's a nice straightforward creature</b>	<b>She came to me from a peasant family or She's from a lower class back-ground, I took her in and raised her</b>	Absolutely wrong. The mistranslation of this phrase explains why generations of audiences are confused as to why Varya and Anya are treated so differently.
Твой отец был мужик, мой - <b>аптекарь</b>	Your father was a peasant, <b>mine a chemist...</b>	Your father was a peasant, <b>mine worked in a pharmacy</b>	Trofimov to Lopakhin. This play emphasizes class. The tutor, Trofimov, is meant to be portrayed as lower middle class by the standards of the day (hence his revolutionary bent); the word chemist, while correct for British English, gives the wrong impression, e.g., of a chemistry professor, to a modern audience.
<b>Я полнокровный</b> , со мной уже два раза удар был	I am a <b>full blooded man</b> , I've had two strokes already.	I have <b>high blood pressure</b>	Said by Pishchik. Mistranslation. Full blooded implies vigorous and healthy. This speech is meant to explain why the character suffered strokes and why he is forbidden to dance (which he does anyway).

\*IMHO

In my multi-year survey of references to Russian literary classics in the media, and particularly the comic strips, I have found what I believe is the first reference to Pushkin—in a strip called *Pearls Before Swine* by Stephan Pastis. This is a strip whose most amusing feature, to my mind at least, is a group of voracious, devious and thoroughly incompetent crocodiles, who keep trying unsuccessfully to eat the other (animal) characters. This particular one shows two characters, a goat and a pig, seated on a couch; the former is reading and the latter drinking a cup of coffee.

Panel 1: Pig: What are you reading, Goat? Panel 2: Goat: The complete works of Alexander Pushkin. Pig: Oh, I love that guy. Panel 3: Goat: You do? How do you know him? Pig: He keeps all my papers stuck to the bulletin board. Panel 4: Goat: That's Pushpin. Pig: Oh, maybe they're brothers.

Ignoring the mystery of why the ordinarily inventive Mr. Pastis suddenly became desperate enough to use this obscure and not particularly hilarious joke in a strip not usually targeted at a highbrow audience, we might consider the equal mystery of how he happened to think of this particular witticism. The easy answer is that he had included the name Pushkin in something he was writing on his computer, and his spell checker, like mine, helpfully suggested that the correct spelling was Pushpin. But why then was Mr. Pastis writing about Pushkin? Does he have a closeted existence as a Slavist, in addition to his day job of keeping track of the personalities of the menagerie he commands? For example, clearly Goat is supposed to be more of an intellectual than Pig, a fact I never noticed until undertaking this exegesis.

In addition to keeping track of references like the above, I also keep an eye out for Slavic license plates. Going to the gym one day, I noticed PETLOV parked outside and spent my entire exercise session trying to recall what I had learned in courses in Comparative Slavic and Slavic Phonology in order to identify a language in which “L” is substituted for “R” in surnames. When I left I found the same car in the same spot and noticed several bumper stickers encouraging Pet Adoption at the ASPCA. Mystery solved!

From multiethnic (but possibly not perfectly multi-lingual) Baltimore. I was walking around in Baltimore's justly famed Inner Harbor, when I noticed the sidewalk was dotted with small plaques with city insignia and the label *Heritage Walk* either in English or in one of the languages of the many ethnic groups that have made the city their home. I searched until I found the Russian plaque. Now it must be said that the phrase *heritage walk* is somewhat difficult to translate in isolation, but in context it seemed clear that the label was meant to indicate a walk (experience) or walkway (the sidewalk section itself) celebrating or commemorating groups of different national origins in the city. Most of the languages I could dope out seemed to do a decent job of rendering this concept. However, the Russian read

*Наследство Гуляют*, which translates as *inheritance or heritage are taking a walk* or possibly *are living it up*.

As most of you know, we are honored this year to have as our Greiss lecturer Pavel Palazhchenko, who was Gorbachev's and Shevardnadze's interpreter, and is the author of *Мой несистематический словарь (из записной книжки переводчика)* [My Unsystematic Dictionary (from a translator's notebook)]. Originally I was going to devote a significant portion of this column to a review of this book. However, I was so struck by some of the words of wisdom in its introduction that I have decided to quote some of them instead. By way of review, I think I need only say that this is a most valuable book for any translator or interpreter between Russian and English to have on the shelf and that, once you pick it up and start browsing, it is a real challenge to avoid reading it from cover to cover.

From the introduction to *My Unsystematic Dictionary*:

Не надо бояться таких слов как *роуминг, брокер, риэлтор, электорат* и тому подобных. Они отражают объекты или явления, не у нас впервые появившиеся или впервые описанные. А если возникает собственное своеобразное слово – например, *самолет* вместо *аэроплана* или *вратарь* вместо *голкипера*, – что ж, тем лучше. А еще лучше, если мы сами произведем на свет и назовем по-русски что-то новое, чего нет у других, и тогда слова будут заимствовать у нас, как заимствовали *спутник* и *перестройку*. [There's no need to be afraid of Russian words such as *rouming, broker, rieltor, elektorat*, and the like. They refer to objects or phenomena that originated in other countries or were first described in other languages. And if we come up with our own unique word—for example, *samolyot* instead of *aeroplan*, *vratar'* instead of *golkiper*—so much the better. But it would be still better for us to invent something new, something that no one else has and give it a Russian name, and then these words will be borrowed from us, as the words *sputnik* and *perestroika* were borrowed.]

...содержательность, что в переводе равнозначно точности (ибо, к сожалению, нельзя быть намного содержательнее оригинала). [...substantiveness, which in translation is every bit as important as accuracy (though, unfortunately, it is not possible to be significantly more substantive than the original.)]

Поэтому учиться переводить, на мой взгляд, означает прежде всего две вещи—изучать лексику и учиться синонимической гибкости. Синонимии надо понимать не просто как подбор сходных по значению слов, принадлежащих к одной и той же части речи (этот путь—часто тупиковый), а как свойство любого языка, позволяющее—благодаря лексическим и синтаксическим приемам, контекстуальному “домысливанию” и наоборот, недоговариванию



*Continued on page 10*

# There's More to Leadership Than You Think

by Pavel Palazhchenko

The concept of leadership so prized by Americans is difficult for Russians to grasp, even when the word is translated correctly.

It is more a cultural than a linguistic problem and needs clarifying. Translators and students of foreign languages are familiar with the problem of what the French call *faux amis* (translators' false friends), words that have the same origin and often look and sound the same but mean different things in different languages. Examples include the English word anecdote and the Russian "anekdot" (a joke) or velvet—in Russian "velvet" stands for corduroy.

Things get a little trickier and sometimes downright difficult when some meanings coincide and others diverge. A director, for example, is "direktor" in Russian when he is a member of a company's board of directors but not when he is a film director (that will be a "rezhisser"); a Russian "director shkoly" is a school principal in America or a headmaster in Britain. A Russian "student" goes to college; in America, he might just as well be a 10-year-old schoolboy.

Experienced translators and interpreters are well aware of such words and, even though they are quite numerous (try Russian *faux amis* for accurate, carton, decade, novel, or revision), we very rarely confuse them. Language learners may be reasonably sure that as their proficiency improves they will get the right word almost automatically.

There is, however, a less well known but insidious problem: Something I call false equivalents. Take the word leadership, which is often translated into Russian as "rukovodstvo." In nine cases out of 10, it is a mistranslation, as this Russian word means guidance, management, or even control. So when a phrase frequently used by American politicians—U.S. global leadership—is translated, sometimes deliberately and maliciously, as "amerikanskoye rukovodstvo mirom," which is something very close to American control of the world, it conjures up all kinds of nasty associations in the minds of most Russian readers.

The right Russian word is of course "liderstvo." We borrowed the word leader from English decades ago and equipped it with Russian suffixes to create derivatives—a verb, an adjective, and a noun. So Russian translators are in this particular case luckier than, say, the French, who simply have no equivalent for the English word; English-French dictionaries therefore recommend roundabout ways of conveying this concept. So far so good? Well, there is still a problem here, and it's cultural rather than linguistic. The American concept of leadership is difficult for many of us to grasp even when the word is translated correctly. I have seen Russians perplexed when they were told that a college somewhere in Virginia has a program in leadership studies and even students majoring in leadership. They thought it was something too vague to be an academic subject. "What is there to study, or to learn? You either have it or you don't," they said.

When Americans speak of someone's "leadership role" the meaning is best conveyed in Russian by the word "initiativnost." Sounds familiar? It's because we both borrowed the word "initiative" from French.

As for "lider," it was for many years confined to its sports meaning. Another word, "vozhd," previously thought to be obsolete but dusted off by Stalinist propaganda, was used to describe Lenin's successor. This word has now fallen into disuse. Recently, some political commentators have taken to describing Prime Minister Vladimir Putin as "natsionalny lider"—the nation's leader. Whether he thinks it's a good idea is not known but I somehow doubt it.

Going back to "U.S. leadership," you are still likely to be misunderstood if you mention it to Russians, but perhaps less so if you tell them that President Barack Obama has recently called for leadership through partnership and cooperation. He even said that leadership includes a willingness to listen to others. We might, after all, be able to work out a common concept of leadership.

The Russian version of the article can be found at: <http://pavelpal.ru/node/548> for those who might like to compare the two.

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## SLAVFILE LITE *Continued from page 9*

(“ясно из контекста”, общего смысла высказывания)—выразить мысль самыми различными способами. [Thus learning how to translate or interpret, in my view, means primarily two things, to study vocabulary and to learn to be flexible with regard to synonyms. Synonyms should be understood not merely as a set of words with similar meanings belonging to the same part of speech (this is frequently a dead end), but as a property of any language that, through lexical and syntactic devices and context-based conjecture and ellipsis (where the overall meaning is clear in the context of the entire utterance) makes it possible to express meaning using the most diverse devices.]

И все же (между качествами, которыми должен обладать переводчик высокого класса) на первое место я поставил бы одно качество, общее как для синхронистов, так и для письменных переводчиков—литературных, технических, не важно каких. Это качество я бы назвал просто: *любовь к словам*. [And yet (among the qualities that a first class translator must have) the most important is a quality that is common to both the synchronous interpreter and the translator of literary or technical material. I call this quality simply *love of words*.]

A nice note on which to end this column, I think.

**INTERVIEW WITH LYNN VISSON**  
**CONCERNING THE 2009 PUBLICATION of the SECOND EDITION OF**  
**THE RUSSIAN HERITAGE COOKBOOK**

**Can you briefly describe your motivation in writing the first edition of this book? In updating it?**

My goal was to preserve the heritage of Russian cuisine kept alive by generations of Russian women in emigration. After 1917 the creators of these recipes, scattered all over the world and concentrated in urban centers such as Paris, Berlin, and Belgrade, continued to cook and treasure their family recipes. Sitting around a table provided a chance to talk and to keep Russian culture alive, and even for émigrés who did not have all that much in common, Russian cuisine provided a kind of “social glue” that united them. I was concerned that these recipes would disappear along with their authors; hence the need to write them down and get them into print.

The first edition of the book was published in 1982, a time when Russian gastronomy was not doing very well in the USSR. Soviet restaurants frequently served bland and uninteresting dishes (an exception being some of the ethnic restaurants, such as the Uzbek and Georgian ones), and constant shortages and long lines did not make for sophisticated cooking at home. The new edition of *The Heritage of Russian Cuisine*, published in 2009, had to take into account the changes brought about by perestroika, and the introduction naturally had to be changed to reflect the rise of a multitude of excellent restaurants in Russia and a renewed interest in the national cuisine and the gastronomic heritage of the past. Since this was a “revised edition,” the publisher naturally was interested in the addition of more recipes, which I provided. The new edition convinced me once more of the need for this book as a way of preserving these recipes, since so many of the recipe authors are no longer with us, and many of their children (and not all of them had children) did not preserve these.

