

2010 ATA CONFERENCE PRESENTATION REVIEW

CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN: Enhanced Vocabulary, Endangered Syntax

Presented by Elizabeth Macheret
Reviewed by Galina Palyvian



Reviewer Galina Palyvian

In a presentation entitled “Contemporary Russian: Enhanced Vocabulary, Endangered Syntax,” Elizabeth Macheret addressed important topics such as recent changes in the modern Russian language on the semantic, morphological, and syntactic levels. The examples were taken from the actual work of professional translators, grant applications written by Russian college students (majoring in linguistics and foreign languages), and from Internet sources.

Elizabeth started off by quoting three lines from *Eugene Onegin* by Alexander Pushkin, which nowadays are often used to excuse one’s linguistic errors: “Как уст румяных без улыбки, / Без грамматической ошибки / Я русской речи не люблю” [“Like rosy lips severe, unsmiling, / To me no Russian sounds beguiling, / Without a grammar gaffe or two.” LRS]. Unfortunately, recently we have witnessed a rise in the number of mistakes made not only by students and professionals in non-linguistic fields, but also by our fellow translators.

Before addressing these issues, Elizabeth summarized the main points of her presentation as follows:

- Contemporary Russian is changing rapidly.
- To a great degree, it is influenced by American/Western technology and culture.
- Historically, Russian has been highly susceptible to new vocabulary and morphological changes.
- Semantic, morphological, and syntactic changes are always positive in the long run, but at the moment they are still “unsettled.”

Elizabeth then moved on to discuss major trends in contemporary Russian, such as the appearance of **new active vocabulary** from such areas as business, politics, technology (mainly through adoption of ready-made English terms), and even from the Russian criminal world, e.g.:

- *секьюритизация* [securitization] and *дефолт* [default] – from the world of finance;
- *праймериз* [primaries] – with regard to elections;
- *превью-версия* [preview version] and *айфон* [iPhone] – communication technology;
- *конкретные пацаны* [literally: specific guys meaning goodfellas, wise guys and the like] – from criminal jargon.

A number of words used in the past are now coming back to life **without semantic change** (e.g., *визитная карточка* [visiting/business card], *биржа* [stock market]). In addition, forgotten words are now acquiring **new semantic content** (e.g., *визитка* [short for *visiting/business card*, instead of the meaning of *cutaway coat* – a men’s clothing item used in the 19th and early 20th centuries for morning visits]).

An especially interesting section of the presentation included examples of the influence of **slang and vernacular** on the development of Russian vocabulary, e.g.:

- *знаковый* – this was introduced as a semiotic term meaning *related to signs or symbols*, e.g., *знаковые системы* [semiotic, or sign systems/systems of symbols]; however, this adjective has now moved from the technical terminology world into everyday Russian and has come to replace a perfectly good Russian word, *значительный* [significant], among others;
- *на данный момент* as opposed to *в данный момент*;
- *как бы* and *тупа* – “weed” words equivalent to *like* and *kind of*, respectively.

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Call for Officer Nominations Slavic Languages Division

The Slavic Languages Division is pleased to call for nominations from the SLD membership for the following positions:

- Administrator (2-year term)
- Assistant Administrator (2-year term)

The results of the election will be announced at the SLD Annual Meeting, which will be held during ATA's 52nd Annual Conference in Boston, Massachusetts, October 26-29, 2011.

SLD OFFICER DUTIES

The SLD Administrator and Assistant Administrator work together with volunteers to prepare the Division newsletter, recruit Division speakers for the ATA Annual Conference, and organize the Division's annual networking event.

WHY BECOME A DIVISION LEADER?

Serving in a Division leadership role provides enormous professional and personal opportunity. In fact, Division officers frequently find themselves becoming more successful in their own careers as they develop additional skills, meet new colleagues, and make useful business connections.

WHO CAN BE A CANDIDATE?

A qualified candidate must be an Active or Corresponding Member, that is, a voting member of ATA as well as a member of the Slavic Languages Division. To learn more, click on http://www.atanet.org/membership/membership_type.php.

If you plan to put a name forward for a nomination, it would be helpful if you could contact the potential nominee first and tell him or her of your intention. Let the person