Two versions of the book were published in Russia (the second one last year), and the translator had the unenviable task of converting cups and ounces into grams and liters. Pot cheese or farmer’s cheese are the American equivalents of “tvorog,” and that required some “reprocessing” for the Russian edition.

**This book focuses on the family recipes brought from Russia by émigrés you interviewed mainly in the 1970s I believe. I infer from your introduction that for the most part they came to the U.S. in the 1940s, often after spending some period (possibly right after the Revolution) in Western Europe and that they came primar-**

**ily from the intelligentsia? Is this correct? How might these circumstances affect their recipes?**

Most of the émigrés who gave me recipes left shortly after the Revolution or during the 1920s, and arrived in the U.S. in the late 1930s or in the 1940s. The experience of living in Western Europe and the U.S. had provided them with an opportunity to experiment with many dishes and to find appropriate ingredients. Some of the most basic Russian dishes, though, such as borshech or shchi and pirozhki are equally popular among numerous social strata, ranging from the peasants to the intelligentsia.

**As you well know, our readers are linguists. Can you tell us some interesting differences between the writing and formulation of recipes in Russian and English, i.e., discuss translation challenges?**

The recipes ranged from some neatly typed up by their creators on large index cards, to old tattered notebooks from these ladies’ mothers and grandmothers, to oral descriptions. Those were the most challenging, e.g., “How much flour for this dough?” “Well, as much as the dough will take.”

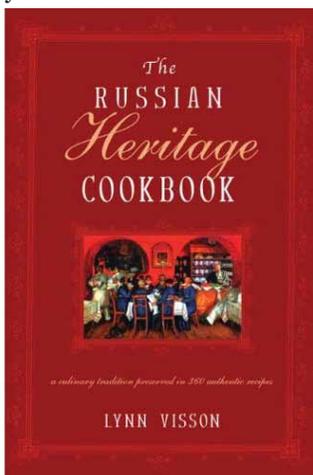
Recipes for American cookbooks tend to be pedantically precise, e.g., “1/8 teaspoon pepper,” “1/4 teaspoon salt.” A Russian recipe usually simply says “sol’, perets.” An American recipe gives precise quantities for ingredients, while Russian ones may say “Make a dough from flour, eggs and butter” and assume that any idiot knows what to do. While an American recipe reads, “Bake in a greased and floured 2-quart casserole for 45 minutes at 350 degrees,” a Russian one instructs the cook to “Bake until done.”

**Would you like to share any interesting or amusing anecdotes about preparing and testing the recipes?**

I think my husband preferred this book to all my other academic books, since he was the guinea pig for the recipes. Our friends also rather enjoyed tasting and commenting on these dishes.

The first edition of my cookbook had a kvass recipe in it. Cookbook publishers are always deathly afraid of being sued for damages or negligence. The kvass recipe involved tightly bottling the kvass, and the publisher (then Ardis) was afraid of what might happen if the cork blew and hit someone in the eye. Hence a rather odd- looking blank on the page that was filled in with a drawing. The new edition has a completely different layout, so no problem. But I did get some questions as to why there was no kvass recipe... :-)

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# SCHEDULED SLD PRESENTATIONS AT THE 2009 ATA CONFERENCE

## Preconference Seminar

### Seminar V

Dealing with Typological Differences Among Languages in Interpreting

**Pavel Palazhchenko** (Wednesday, 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. All Levels; Presented in: English)

This seminar will focus on certain typological differences among languages—mostly Russian and English, with some discussion of other European languages—that interpreters need to keep in mind. Strategies for identifying these differences will be discussed. The differences between the styles of Russian and English political, technical, and other texts and oral presentations, as well as specific lexical difficulties related to the rapid evolution of vocabulary and linguistic interactions, will also be covered.

## DIVISION SESSIONS

### SLAVIC LANGUAGE DIVISION SESSIONS

#### SL-1 Translating Legal Text to/from Russian/English

**Fred Grasso, Maksym Kozub, and Thomas E. Fennell** (Thursday, 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.; All Levels; Presented in: English)

This presentation will review several important principles, including fidelity versus transparency and plain English versus terms of art (also known as “legalese”). Differences among legal systems and their implications for translation will be discussed briefly. General concepts and principles will be illustrated by examples, including problematic ones. Special emphasis will be given to contracts, corporate law, arbitration courts and procedures, and legal translation issues related to securities. Civil law litigation concepts and terminology will be examined. Troublesome general usage vocabulary in legal texts will be identified and explained.

#### SL-2 Noob No Longer: Making the Most of Internet Resources in Translation

**Eugenia A. Tumanova and Megan G. Lehmann** (Thursday, 4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.; All Levels; Presented in: English with Russian Examples)

The ability to effectively mine Internet resources for information and make use of free Internet tools is key for boosting efficiency and improving quality. The first half of this session will focus on search engine strategies and tricks, online dictionaries, and other resources, while the second half will show how to maximize efficiency in collaborating with other translators on large projects using Google Docs, Google Sites, customized search engines, and instant messaging. Examples from the Russian to English combination and other languages will illustrate general principles, strategies, and tips that will help translators with any language combination.

#### SL-3 Blind Date: How to Tackle the Sprouting of New Terms in Croatian and Serbian **Larisa Zlatic**

(Friday, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.; All Levels; Presented in: English)

Political and economic changes in Eastern Europe have had a huge linguistic influence on Slavic languages. This presentation will provide solutions for keeping up to date with contemporary sociolinguistic trends, and will cover English-as-a-global-language issues. Topics will include how to tackle the overwhelming influence of English terms in such areas as the economy and information technology industry. Examples and practical tips in English, Croatian, and Serbian will be provided along with solutions for common traps and typical errors in translation. Emphasis will be on the translation of obstacles common to other Slavic languages.

#### SL-4 Translation and Interpreting in a Pragmatic Age (12th Annual Susana Greiss Lecture)

**Pavel Palazhchenko** (Friday, 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.; All Levels; Presented in: English)

The profession of translator/interpreter is unique, requiring years of preparation, constant “upgrading,” and knowledge in many areas. This often leads to the translator/interpreter having the kind of broad erudition and ability to handle complex issues that many feel would be more appropriate for a person with “greater responsibilities”—and better pay. In a pragmatic age, this makes the profession unlikely to be among the most attractive ones. This presentation will discuss the type of person who will find this work attractive and the differences that exist in this regard across countries and cultures.

#### SL-5 Pharmaceuticals for Slavists

**Jennifer L. Guernsey and John W. Riedl** (Saturday, 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.; Intermediate/Advanced; Presented in: English)

Demand for translations of pharmaceutical documentation is considerable. This presentation will explore the typical structure of these documents and review related terminology. A multilingual glossary will be provided that includes English, Russian, Ukrainian, Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, Polish, Czech/Slovak, and Bulgarian. This presentation will be in English.

### SESSIONS IN OTHER DIVISIONS OF INTEREST TO SLAVISTS

#### L-1 Translating the Funny Parts of a Sad Opera

**Mark Herman and Ronnie Apter** (Thursday, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; All Levels; Presented in: English)

The opera Boris Godunoff, by Modest Musorgskii, chronicles the coronation, tormented reign, and death of Tsar Boris, and is usually regarded as a tragedy. However, Alexander Pushkin’s play, the source material for the opera, was originally called a comedy. Musorgskii’s operatic adaptation mutes some comic

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## 2009 CONFERENCE *Continued from page 12*

elements but adds others. The translator must be aware of the opera's genesis and preserve such comic characters as the cynical crowd members, drunk vagabond monks, and hopelessly inept policemen. These characters must still fit into an essentially tragic opera, however, and be recognizably cut from the same Russian cloth as Musorgskii's non-comical characters.

### LAW-7 Improving Your Sight Translation Skills for Court Interpreting and Beyond

**Maria G. Entchevitch** (Saturday, 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.; All Levels; Presented in: English)

Many interpreters find sight translation difficult, sometimes even distasteful. Many, if they work on their sight translation at all, do it only because it is a prerequisite for the court certification exams. There are ways to learn these skills, however, and learning them will significantly help an individual to develop other interpreting skills. This presentation will cover practical approaches to learning and improving such skills, including those needed to prepare for certification exams. Examples and exercises will be in English. Participants will form groups according to their languages and perform sight translation exercises.

### **SLD Meeting Moved to Friday 12:30-1:30**

NOTE FROM LYDIA

It may be noted that presentations by SLD members this year are down to 4, compared to between 8 and 12 in recent years. Furthermore there would have been only 3, if we had not convinced the powers-that-be to let us try holding our meeting during lunch hour (see Becky's column, p. 3) on a pilot basis, to free up an additional slot. The decline in

the number of Slavic presentations is not a result of fewer acceptable proposals. Probably because this will be ATA's 50th anniversary meeting and it is being held in the Big Apple, there was a large increase in the number of presentation proposals overall while the number of slots remained the same, indeed fewer than some years ago when minimum presentation duration was lower. In making their decision, those choosing among division-approved proposals opted to favor those that were of the most interest to the most people and this seemed generally to mean those where the proposal did not emphasize a focus on a particular language. This has led to a situation where there are, for example, 13 sessions (including a meeting) scheduled for the Language Technology Division, and 10 in the Independent Contractor area compared to our thinner schedule. This may, of course, be what the majority of ATA members prefer. However, some of us who are active in our respective divisions have protested quite vigorously. I, for one, have made such a pest of myself about this and other policy changes that I feel have had a negative impact on SLD that I got appointed to a task force looking into these matters. We are currently working on a presentation to the Board. Please forward to me (Lydia) your perceptions of Division problems and suggestions for solutions and I will pass them on, anonymously if you so request.

At any rate the conference is bound to be a gala event and I hope to see many of you there. If you are planning to come be sure to read the feature on pages 5-6 describing extracurricular Slavic events put together for us by Elana Pick, resident of Little Russia by the Sea, aka Brighton Beach.

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## COOKBOOK *Continued from page 11*

### **Do you see any influences on these recipes of life in emigration?**

The countries in which these women lived unquestionably had an impact on their cooking. Those who had lived in France often liked sauces made with wine, ones who had been in Latin America used rice and beans in their cooking, America contributed ketchup as an occasional substitute for tomato sauce.

### **Are all the recipes as you received them or did you make modifications?**

I did some adaptations on quantity, as some of them were intended for dinners for 30-40 people!

### **Is there one recipe in here you would pick out to suggest to one of our Russonate readers, what about an Anglonate?**

I'd pick the kurnik (chicken pie) for Russonate readers, and the Aratun (black currant squares) for Anglonates. Somehow it's the kind of little pastry that would be a nice substitute for scones with afternoon tea... These two recipes, in addition to a fabulous pickle recipe nominated by Lydia, can be found on the "Additional Resources" page of

the SLD Division section of ATA's website [www.ata-divisions.org/SLD/resources.htm](http://www.ata-divisions.org/SLD/resources.htm)

### **Do you think it is possible to even attempt Russian cooking if you live somewhere where you can neither purchase nor grow fresh dill? What if you are determined to substitute low-fat sour cream or yoghurt for the genuine article?**

I think dried dill would work for many of the recipes, though the quantities have to be adjusted. Frankly, I prepare many of the recipes with low-fat sour cream (though not anything involving a dough), but I would not use yoghurt, except in a cold soup. In hot dishes it curdles.

### **Unlike most of my "Russian" cookbooks, this one does not seem to include any from the non-Slavic peoples of the USSR (lobio, or plov for example). Is this because this group of people did not eat these dishes?**

Yes, this group did not generally tend to eat those dishes, and were not all that familiar with them. While I could have added a few such recipes, I decided early on not to do so because my specific subject was Russian cuisine, and that would have led to a huge and unwieldy volume.

# BEGINNER'S LUCK

Liv Bliss (perennially novice translator)

Lakeside, Arizona

***My dog really enjoys surfing the Net.  
Really? What an intelligent animal!  
Nah, it took the cat a week to teach him.***

Dumb joke found online

Last time, we talked about hardcopy reference sources; this time, we're going out on the Internet. Of which, if anyone is wondering, the Web is only a part. That isn't of any practical relevance to us here, but if you'd like to know more, take a look at <http://netforbeginners.about.com/cs/technoglossary/f/Faq1.htm>.

For starters, four disclaimers.

First, these hints are intended for the newcomer translator (and possibly interpreter, in the project preparation phase).

Second, I am by no means an expert in this field, and will simply be sharing with you some of my own bargain-basement experience in English-language Net search (although the basic concepts are surely transferable to other language environments).

Third, I won't be talking about Google Chrome, Wolfram Alpha, Twitter and its twibes, Google Translator Toolkit, or any other new kid (remember Cuil?) that promises to change our T&I world beyond recognition in the very visible future. That I gratefully leave to far more knowledgeable colleagues. But why am I offering you something that is so far from the cutting edge? Because I have been surprised to discover, in the course of my mentoring activities, that some aspiring language professionals are applying a scattershot approach to searching that leads to frustration and a whole lot of wasted time and missed opportunities. And none of us can afford that.

Finally, my intent here is to talk as much about the Why as about the How, but the How is always a good jumping-off point, so here we go.

According to [www.phillb.com/webse.htm](http://www.phillb.com/webse.htm), a neatly annotated listing of search engines, there were over 2,000 of them in September 2004. When I last saw the list, it had not been updated since November 2008 and did not include Cuil (which launched in the summer of 2008) even then, so it's highly selective but still informative. However, you probably already have a favorite engine.

On the off chance that your pet engine is Google (for now), you should take a look at [www.google.com/support/websearch/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=134479](http://www.google.com/support/websearch/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=134479), for a basic primer on the How of searching with Google. (Or, as Jost Zetzsche indicates in his "GeekSpeak" column in the July 2009 issue of *The ATA Chronicle*, you can get to the same place from [www.google.com/help/features.htm](http://www.google.com/help/features.htm): click on "Web Search Help Center" on the left side of your screen.) Once you've digested the basics, you should go on to the more targeted and detailed tips accessed via the



"More search help" link on the left-hand side and bottom of the page.

For search help with a non-Google engine, just input its name into a search box and add a combination of words like "search tips." That should do it. And I would, of course, love to hear from readers whose engine of first resort is *not* Google, and to learn why.

Incidentally, if you haven't already read Jost's July 2009 column, please do. Separately, Nora Favorov contacted me to recommend the *site:/domain name/* (e.g., *site:edu*, *site:ru*, etc.) + *search string* technique (e.g., *site:edu "Harry Potter"* for every academic domain containing a reference to our dear, overworked Harry). She also uses the *site:/site name/ + search string* technique (e.g., *site:bbc.co.uk "wombling free"*) for a particular client, to see if a translation conundrum has already been resolved in that client's world. Both of those tricks are in Jost's column, and are now in my own search technique arsenal too.

The number of useful hits can vary enormously from engine to engine. For my simple (i.e., non-restricted) query, "happy happy joy joy" (don't ask), Webcrawler, which aims to combine the top hits from prime search engines, returned a total of 46; Cuil, 11,519; Google, 287,000; and Bing, almost 85 million. (To quote John McEnroe, "You can't be serious!") I guess it all depends on the algorithm, whatever that is.)

It will be up to you to determine what makes a hit "useful," because in Internetland you cannot risk taking anything on trust. As I've had to tell non-native-Anglophone colleagues on numerous occasions, just because a lexical item or turn of phrase can be found out there doesn't mean that it's correct. You have to use your common sense when assessing the value of a given discovery. Ideally, it should have been generated in a U.S. English environment (assuming that U.S./E is your source or target language); British English and its cousins won't always do, and we'll come back to that later. And if the term or phrase you're trying to verify only shows up in non-native translations or abstracts of native-authored texts, that is not a good sign. As Lydia Stone pointed out in a recent e-mail exchange, calques can spread like kudzu and take on a life of their own, and perhaps especially so in the scientific disciplines, both hard and soft.

Now on to the Why—why are we searching? For concrete information, obviously, since context can be the door to an accurate and authentic translation. Which John Smith is the subject of your author's ire and what exactly was his shortcoming? What does the doohickey really do in the splunkalating machine? Is "prayer beads" a full-on

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## BEGINNER'S LUCK *Continued from page 14*

synonym for “rosary”? Were the three vessels that were sunk on August 14, 1597 (I made that up) ships, boats, or dinghies?

For me, though, use of the Net goes beyond that, to an exploration of the language itself. The following are some of my “non-concrete” uses of the Net.

1) Does the word exist? Seriously. I work a lot, not always willingly, with Russian postmodernist literary criticism, and you'd be astonished to know how many times I have simply rendered a term into English and found that it has been standard in the field for years. Yes, проблематизация obediently turns into “problematization,” and on I go. But, rather than risking the quality of the job and my reputation in the eyes of some highly erudite subject-specialist editors, I have to be sure. Again, one or two hits won't convince me; the term has to exist widely enough and in a great enough variety of linguistic contexts for me to feel sure of its authenticity.

2) Does the phrase exist? Sometimes I come up with a collocation that *seems* fine and is gratifyingly close to the Russian but I'm not 100% sure that it is a true product of the target-language environment. So I input the whole phrase, with quote marks around it, and see what pops. “Rampant availability”—really? Yes indeedy.

3) In a related scenario, I may have a yen to change up a fairly common noun, verb, or qualifier. This is a great way of avoiding dictionaritis, which as you know makes me break out in hives. Suppose I'm sick of “turbulent applause” (which I am: remember the бурные аплодисменты that repeatedly interrupted just about every meeting ever held in the USSR?). So I input something like “when \* applause rang out.” (I have to find some way of “bookending” the \*wildcard, because otherwise, I get a boat-load of hits and precious few useful qualifiers.) Then I start refining the search string by entering the adjectives I don't care for into the search box, with a “minus sign” (-tremendous -rapturous -enthusiastic -“wild and crazy” etc.), until I find a combination that matches the flavor of my target text. Note that Google, at least for now, limits you to 32 terms in a single search string. But if you've entered even close to that many exceptions, you can be sure that this is not the correct search technique for your current need.

This is a function for which the Net excels in speed and flexibility: if you have nothing better to do, try “quite \* disadvantaged,” to see how helpful it can be. I do own *The Word Finder* by J. I. Rodale, but it probably hasn't given me more than a handful of useful qualifiers in 30+ years on my bookshelf.

4) I often search (separately) for a couple of variant transliterations of a Russian term, to see if scholarship has already produced a standard accepted translation, because a scholar will often follow the first use of the translated term with a transliteration. This has proven especially useful for specialist terminology in history, politics, linguistics, etc.

5) You may need to track down the original English, or a canonical English translation, of a quotation that has been translated into your source language. My Russian source texts, being mostly on the academic side, are rife with those, and these days, it's not just Shakespeare, Dickens, and Jack London any more. If a recognizable title has been provided, that may help you narrow your search for the quote in an online English-language article or paper or in the entire publication, which you might well find at books.google.com (with its wonderfully handy full-text search engine). If not, you will have to search on your best guess of some very basic words in the title and/or quotation (with the author's name included, to narrow your search field) and cross your fingers, tightly.

6) Finally, a rather esoteric use: I occasionally need to assure myself that an Anglicism is not creeping into my translation from my dim and distant past. If my American-born husband had a dollar for every time I have asked him “do you say it *this* way or *that* way?”... So I input the collocation (a combination of several words often brings the most reliable hits) and look at the sources where the hits were found. And if I'm seeing, for example, *The New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and/or *Time* magazine, I feel safe.

As Craig Raine tells us in “Bad Language: Poetry, Swearing and Translation” (*In Defence of T. S. Eliot: Literary Essays* [London: Picador, 2000], p. 22), “Translation is the art of compromise. .... Rigid rules are its enemy. Ask your mouth to tell you not if what is written is *allowable* in English but if what is written is *right* in English. And then beware of clichés—which always sound right.” This is certainly not bad advice (I often speak a phrase or sentence aloud, grateful that I'm alone in my office, and the very sound may tell me whether or not it works), but I believe that consulting the Net is a consistently more reliable approach than practicing my oratory.

Finally, some related tips.

You've found a wonderful site, full of copious information that you can't live without. You bookmark it (in Google, click on Favorites, marked with a large yellow star, at the top of your screen) and go your merry way. Your computer crashes. You had all your data backed up but forgot about your bookmarks. You never find that site again. Here's how I copy my bookmarks to an external storage medium, using Internet Explorer 6; your mileage may vary. In Internet Explorer, go to **File** and select **Import and Export** (which opens the Import and Export Wizard). Click the **Next** button. Highlight **Export Favorites** and click **Next**. Highlight the folder you want to export from (it will be called **Favorites**, unless someone has renamed it). **Next**. Click the radio button alongside **Export to a File or Address**. Click the **Browse** button to choose the export destination. The default filename is “bookmark.htm”; this is your chance to change the name if you want to. **Next. Finish.** Wait a

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## BEGINNER'S LUCK *Continued from page 15*

short while, until the system tells you that it's done. And when disaster strikes, you go in the opposite direction to import your bookmarks from the storage medium to your new/repaired hard drive, and that will be another tragedy averted.

Nora Favorov also recommends a free add-on utility called Xmarks (<https://www.xmarks.com/>), by Firefox, that works with most browsers and allows you to log into your bookmarks from any computer that has Xmarks installed. Each time you change your bookmarks, Xmarks will store the latest version for six months. Worth investigating, I'd say, especially if you have a good buddy and/or significant other whose computer you're always borrowing.

One last thing. All this searching and browsing has created an easily accessible trail. Your Net browsing history is an invaluable way to backtrack over a day's- or week's-worth or more of searching, but there may be times when you'd rather it were gone.

But first, let's see what we're talking about. In Internet Explorer 6, 7, or 8, click the down arrow between the back button and the forward button, or to the right of the forward button, at the top left of your screen. This will produce your Address Bar History, which is a list of recently visited URLs *and* (irritatingly, to me) recently opened files. Click **History** at the bottom to expand it. (You can get to the same place by clicking the History icon on the Google toolbar, which on my screen is to the immediate right of Favorites. That should produce the full, already expanded list.) Click **View** or **View by...** to rearrange the entries to your liking.

To clear that history, go to **Tools**, pick the most likely choice (in IE 6, **Internet Options**; in IE 7 and 8, **Delete**

**Browsing History**), and go on from there. (If you don't want a history at all, set the number of days to save your history to 0 in IE 6 and 7, or use InPrivate Browsing in IE 8.)

You also have a Toolbar History (which saves the search terms you have been entering in the search box on your Google toolbar, and will therefore overlap somewhat with your Address Bar History). Open the **Search** drop-down menu at the right of the search box, go to **View History** at the very bottom and select **Clear History**. Poof, no more Toolbar History. (Note: clearing my Address Bar History does *not* automatically clear my Toolbar History, so look out for that.)

This, however, only scratches the surface. Would you like to delete cookies (the ones you don't want) and histories and tune up your registry, all in one go? Then consider downloading CCleaner. It doesn't seem to be a memory hog, it's free, and you can read all about it at [www.ccleaner.com](http://www.ccleaner.com). If you do download it and don't want the Yahoo toolbar that it appears to come with, go to <http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/toolbar/troubleshootie/index.htm>, scroll down to the "How do I remove Yahoo! Toolbar..?" link, click on it and follow the instructions.

Of course, nothing is ever really gone from the cyberworld, and where you and your machine have been is no exception. If Homeland Security ever comes and confiscates your hard drive to study your wanderings in the Netosphere, you're on your own. But a little prudent attention to your histories may prevent unnecessary embarrassment when the ever-inquisitive Aunt Clarice comes to visit and asks to borrow your machine to download a shoofly pie recipe.

Liv may be contacted at [bliss@wmonline.com](mailto:bliss@wmonline.com)

## FROM THE EDITOR

*Lydia Stone*

### THIS ISSUE

First of all, some of you may have noticed that the current issue covers both summer and fall and thus we have produced only three issues this year. We try to publish four issues and indeed have not put out a combined one since 2004. However, we are volunteers with full (and sometimes difficult to coordinate) schedules and sometimes such lapses cannot be helped, especially if, as in the case of the current issue, the four of us—Becky, Elana, Nora and I (Lydia)—wrote or put together the majority of the articles ourselves.

### INTERN(S) WANTED

Speaking of help, we need some and especially an infusion of young blood. We are wondering if there is a young and/or beginning translator/interpreter out there who would like to work with us as, let's say, an intern (though you can help concoct your own title), learning the SlavFile business from the ground up, gaining a set of mentors, and exposing your name and writing skills to fellow practitioners and potential clients. We could easily accommodate more than one intern and would particularly like someone who would be interested in functioning as editor for one or more of the West Slavic languages and/or writing a semi-regular interpreting column. If interested please write to Nora or Lydia at the address on the masthead or speak to us at the upcoming conference.

# JAVITI SE! (MAKE YOURSELVES HEARD) – PART II

## (A MESSAGE TO SLD MEMBERS NOT SPECIALIZING IN RUSSIAN)

Paula Gordon

Attention fellow SLOTR-ers (aka those who specialize in Slavic languages other than Russian) –what can the Slavic Language Division offer us? Since the SLD is member driven, if we feel overlooked or underserved, then we need to initiate some action. Such action could involve anything from writing an article for *SlavFile* to calling on colleagues to create a language-specific listserv, or from organizing a get-together at the annual conference to the mother of all initiatives – establishing a workgroup for getting a new language pair accepted in the Certification Program.

### Here are some ideas for getting started:

#### Identify your colleagues

- Write an article for the *SlavFile*; if there is an editor in your language pair, contact that person for ideas or assistance, and if not, contact Lydia (lydiastone@verizon.net) directly; end your article by inviting readers to contact you. (You will find that the editors are eager for SLOTR material and will be glad to work with you.)
- Use the ATA Services Directory to find colleagues working in your language pair(s), cut and paste to make an initial contact list, then pare it down by dropping people who don't respond to your invitations (you don't want to become a spammer, after all).
- Search regional association website directories, ProZ or other searchable translator sites to add to your list.
- Attend the ATA conference, read the attendee list, look for names you recognize from your online searches, and engage in some name-based profiling; even if you're wrong, you might find you have something else in common.
- Target agency project managers who cover your languages; gather contact information at the conference (a great way to start a conversation, not only about your ideas for getting people together, but also about *your* expertise as a translator and/or interpreter).

### Get together online

- Search Yahoo, Google and/or ProZ for listservs catering to your language combination(s); if you don't find any, start your own, and use the above methods for identifying potential invitees.

### Get together in person at the annual conference or regional conferences

- Make plans to meet at the welcome reception and/or the networking session; pick an arbitrary but unambiguous meeting point (remember that there are always more than one bar and carving station), or exchange cell-phone numbers in advance.
- Encourage colleagues to prepare translations for the Literary Division After Hours Café. It's a lot of fun, especially when people in the audience speak your language; no preregistration is necessary, just BYOT(translation).
- Hold a book fair – encourage colleagues to bring their favorite obscure reference book (or a photocopy of the cover, title page and a few pages of content), and set a meeting time/place to sit together to browse books and trade information.
- Lunch! Do some advance scouting and find a “nacionalni restoran” in the vicinity, then round up your colleagues for a meal or drinks. If you cannot find anything ethnically appropriate, choose any convenient eatery and supply ethnic color yourselves.
- If you have absolutely no time to plan, find a sheet of colored paper (there's bound to be one in your welcome kit), borrow a pen, and post a message on a message board (name, cell or hotel-room extension, invitation to meet, and, of course, who you're looking for and why).
- You can float all these plans in the SlavFile. It's never too soon or too late to start planning; contact Lydia for more information and suggestions about how SlavFile can help your future “outreach” efforts.

It's up to us, individually and collectively, to get involved and make our voices heard in the SLD.

## Attention colleagues attending the Annual Conference in New York, especially those working in South Slavic Languages:

### Hajdemo na večeru (ili dezert)!

Let's meet Wednesday right after the Welcome Reception, and head down to Djerdan Burek for dinner or dessert!

221 W. 38th St. (just west of 7th Ave.); [www.djerdan.com](http://www.djerdan.com)

No advance arrangements will be made – dinner location subject to change – pay your own way.

All are welcome!

(Welcome Reception 6:00–7:30 pm.) We'll gather at the center doors at 7:30.

Newcomers, especially, contact Paula at [paula@dbaPlanB.com](mailto:paula@dbaPlanB.com) to give her your cell number and/or let her know to keep an eye out for you.

There may be other informal dinner/music excursions planned, so check the announcement boards on-site for messages to SLD Members / South Slavs.

## An Exploration of Complementary Language Partnerships

By Lydia Stone

Participants:

**Nora S. Favorov** (R>E) and **P. Elana Pick** (E>R)  
**Svetolik P. Djordjević** (E>BCS) and **Paula S. Gordon**  
(BCS>E)

**Vladimir Kovner** (E>R) and **Lydia Stone** (R >E)

This ATA session was inspired by the successful partnerships some of us have formed with others translating the same pair of languages but in the other direction. In our presentation we tried to demonstrate how very fruitful such arrangements can be through description of the three different partnership models we have experience with.

The first pair scheduled to talk was Nora S. Favorov, a certified R>E translator, and P. Elana Pick, a certified E>R translator, court-certified interpreter, and medical interpreter trainer. Unfortunately, Elana was unable to attend for family reasons and Nora represented both partners on the panel. Early in her presentation Nora made a statement that sums up the essence of the kind of relationship we had convened to recommend: that this type of partnership is analogous to mentoring but it involves mutual mentoring between equals. Of the three discussed in this session, the kind of working relationship Nora and Elana have is undoubtedly the most adaptable for use by other SLD and ATA members since it involves mutual editing of freelance assignments.

It is a truism, at least in our circles, that translations should be performed by a native speaker of the target language and another truism that translations (along with all other writing) should be edited. Nora introduced a third component to this informal syllogism—the editor should be both a competent speaker (or at least have excellent reading comprehension) of the target language and a native speaker of the source language. She argued that translators of her own and Elana's level and experience do not really require a great deal of traditional editing—although of course no one is immune to the occasional typo or omission. For the editing process to work as well as theirs does, each team member has to have implicit trust that the other writes well in her own native language, so, for example, time is not frequently wasted by the Russonate member questioning the article use of the Anglonate in English. What they need, lacking lifelong immersion in the culture of the source language, is a feeling for the depth, variety and nuances of meaning in the source text, as well as for culture-based allusions that even the most proficient non-native speaker might sometimes miss or misinterpret. Nora described their first joint project. She had been assigned a translation of a Russian language film script written (in Russian) by an Armenian about Armenia and immediately thought of Elana, who, she had learned when they first met at an ATA financial translation conference in New York, had grown up

in the Caucasus. She called her and proposed the arrangement described above and was soon convinced that “this was a match made in heaven.”

After years of experience, Nora and Elana (by proxy) recommend their arrangement highly for producing high-quality, client-pleasing texts. Before they began their collaboration, each woman had her own set of clients. Now, after years of collaboration, they have many shared clients that one of them introduced to the other, greatly increasing their client bases. Of course, they acknowledge that each of them gets slightly less money per translation than she would if she edited herself, but there are also economies of time: they are able to translate faster knowing their work will be checked by a careful and knowledgeable partner. One question that Nora was asked was whether there were problems working out what percentage of an offered price went to the translator and what to the editor. She implied that they worked out percentages on a case-by-case basis, considering relevant factors, and added that the only dispute they tend to have derives from each thinking the other is too generous.

In any partnership each side will bring a particular set of strengths to the relationship (above and beyond native knowledge of his or her particular language), and in an ideal relationship these strengths should complement one another. Elana and her mother, a retired physician, have helped Nora improve her competence in medical translation and her skill in deciphering handwritten medical records. Nora, on the other hand, enjoys exploring new technologies and using software to enhance a translation's appearance or resolve difficult formatting challenges and has helped Elana navigate some of these issues. Another benefit Elana brings to the table is her active involvement in ProZ, a forum she often turns to when helping Nora with particularly difficult Russian terms.

The next partnership described, that of Svetolik (Paul) Djordjević and Paula Gordon, differs from the first in a number of respects, of which perhaps the least interesting is that the pair works into and out of Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian (B/C/S) rather than Russian. Actually, Svetolik, who recently retired after 25 years as a translator for the U.S. Social Security Administration, has been known to translate professionally out of 36 languages, although he only lists half a dozen Slavic ones in his ATA profile. He is best known for his French–English Medical Dictionary (recently reissued on CD-ROM), but over the course of his long career has also been compiling medical terms in Serbian and Croatian. The way Paula remembers it, she overheard Svetolik telling someone about his soon-to-be-published Serbian and Croatian–English medical dictionary

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at the 2002 ATA annual conference in Atlanta and decided at that moment that she had to be involved. She followed him until she could get his attention, introduced herself, and offered her services. He seemed somewhat dubious, but Paula was persistent and they stayed in contact. Almost a year later he agreed to let her take a look. They met in a restaurant parking lot outside of Baltimore, where Svetolik handed her “the goods”—a thick accordion folder of the ca 800-page manuscript and a handful of floppy disks.

The rest of their presentation, aside from touching on a number of intriguing lexicographical details, was essentially the story of how a person who signed on as an assistant (“Svetolik made it clear that all he wanted was a spell-checker”) became in the course of a number of years (for what had been estimated to be a 6-month job) a valued collaborator. Everyone who knows the dynamic and analytical Paula will not find this at all surprising. Svetolik’s original assumption was not surprising either since Paula, when she volunteered, claimed no special medical expertise at all—however, she learned fast. Some of Svetolik’s descriptions of his junior partner: “Paula is relentlessly logical.” “Paula will not let any error go unattended.” “Paula is a marvel for ensuring consistency.” Paula, for her part, is constantly amazed by random snippets of Svetolik’s life story and the breadth and depth of his knowledge, casually divulged as they communicated over the years. He can quote philosophers and the Bible, and any number of medical treatises, and yet he is so unassuming, not to mention graciously tolerant of what she now knows to be the most elementary questions.

The two Djordjević medical dictionaries, this one and the French, are innovative in that they provide not only the appropriate target-language (English in both cases) words to translate the source term, but also a full target-language definition for selected terms, so that the user can be sure of using the correct equivalent in context. Paula introduced an additional innovation on top of this one, insisting that the English definitions be completely understandable to her, reasoning that many translators and other users would not have any more specialized medical background than she did. Indeed, she suggests that it is a most desirable thing to have your editor be representative of the target reader population.

Like Nora, Paula cited a number of collateral benefits of her work with Svetolik on this project. First she notes that it was a fascinating lesson in how to figure out how to really work with another person. Second, she remarked with some surprise that “this kind of thing really teaches you a great deal about your own language.”

And they promised, as they admitted that they have done every year since 2003, that the Serbian and Croatian–English Medical Dictionary was “almost” done. That may finally be true in September 2009, as they both insist that all questions have been asked and answered (for now) and that the dictionary will soon be on its way to the printer.

The website for publication details and ordering information is [www.jordanapublishing.com](http://www.jordanapublishing.com).

The third presentation concerned the partnership between Volodia Kovner and me, working into and out of Russian, respectively. (I hope I will not be considered too folksy if I refer to myself in the first person.) Volodia started out by saying that our collaboration was in many ways similar to that of Nora and Elana. At this point I interrupted to say that the major difference is that we do not get paid for our work. Although that half-joking remark is true, I would say that the real substantive difference, brought about by the fact that we are both of retirement age and do not have to support ourselves, is that we are free to work on whatever projects interest us. So far, these have included:

- A bilingual book of translated English and Russian children’s poems, which we hope to publish in some form. We have published numerous excerpts, and given presentations (including one at the Russian Embassy) and poetry readings.
- A 1000+ term English-Russian dictionary of sports idioms to be published by ATA in late 2009 or 2010, on which we have given several presentations.
- An empirical analysis of article errors made by Russian speakers in English leading to the generation of 60 rules designed to replace the virtually useless general rules usually given to non-native speakers. This too led to a presentation and a publication offer we have not yet followed up on.
- A regular column in SlavFile called Idiom Savants, which virtually writes itself.
- Joint translation of a Russian book describing the lives of young Russian drug addicts in their own words.

Volodia and I were introduced over the Internet by SLD member Tanya Gesse, who knew I was working on translating children’s poetry. She had received a message from Volodia, who was an old family friend, about some children’s poetry translations he had done to help an illustrator friend. The first poem of his I read was enough to make me realize that here was someone I wanted to collaborate with on this project, and his subsequent agreement to work with me allowed me to conceive of projects that I never could have undertaken on my own. After four decades working primarily as an engineer, through our collaboration he has found an avenue to return to the literary interests that had to some extent been on hold. Aside from the formal projects we work on, and I cannot imagine we will not continue generating them, Volodia and I constantly call upon each other for help in writing in or translating out of each other’s native language. Although his active English is considerably better than my active Russian (which means that I’m generally the one who needs more help), he has a vast number of Russian acquaintances in two hemispheres who are constantly asking him for English editing or translating

*Continued on page 20*

# Ask the Experts: Advice for Novice (and Not so Novice) Interpreters

## Review of Panel Discussion Presented at the 2008 ATA Conference

Reviewed by Tom Fennell

Panel Participants:

**Lynn Visson** – United Nations retired senior interpreter, visiting professor at Monterey Institute of International Studies, Graduate School of Translation, Interpretation, and Language Education, interpreter trainer, author.

**James Nolan** – United Nations retired senior interpreter and language services administrator, interpreter trainer and author.

**Barry Olsen** – AIIC certified conference interpreter, professor at Monterey Institute of International Studies, Graduate School of Translation, Interpretation, and Language Education.

**Emma Garkavi** – Washington State certified court interpreter. Administrator of Interpretation Services, Seattle Municipal Court.

Four prominent interpreters came together for a panel session at the 2008 ATA Conference in Orlando to provide advice to would-be, budding and even mid-career interpreters. The following touches on some of the themes they discussed.

### Training

Barry Olsen noted that anyone can legally say “I’m an interpreter,” since currently there are no specific or universal certification standards for the profession. There are, however, any number of credentials that are useful in establishing one’s credibility as a professional interpreter, among these a specialized degree, ATA certification, and especially, documentable interpreting experience.

The speakers explored the many ways in which one can gain interpreting experience. Both Jim and Barry spoke of jumping into volunteer work as a first step. Emma Garkavi emphasized that the Red Cross is always looking for volunteer interpreters. In the “old days” many careers were

launched in just this way. Nowadays, however, it is imperative to have specialized education and training in order to become a high-level interpreter.

Beyond the formal requirements, the panelists stressed that successful interpreters must possess real talent, something admittedly hard to quantify. They discussed the old problem of whether interpreters are born or made. Panelists repeatedly compared interpreters to musicians and the practice of interpreting to musical performance.

Lynn Visson stated that if people are “born” interpreters, if they have innate talent for the profession, then they can be trained, just as in the case of musicians. However, if people have “tin ears” in this respect, then training is virtually useless. This would not necessarily mean they could not be good translators, as there seems to be an innate set of skills specific to interpreting. She added that the fact that someone is bi- or tri-lingual is no guarantee of the ability to “code switch,” i.e., interpret. Jim noted that a very short 3-minute test with a few “faux amis” thrown in can frequently suffice to determine whether someone has the basic talent to justify investment in further training. Even those with impressive résumés may not pass a test like this.

While most of those seriously contemplating a career in interpreting already have some proficiency in at least two languages, they nearly always need additional training. Here Lynn noted that even in high-level interpreting, you can interpret FROM any language you understand well. Native or near-native proficiency is not required in order to work professionally FROM a language, especially a “C” (or third) language. An excellent passive understanding of the source language is sufficient when you’re working into your “A” language.

*Continued on page 21*

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## COMPLEMENTARY LANGUAGE PARTNERSHIPS *Continued from page 19*

aid, and at times he forwards their requests to me. But a favorite occupation for both of us is working on poetry translations. Recently we have attempted to translate some Bulat Okudzhava, a personal acquaintance of Volodia’s. It would seem that the major work here, since it is into English, would be mine, but because I have a tin ear and can render meter but not melody, we have to work together on virtually every word—a truly balanced collaboration. Here is a brief sample.

Господи, мой Боже, зеленоглазый мой,  
Пока Земля еще вертится, и это ей странно самой,  
Пока еще хватает времени и огня,  
Дай же Ты всем понемногу... И не забудь про меня.

*Green-eyed God in heaven, you who all pain relieves,  
While our Earth is still spinning, which she herself hardly believes;  
While there is still time and fire, Lord pray answer this plea;  
Give to each man, just a little, and do not forget about me.*

Last Stanza of Okudzhava’s “Prayer” 1963,  
Translated 2009 by Vladimir Kovner and Lydia Stone

## ASK THE EXPERTS *Continued from page 20*

For high level formal interpreting jobs, it has become more and more critical to have mastery of three or even four languages—and not just any languages. Many interpreters have regretted not having known from the start that a knowledge of both English and French is mandatory for working in Europe. For the Americas, Portuguese is required as a third language. The European Union currently requires four languages (!). Indeed, even one of our accomplished panelists acknowledged having to frantically bone up on Portuguese before being able to work as a conference interpreter in Latin America.

For native English speakers there is a ray of hope amidst the ever-thickening forest of professional requirements: there remains a dearth of world-class interpreters capable of interpreting into English as an “A” language out of some languages, including Slavic. For example, according to Barry, 90% of those studying Russian interpreting at Monterey are native speakers of Russian.

Barry also noted that, to determine the qualifications of interpreters, many clients now perform tests themselves, loading them onto laptops for on-the-spot testing.

Jim Nolan emphasized that interpretation requires extensive education, both specialized and general. In addition to formal training and degrees, he attached great importance to life experience. It is very possible that, for example, someone who has worked in a hospital for 10 years but has never taken a course in medical interpreting may well do an excellent job of interpreting in a medical situation.

As for the training process itself, again the panelists invoked the analogy to music. Like music, interpretation is an art learned by doing. Jim stated that were he to open an Interpretation Academy, he would do so along the lines of a Conservatory, with interpreters practicing every day in order to stay in shape.

Lynn emphasized that she was surprised that when she came to the UN, the training course placed such great emphasis on the “A” language. The logic here is that for into-English interpretation the audience will assume you have a great passive knowledge of Russian or French, but they will be listening to and judging everything you say in English. One must constantly polish one’s output, no matter what type of interpreting is involved: simultaneous, consecutive, escort or chuchotage (whispered interpreting).

### **Certification and Other Credentials**

Along with education, certification is an important element in establishing a successful career in interpretation.

ATA certification is a prestigious credential, but of course is based on translation rather than interpretation performance. Membership in AIIC, the Geneva-based International Association of Conference Interpreters, is a most impressive addition to an interpreter’s conference resume and requires sponsorship by a number of current members. Since sponsorship is not taken lightly and requires the sponsor to have worked with and listened to an

## **SOME ADDITIONAL TIPS FROM THE PANELISTS**

Lynn Visson:

- No matter how much you dislike listening to yourself on tape, record your interpreting performances and listen to them.
- Keep a record of the who, what, and where of your interpreting assignments.
- Intonation is an important and often neglected aspect of interpreting performance.
- If you do not think interpreting is great fun, do not choose it as a career, as you and your clients will both be miserable.

Barry Olsen:

- Throughout your career keep your ultimate goal in mind, do not get sidetracked, and do not stay too long in one place.
- Visit the AIIC website to learn about their mentoring program and obtain other invaluable information about interpreting.
- Refer to standards set by AIIC to bolster your demands for appropriate working conditions.

James Nolan:

- At the beginning of your career, never pass up the opportunity to gain experience.
- History suggests that interpreting is indeed the second oldest profession. Take pride in this.

Emma Garkavi:

- It is probably not possible to earn a living as a court interpreter, but court interpreting combines well with translating, which can be done in the library between court sessions.
- Being a court interpreter is for people who consider it fun to jump off a bridge three times a week.

applicant to vouch for his or her professional competence, and since the AIIC applicant must have a minimum number of days worked in the booth, it may take many years of interpreting work before one can become a member. All the panelists highly recommended the AIIC and its website ([www.aiic.net](http://www.aiic.net)) to interpreters at all stages in their careers. They also brought up *The Whisperers*, a film about consecutive interpreting and a second film on the history of 50 years of simultaneous interpreting at the UN.

Emma spoke on the issue of court interpreter certification as a substitute for a general interpreting certification. She said that a number of major corporations, including Microsoft and Starbucks, require their interpreters to be court certified, not necessarily because they will be dealing with court-related subject matter, but in recognition of the extremely high performance level required of court interpreters both to pass the court certification process and during the practice of their craft. *Continued on page 30*

# IDIOM SAVANTS: AIR IDIOMS

Vladimir Kovner and Lydia Stone

(See page 24 for readers' comments on our previous column, on water idioms.)



In this column we continue our exploration of idioms citing one of the traditional four elements—this time *air*. We are at a loss as to what to do about the fourth element since the one Russian word, земля, is equivalent to at least three English words—earth (Earth), land and soil/ground/dirt. Any suggestions?

Finally, someone has responded to our requests for idioms in a Slavic language other than Russian. Inna Oslon has sent us the Ukrainian equivalents of some of the Russian and English water idioms we published last time. Her contribution appears on page 24. We are grateful to Inna and hope that other speakers of non-Russian languages will follow her example and send us some idioms—either equivalents of ones we have already published or ones that can form the basis of a completely new column.

## I. EQUIVALENTS OR NEAR EQUIVALENTS IN BOTH LANGUAGES

1. **Бывать на воздухе (выйти на воздух):** выйти из помещения, на улицу, ходить на прогулку. Go outside, go out for some (fresh) air. Cf. **На воздухе / на открытом воздухе:** не в закрытом помещении, под открытым небом. Outside, in the open air, not cooped up, under the open sky.
2. **В воздухе носится, чувствуется что-то:** (перен.) заметно появление в обществе каких-либо идей, настроений. *В воздухе чувствовалось приближение восстания.* Of some idea, feeling, mood, etc., to be in the air. Also see **Витать в воздухе** in section IV.
3. **Питаться одним воздухом:** питаться неизвестно чем; почти ничего не есть. To live on air.
4. **Повиснуть в воздухе:** (перен.) оказаться / задержаться в неопределённом положении / состоянии. *Вопрос о его переводе в другой отдел повис в воздухе.* To be up in the air.
5. **Строить воздушные замки:** мечтать о несбыточном. To build castles in the air.

## II. A FALSE FRIEND

1. **Воздушный поцелуй:** поцелуй в воздух, посланный кому-то рукой от губ Compare to: **Air kiss:** a social kiss in which the cheeks are in contact but the lips smack the air.

## III. AIR ONLY

1. **A breath of fresh air:** a welcome relief or change, especially if a change or replacement is an honest and sensible change for the better. Глоток свежего воздуха; дуновение свежего ветра; желанная перемена, желанная разрядка.
2. **Air**\_\_\_\_, for example, in **air ball**, **air guitar**, **air kiss**, **air quotes**: phrases in which air is used idiomatically to modify a noun suggesting the performance of an action associated with the noun, but instead of the physical contact the action normally involves, it is performed without physical contact, i.e., in the air.
  - A. Thus, an **air ball** is one where a basketball not only misses the basket but does not even touch the rim or the backboard. В баскетболе, неудачный бросок по кольцу, когда мяч не попадая в кольцо, не касается ни кольца, ни щита.
  - B. Playing an **air guitar** involves mimicking guitar playing posture and actions with a wholly imaginary guitar. Игра на воображаемой гитаре без гитары в руках.
  - C. **Air quotes** are the simulation of quotation marks with one's fingers to indicate that the phrase you are pronouncing, would, if written, be enclosed in quotes or italics. При устном использовании какой-либо цитаты показ воображаемых кавычек двумя поднятыми вверх пальцами. See also **Air kiss** in the previous section.
3. **Airhead:** an empty headed, superficial person. Пустоголовый, никчёмный человек, пустышка, балбес, болван, остолоп; курильщик марихуаны (жаргон наркоманов).
4. **Airy-fairy:** chiefly British, of an idea, plan or person, insubstantial and totally impractical. (Главным образом используется в Англии) об идее, плане или человеке: витающий в облаках, необоснованный, неосуществимый, непрактичный, нереальный, нецелесообразный, оторванный от реальности.
5. **Clear the air:** eliminate confusion, controversy or sources of tension. Внести ясность, положить конец недоразумению (перен.), поставить всё на свои места (перен.), развеять туман, разрядить обстановку, устранить противоречия / источник напряжённости.
6. **(Not) Come up for air:** to perform an action (particularly something involving the mouth, e.g., kissing, talking, eating, etc.) continuously, seemingly without pausing to breathe. *On my bus trip, the lady next to me narrated the story of her life for 4 hours, never once coming up for air.* Безостановочно делать что-либо с участием рта (говорить, целоваться, есть,

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## IDIOM SAVANTS *Continued from page 22*

играть на трубе...), (как будто) не переводя дыхания. Во время моей автобусной поездки сидящая рядом со мной женщина четыре часа подряд, не переводя дыхания, рассказывала историю своей жизни.

7. **Fresh air fiend:** joking reference to someone devoted to spending time out of doors, or to extolling the benefits of doing so. (шутливо) Любитель свежего воздуха; человек, страстно расхваливающий преимущества быть на свежем воздухе.
8. **Have one's nose in the air:** to act snobbish, conceited or aloof. Задирать нос; быть важным, как индюк; быть спесивым, напыщенным, чванливым, как павлин; важничать.
9. **Hot air:** empty, exaggerated talk. Пустые, громкие фразы; пустопорожний разговор; пустое красноречие.
  - A. **Full of hot air:** a person prone to such talk, a person who talks rubbish. Краснбай, пустобрех; человек, который любит разглагольствовать, о которых говорят: "Мели Емеля, твоя неделя". В огромных старорусских семьях члены семьи понедельно чередовались на домашних работах, например, женщины поочередно мололи зерно на ручных жерновах. От выражения "молоть зерно" (молоть муку) пошло насмешливое выражение "молоть языком" о болтунах, несущих вздор. По-видимому, в этом выражении язык уподобляется пестику, которым измельчалось зерно.
10. **Into thin air, to vanish:** disappear completely. Исчезнуть, пропасть без следа.
11. **Out of thin air:** to appear or produce something suddenly and unexpectedly or from no known source. Из ниоткуда; из ничего; взятый с потолка; высосанный из пальца.
12. **Turn the air blue:** to emit a stream of curses. Сквернословить, ругаться, поносить кого-то; ругаться на чём свет стоит; использовать в разговоре густой мат / мат-перемат.
13. **Walk (float) on air:** to feel elated, happy. Ликовать, радоваться; быть на седьмом небе; ног под собой не чувствовать (от радости).

14. **You could cut the air (atmosphere) with a knife:** used as a description of thick muggy air, or an atmosphere "thick" with tension. Воздух такой густой / атмосфера такая густая / мат стоял такой густой и т.п., хоть топор вешай.

## IV. ТОЛЬКО ВОЗДУХ

1. **Взлететь на воздух:** взорваться. To explode, to blow up.
2. **Витать в воздухе:** 1) витать в облаках - предаваться бесплодным мечтам, фантазиям; жить не практическими интересами, а романтическими грёзами. 2) незримо таинственно присутствовать (напр. об идеях). Идея этого открытия давно витала в воздухе. 1) To have one's head in the clouds, to be a daydreamer. 2) To be in the air.
3. **Воздух!:** сигнал тревоги; предупреждение о воздушной атаке. Take cover (warning of an impending air attack).
4. **Воздушный:** очень лёгкий, нежный (напр. воздушная походка, воздушное платье, воздушное пирожное). Airy, light, fluffy, diaphanous.
5. **Дышать воздухом чего-нибудь:** (перен.) проникнуться впечатлением от чего-нибудь; жить интересом к чему-нибудь (напр. дышать воздухом театра). To eat, sleep and drink something, e.g., the theater.
6. **Дышать одним воздухом с кем-либо:** 1) жить общими интересами с кем-либо; 2) быть / оказаться в обществе кого-либо. Только подумать, что в тот вечер мы дышали одним воздухом с крупнейшим поэтом современности. 1) Share the interests or obsessions of someone. 2) To breathe the same air as someone.
7. **Как воздух:** очень / предельно нужно, необходимо что-либо или нужен кто-либо. As necessary as air.
8. **На вольном / свежем воздухе:** за городом. Where the air is fresh, in the country.
9. **Портить воздух:** испускать газы; пукать. To break wind, pass gas.
10. **Сотрясать воздух:** говорить пустые, громкие фразы; разглагольствовать. To be full of hot air.

# American Translators Association 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

New York City October 28-31, 2009 New York Marriott Marquis



# UKRAINIAN WATER IDIOMS



Contributed by Inna Oslon, who implies she has additional Ukrainian water idioms to share with us.

For English and Russian water idioms see the Winter 2009 issue of SlavFile.

Inna Oslon can be reached at [inoslon@mindspring.com](mailto:inoslon@mindspring.com).

Idiom	Literal Translation	Meaning	Russian or English "Water" Equivalent
Піти за водою	Go after (with) water	To disappear, to die, to be drowned; about something ineffective, in vain, all for nothing	not found
Як вода змила	As if washed off by water	About smth (smb) that disappeared	not found
Як лист за водою	As a leaf with water	About smth (smb) that disappeared	not found
Канути у воду	Sink into water	About smth (smb) that disappeared	Как в воду кануть
Взяла вода	Was taken away by water	About smth (smb) that disappeared	not found
Краще з мосту та в воду	It would be better to jump off a bridge into the water	To be in a desperate situation	not found
Хоч з гори та в воду	Enough to make you jump off a mountain into the water	To be in a desperate situation	not found
Холодною водою облили	To pour cold water over someone.	To stun or shock someone To dishearten. To immediately kill enthusiasm.	Холодной водой окатить. Pour cold water on someone. To throw cold water on. To throw a wet blanket on (contains a veiled idea of water).
Грішна вода	Sinful water	Vodka	Joy water, water of life
Багато води утекло	A lot of water has flown	A lot of time has passed	Много воды утекло. A lot of water has flowed under the bridge.
Лити воду в криницю	To pour water into the well	To do something useless	Cast water into the sea
Замутити воду	Muddy the water	Stir up trouble	Мутить воду. Muddy the water
Каламутити воду	Muddy the water	Stir up trouble	Muddy the water
Виводити на чисту/свіжу воду	To bring into clear water	To unmask someone.	Вывести на чистую воду
Ловити рибу в каламутній воді	Fish in muddy water	To get something in a questionable way using an unfortunate situation	Ловить рыбку в мутной воде. Fish in troubled water
Вилами по воді писано	Written on water with a pitchfork	About something uncertain, doubtful, not likely to happen	Вилами по воде писано. Written in(on) water
Плисти проти води	To swim against the water	To overcome obstacles, to act in opposition to a majority, to be rebellious	Плывть против течения. Go/struggle/row against the stream/tide/ current
Варити з когось воду	To cook water	To get on someone's nerves by being hard to please, fastidious	not found

# RUSS-ENG: ARE WE GETTING CLOSER?

## Anglicisms in Russian

*Text of a Presentation Made by Anastasia Koralova at the 2008 ATA Conference*

### 1. ENGLISH NEWCOMERS

In the history of the Russian language, there has never been the kind of huge avalanche of foreign language borrowings we have seen in recent years. Some people call this phenomenon “aggression by the English language.” That term seems unfair: English has never tried to impose itself on Russian. On the contrary, the Russian language has opened wide its doors and is eagerly welcoming English newcomers.

Yet many Russians evidently experience some discomfort at witnessing their language being so thoroughly inundated. Perhaps the intensity of the discomfort comes with the realization that, while they decry the borrowings, they find themselves increasingly using them.

In this paper, I endeavor to look at this picture more closely, trying to identify the nature of borrowings, their scope, as well as their types and functionality. I will also try to comment on how those verbal newcomers may influence the translation process, which sometimes is not as straightforward as it may seem.

### 2. WHY THE FLOOD?

The reasons for the “flood” are evident. Any language is like a living organism and quickly reacts to any significant changes or events in the lives of the people who use it. There was no way the language could have prepared itself ahead of time for the drastic changes in Russian society that began a couple of decades ago and are still continuing.

The appearance of foreign words on the Russian landscape was inevitable. Nobody disputes their necessity in technical fields, in computer science, marketing, politics, or finance. However, their penetration into other spheres of life—journalism, show business, art, fashion, food, advertising and everyday communication—is the subject of heated disputes among Russians. Should we take a critical stand here and try to resist the corruption of Russian? I will offer my comments on this issue below.

First, however, let us consider various types of borrowings.

### 3. TYPES OF BORROWINGS

They come in all shapes and sizes.

#### 3.1 Transpositions.

Using foreign words in their original form has become a common practice. The names of foreign newspapers and magazines, firms and companies, makes of cars, and sometimes just proper names (of people and places) in their original alphabetic form can be found everywhere.

“...интервью Путина для CNN” – Putin’s interview for CNN

“...журнал Newsweek, США” – U.S. Newsweek

“...газета The Financial Times, Великобритания.” – The Financial Times

“...он выиграл U.S. Open” – he won the U.S. Open

“...кампания Nissan может начать сборку автомобилей в Комсомольске-на-Амуре”. – Nissan can now open the assembly plant in Komsomolsk-on-Amur.

As long as it is made clear what words in the Latin alphabet refer to, this tendency is a welcome one. It makes the life of translators easier since they do not have to decide in each case between transliteration, transcription or calques.

#### 3.2 Transcription and transliteration (or a combination of both).

These are the most common types of borrowings. It is very important that they be placed in a “supportive context” or, better still, are accompanied by explanatory definitions until they are well assimilated. For example:

“Он работает спичрайтером, причём готовит не только речи, но и тосты”.

He works as a speechwriter and he writes not only speeches but the texts for toasts as well.

“Вместо лекарства им давали плацебо – пустышку”. The control group of patients was taking a placebo.

“В стратегии развития сети федеральных аэропортов особое внимание уделено созданию хабов – крупных транспортных транзитных узлов, в которых происходит основной объём пересадок”.

Special interest in the development of federal airports is devoted to the construction of hubs.

As we can see, the translator’s task can be reduced to omitting the explanatory part of the sentence, since it is absolutely redundant in English.

Ascribing Russian grammatical characteristics to borrowed words is traditional. But sometimes the process can go too far. Problems can arise when the Russian language starts to handle adopted words too “freely,” i.e., to twist and change them to its liking. Thus, the acronym PR came into Russian not as a two-letter acronym but as its phonetic representation, the transcription turning into a new word: “пиар”. After this the word quickly gained a life of its own. It spawned all kinds of derivatives such as “пиарщики”, “самопиар”, “пиарить”, “запиариться”, “распиариться”, etc.

Or another example:

“Чаша терпения виайпишной тусовки от кино переполняется».

The patience of the movie-celebrity crowd is growing thin.

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## ARE WE GETTING CLOSER? *Continued from page 25*

It really takes some concentration to figure out that the word *виайпишный* should be traced back to another acronym, VIP, treated by the adoptive language the same way it treats PR. So the translator's primary task in such cases would be to identify the derivative; without this "deciphering process" the translation cannot be performed. In Russian, foreign borrowings sometimes change beyond recognition.

### 3.3 Calques (loan component-for-component translations).

Of course only compound words, set expressions and idioms can belong to this group.

Here are a few examples:

Микроволновка, микроволновая печь – microwave.  
«Осталось горькое последвкусие». – There was a bitter aftertaste.

«Сильнейший передоз от гашишного масла». – Strong overdose of hashish oil.

«Президент скоро станет хромой уткой». – The president will soon become a lame duck. (about Russian president B.Yeltsin!)

### 3.4 Allusions or analogues.

This type of borrowing may extend to intentionally modified calques referring to the original English expression:

«Печально известные времена «Дикого Востока», когда бизнес контролировался мафией, казались спокойнее.»

The notorious "Wild East" period when businesses were controlled by the mafia seemed to be more peaceful.

In this statement we can see a clear reference to another set expression – "Wild West."

### 3.5 Semantic expansion, i.e., attributing to a Russian word new meanings borrowed from its partial English equivalent

In the Soviet era, the Russian word "вызов" did not have the meanings: 1. испытание; напряжение сил; нечто требующее мужества, and 2. сложная задача, проблема. The only meaning it shared with the English word "challenge" was: an invitation to engage in a contest, a summons to fight, as in a duel. Before approximately 1991, a Russian phrase such as:

«Буш выразил скорбь по поводу вызова урагана Катрина».

Bush expressed his grief about the challenge posed by hurricane Katrina.

would have been incongruous, but now translators are more than happy to use this "expanded equivalent" of the word "challenge".

Likewise, less than a couple of decades ago, "прорывы в экономике" (breakthroughs in the economy) could only mean a disaster, whereas now it is a declaration of major achievements.

### 3.6 Grammatical expansion, i.e., attributing grammatical characteristics borrowed from the English equivalent.

The word "риск" (risk), which in the past was used exclusively in singular form, adopted the plural form in post-Soviet Russian:

«застраховаться от политических рисков» – to insure oneself against political risks

«преодолевать разные риски» – to overcome various risks

Combinations like these no longer surprise anyone; they have become the norm.

I have singled out six types of borrowings. Now let us approach the problem from a somewhat different perspective. How profound foreign penetration really is can be seen not only from the numbers and variety of types of borrowed elements, but also from the language levels on which they "reside."

I will start with the lowest level and move upstairs, so to speak.

## 4. LINGUISTIC and CULTURAL LEVELS OF FOREIGN PENETRATION:

### 4.1 The level of letters.

No fear: Cyrillic is not endangered.

Transpositions—borrowings in which words in their original alphabetic form are used in Russian—are not considered here, even though they technically qualify. I would rather speak of one borrowed linguistic-cultural feature that manifests itself on the level of letters.

BBI – this is how Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin is occasionally referred to by the press.

Could anyone imagine having called L. I. Brezhnev LIB without consequences? Or, God forbid! I.V. Stalin IVS?

This cultural reference to presidents by their initials is a definite result of American influence. It remains to be seen if this "letter-naming" is going to remain in Russian for long.

Letters in the Latin alphabet are sometimes used for naming Russian firms or production:

«...Lada Priora против иномарок: что выбрать?»

What to choose: Lada Priora or a foreign car?

I myself find this tendency pitiful: If the producers believe that the Latin letters add some competitive value to their product, I am sorry for them. Or if the use of these letters does increase their sales, I am sorry for Russian consumers.

### 4.2 The level of word components (morphemes – suffixes and prefixes).

I should confess that the title of the book by Sergei Minaev, *Дух-less*, shocked me. The book is devoted to the

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## ARE WE GETTING CLOSER? *Continued from page 26*

generation of 1970-1976, which the author considers to be “a lost generation.” The Russian word “дух” (spirit, breath, courage) is here combined with the English suffix “less” and this “hybrid” is supposed to denote young people who were “spiritually impoverished” and lived meaningless lives. According to readers' reviews, it is the book itself that is “духless,” which must be true, since it received an award for “the worst book of the year.” Maybe this fact will discourage future authors from “borrowing foreign morphemes” for the sake of cheap publicity or promotion.

We often run into “передача ТОП-НОВОСТЕЙ” (i.e., последних новостей) – the latest news broadcast, “топ-10 регионов, привлекательных для инвесторов” – 10 most attractive regions for investors, “представителей ПОП-ТУСОВКИ” (pop-culture crowd), etc., in which the initial elements (actually words) “top” and “pop” act as productive prefixes. In the combination “топовые новости”, “top” becomes a root.

### 4.3 The level of words.

Of course, this is the largest group. Here we find hundreds, if not thousands, of borrowings. They represent almost every part of speech, interjections: “вау!” – wow! (“ну и ну!” or “вот это да!,” etc.) and “упс” – oops! (“ой!” or “ай!”); nouns, which are in the majority: мессадж (message), “мейнстрим” (mainstream), “лейбл” (label), “гаджет” (gadget); adjectives: “широкие маскулинные скулы” (broad masculine cheekbones), “электоральный рейтинг” (electoral rating); verbs: “затюнингуй машину” (have your car tuned). Adverbs and numbers are not passed over either: “Зайцев гламурно вышагивал по пирсу” (Zaitsev strutted along the pier) и “ту пицца” (two pizzas).

You can see from some of the above examples how easily the borrowed words can be integrated into Russian grammar through adoption of appropriate endings and affixes. There is no need to discuss how well adapted they are phonologically. Their initial “foreign acoustic signal” may become unrecognizable in time.

### 4.4 The level of set expressions and idioms (word groups and sentences).

There are not as many of these as single-word borrowings so far, but their number is growing. They are mostly brought in as calques, and I will give a few more examples:

Russians have borrowed the name for the 1<sup>st</sup> of April: “День дурака” – April Fools' Day (All Fool's Day). The tradition was there previously, but the name was not.

There are set phrases and idioms like:

“Он прошёл точку невозврата”. – He passed the point of no return.

“Но дьявол, как говорится, в деталях”. – The devil is in the details.

(Or, according to Luzhkov, the mayor of Moscow: “Бес скрывается в мелочах”.)

In the last example, we have reached the top level,

the level of sentences, since the idiom there is a complete sentence.

I would like to mention one more “level of borrowing” although it is more a cultural imitation than a linguistic loan. Russians have borrowed jokes about blondes. These are not simply translated, but are now “home-grown.” So we witness the transfer of a type of cultural humor. Russia turned out to be fertile soil for jokes of that kind. No surprise.

## 5. BORROWINGS: PROS and CONS.

### 5.1 Pros

#### 1. Terms and *realia*.

There seems to be a consensus about the need for a certain category of borrowings in Russian: terms and *realia*. Their acceptance has indeed been the most effective linguistic solution to the socioeconomic and technical explosions happening in the country. Words like “риалторы”, “провайдеры”, “офшоры”, “букмекеры”, “фитнес-центры”, and hundreds of others are put to use to describe the emerging market economy and new aspects of life. These words didn't exist in Soviet times simply due to the absence of the notions themselves, and nobody should frown upon them now that the notions have appeared.

#### 2. Filling a lacuna

Then, there is another group of borrowings that have come to describe things that have been part of Russian life or knowledge all along but have remained “nameless.” (The reasons for this are a separate issue. “Lacunae” or holes in the language may be the result of numerous factors, political and ideological among them.)

Until some 20 years ago, the word “холокост” (holocaust) did not exist in Russian even though the Soviet Government never denied the fact of “massive extermination of Jews by the Nazis during WWII” (this is the explanatory phrase by which the one word was translated).

To take another example, the actual practice of a “double standard” was widespread but the calque (word for word translation) of this phrase—“двойной стандарт”—came into being only after perestroika.

I would not be far wrong to say that almost every career woman in the Soviet Union and Russia at one point or another experienced harassment, but the word “харасмент” is relatively new, as is its Russian counterpart “сексуальные домогательства”. Of course, there were multiple ways to refer to the practice of harassment in Russian, like “он предлагал ей переспать”, “он хотел затащить её в кровать”, “он домогался её”, etc., but no specific word or ready-made phrase previously existed in Russian.

Another example is the Spanish word “мачо” (macho), which came into Russian through English and was naturalized so quickly that it produced “теле-мачо”, (TV-macho), “радио-мачо” (radio-macho) and perhaps other derivatives.

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This type of addition to the language not only makes a translator's task much easier, but also enriches the adoptive language and culture. Why be too wordy or just the opposite—mute—about those things that we see or experience? I am surprised that the compound word “jet lag” has not yet been adopted by Russian either in its original form, or by transcription (“джет-лэг”). Another possibility might be a word group “перелётный синдром” instead of “сонливость, которую мы испытываем в результате перелёта через несколько временных поясов”.

I welcome the filling of gaps. I was happy to see “свидание в слепую” (blind date) and “никогда не говори никогда” (never say “never”) being absorbed into Russian. I even came across a play on words based on this phrase: “Никогда не говори некогда” – (never say you don't have the time).

If Russian were to become a welcoming home to words and expressions of this kind, I would call it a healthy evolution of the language, since such additions would neither compete with nor oust existing Russian words or expressions; rather, they would facilitate communication (both inter-cultural and cross-cultural) and add a new dimension to the language.

### 5.2 Cons

#### 1. Using doublets

Of course, under this rubric you will find English words that already have Russian equivalents. Here I join those who protest vociferously against borrowings. I see no reason to duplicate Russian words in such cases as:

“секьюрити” (security) – “охрана”; “дайвинг” (diving) – “ныряние” or “подводное плавание”; “слоган” (slogan) – “лозунг”; “хедлайн” (headline) – “заголовок”; “байкеры” (bikers) – “велосипедисты”; “лузер” (loser) – “неудачник”; “креативность” (creativity) – “изобретательность”; “землетрясение магнитудой 7 баллов” (magnitude 7 earthquake) – instead of “силой 7 баллов”; and many, many more. There is no excuse for writing “бодигард” when Russian has “телохранитель,” which is its complete equivalent even in its components. Why should we say that “балерина делает экзерсис (exercise) у станка” (the ballerina is exercising at the ballet bar) instead of “упражнений или разминки”?

The insistent, unnecessary incorporation of foreign words has become extremely popular with journalists, writers, and public figures—all those people who have access to public media. It has become fashionable or “cool” to demonstrate “knowledge of English,” and some Russians seem to compete with each other in their efforts.

Or, perhaps, I am mistaken, and they have taken upon themselves the noble task of educating Russians and teaching them English? Then I only wish this were being done more responsibly. These would-be educators have introduced the word “тинейджеры” into Russian. The borrowing was readily adopted by Russian speakers; often without

a clear understanding of which age group this word should legitimately embrace. As a result, the borrowed word's meaning has shrunk: it has come to denote the same age group as “подростки”, i.e., young people from 12 to 16. So the phrase from *Time* magazine, “suicides among teenage U.S. troops are on the rise,” cannot be translated as “число самоубийств среди тинейджеров в американской армии возросло”, since this would create the incorrect impression that underage children serve in the US army.

#### 2. “Misfits” or “misfires”

Some borrowings seem to be completely out of place in a Russian context. They may be either misleading or simply fall flat on the Russian ear.

There are many ways to express the idea of caution in a natural way, “быть осторожным”, or “осмотрительным”, or “хорошенько подумать”, to name just a few. But for some reason none of them is good enough for the author of an article who writes:

“Высказывания Тимошенко напугали инвесторов, и сегодня они думают дважды”.

Timoshenko's remarks scared investors and now they have to think twice.”

“Думать дважды” – why not “трижды” or “семь раз,” which would be more in keeping with Russian tradition, since we already say: “Семь раз отмерь – один раз отрежь” and “Троицу Бог любит”.

“Стране необходим свежий старт”. – The country needs a fresh start.

“Свежий старт” (fresh start) may push our thoughts in the direction of “несвежий” or “тухлый” in the context of our language, so I would tend to consider this borrowing as a misfire too. “Начать заново”, or “сделать новую попытку” work much better than the English loan.

Or to cite another example:

“Эта актриса попала в число самых “горячих женщин”.

Evidently, the author's intention was to say that the actress is one of the “hottest women,” which in English would mean that she is beautiful, sexy and in great demand. But in Russian she becomes “ardent” or “hot-tempered.” In other words, the “misfire” in this case results in creating a different impression of the woman than that made by the original English.

Secondary meanings, connotations, and associations of words in the adoptive tongue are extremely important when you introduce a borrowed word or expression.

Perhaps I am too cautious, but I was shocked to see the following statement the other day in *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*.

“Специалисты советуют нам не складывать свои яйца в одну корзину”.

Specialists recommend that we not put all our eggs in one basket.

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Naïve (or mischievous?) journalists Tatiana Zamahina and Elena Mishina wrote this, seemingly forgetting about the second meaning of the Russian word “яйца” (testicles). However, the ladies’ ultimate intentions were good: they were advising readers to diversify their investments in dollars, euro and rubles.

It is mostly the use of unnecessary foreign doublets and awkward misfits that offends many Russians and makes them perceive the process of linguistic borrowing as a corruption of their language. Still, even among doublets, there are some that can be considered acceptable.

I will make one more attempt to be liberal about the issue of Anglicization. I have been trying hard to find a silver lining in this dark cloud of “CONS.” And this is what I came up with.

There may be some “mitigating circumstances” even for those adoptions that duplicate a Russian word or expression. Among “mitigating circumstances” I would name the following:

### **a) Economy**

When an English variant is considerably shorter, its “preferential usage” may be justified (however, I can foresee angry objections from Russian language purists here). We do save time and space using the word “молл” (mall) instead of “большой торговый центр”, or “реклайнер” (recliner) instead of “кресло с откидывающейся спинкой”, or even “тату” (tattoo) instead of “татуировка”.

### **b) Creation of a “foreign or exotic atmosphere”**

“Весь день шёл пресловутый дризл – мелкий и колючий дождь”.

It was drizzling all day.

For a description of Russian reality, “Весь день моросило” would work more naturally than “пресловутый дризл”. This word, on the other hand, may be appropriate to “exoticize” a narration concerning, for example, the weather in England.

### **c) Euphemism**

Euphemism should also be acknowledged as a legitimate reason for using a foreign word. Otherwise, how else can we explain the appearance and insistent usage of the word “диарея” (diarrhea) instead of ordinary “понос”? Evidently, the English word adds some “aristocratic flavor” to the condition and puts a prettier wrap on the package. Or maybe just distances the hearer from the details.

Another word “эвтаназия” / “эйтаназия” (euthanasia) – умерщвление безнадежно больных (по гуманным соображениям) can serve as an example of economy (what a time saver!) and of a euphemism. The foreign word definitely lets Russians feel more detached from the painful problem by “dimming it,” making it more obscure.

And here my liberalism ends. I couldn’t find any more “mitigating circumstances” under the “CONS” rubric.

Now the main question:

## **6. ARE WE AND OUR LANGUAGES GETTING CLOSER?**

We definitely are. Both culturally and linguistically. But this does not always mean that the translator’s task will necessarily become much easier.

Here are a few observations of how changes in the Russian language have affected the translation process.

**6.1** As mentioned above, transpositions, i.e., a transfer of an English name into a Russian text, is a boon for translators. We can only welcome this new approach in translation.

**6.2** Those English words that were used in Russian in the pre-perestroika era to describe “capitalist reality,” such as “бизнес” (business), “брокер” (broker), and “карьера” (career) have shed their negative connotations with the onset of capitalism in Russia and become neutral, if not positive. As a result, they have become real equivalents to their English prototypes.

For example, in a text about Michael Faraday we read:

“The eminent English chemist Humphrey Davy took on Faraday as his assistant, thus opening a scientific career to him.”

Until 18 or 20 years ago, it would have been highly desirable to avoid using the word “карьера” with regard to Faraday in a Russian translation; after all, he was a respected scientist. Avoiding the negative connotations by selecting another phrase was the translator’s only promising strategy.

Известный английский химик того времени Хампффри Дэви взял Фарадея к себе в ассистенты, тем самым открыв ему дверь в науку.

Nowadays, the translator is free to use words of “capitalist coloring” (like “карьера,” “бизнес,” “брокер,” “маклер,” etc., since their status has changed.

**6.3** Many recent borrowings such as terms and *realia* have made translators’ lives easier. The same is true about words that have taken on English semantic and/or grammatical features (like Russian words – “вызовы”, “прорывы”, “риски”).

Yet, many other loans stand out in the Russian context and their “foreignness” is only too obvious. Sometimes this creates a comic effect, something Russian writers and comedians have not failed to notice and exploit:

“Старушка взяла авоську и пошла на маркет”.

Michael Zadornov, a famous stand-up comic, ridicules the Russian infatuation with foreign words. The clash of the very Russian “авоська” (string bag) with the English word “маркет” (market) is really funny, and I don’t see how this effect can possibly be conveyed in translation. The sentence “A little old lady took a string bag and went to the market” levels the stylistic differences of the two clashing words and is not humorous at all.

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In his comic routine, Zadornov lampoons the tendency toward indiscriminate borrowing and provides more examples like “супер-сельпо” (a сельпо being a rural cooperative) and “окейюшки,” which he finds shocking. I am not sure if he ever really saw or heard those gems, but I am inclined to believe that he did. Especially so, after I encountered the following phrase in a very popular paper, *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*: “Поп-дива Бабкина исполнила частушки”. This sentence is taken from a serious article and is not intended to be humorous. (Pop-diva Babkina sang folk-ditties is just a bare statement of the fact, the whole point of how laughable it sounds in Russian is completely lost.

**6.4** There is another reason for translators to be cautious when dealing with borrowings.

This concerns those words that are already well established in Russian but have a somewhat modified meaning. Thus, when back-translating the word “*киллер*”, we simply must add the adjective “hired” to it: “a hired killer.”

The word “*гламурный*” in most cases acquires a cheap or ironic ring to it in Russian. If translated by its English original prototype “glamorous,” it will be “ennobled” or “raised in its rank.” The translator would be wise if s/he tries to find new contextual variants for the word, some of which may be “glossy” or “showy” or “tawdry.”

As we can see, from a translator’s point of view, borrowings may be a mixed blessing. They may help to resolve some of translators’ previous problems, while creating new ones. So, as always, the translator should be on the alert and fully armed.

I have tried to show both the positive and negative sides of the process of language borrowing in this paper, singling out fortuitous adoptions and horrid ones. However, my assessment of their quality does not imply an attempt to predict their future. Language is a willful animal, and there is no way of knowing which of the borrowings will take root in Russian and which will be soon forgotten.

I may like some aspects of Anglicization and dislike others, but I am convinced of one thing: the Russian language is not in danger. I have begun to understand Turgenev’s words better than before: “Русский язык большой барин, всё вытерпит”. – “The Russian language is a strong gentleman; it can endure anything.”

I would paraphrase this famous quotation in the following way: The Russian language has an iron stomach. It will digest anything it swallows.

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## ASK THE EXPERTS *Continued from page 21*

### Being an Interpreter

Jim described a recent French study performed on the interpretation of parliamentary proceedings. It was found that rhetorical skills were as critical to interpreter performance as the rendering of content. Jim advised that the ability to improvise is critical for an interpreter and can save the day when the specific word needed is “not quite there.”

He further suggested that interpretation is a “copycat” profession and that one need never be embarrassed about adopting the style or techniques of colleagues, especially more experienced ones. Offense is unlikely to be taken; on the contrary, interpreters tend to be flattered when they are imitated.

General talent and training aside, specific preparation is critical for each interpreting assignment. And that means not just perusing a 300-page conference glossary, but analyzing it to reduce it to the 30 words you are going to need to have in your head for the job.

Interpreter ethics were discussed, and special attention was given to the situation of the court interpreter.

Emma emphasized that it is critical that the court interpreter in particular remain strictly neutral and never go beyond strict interpreting or try to help or console the client. In this area, making friendly small talk with the client is not acceptable. The role of the court interpreter, she told us, is much more similar to that of a court reporter than to that of the client’s lawyer. Emma suggested that work in court reporting can often be combined very successfully with translating; indeed, translation can often help hone the interpreter’s repertoire.

### An Ancient Profession

Toward the end of the presentation, Jim asked everyone to reflect on the fact that every major shift in history has required the presence of interpreters.

And in conclusion, Lynn issued a final challenge to the audience (which she has often posed to her students): watch the film *The Interpreter* and point out 5 things that could never happen in the real life of a UN interpreter.

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**Brown Bag SLD Meeting  
at ATA Conference  
Friday, October 30, 2009, 12:30-1:30.  
Room to be announced.**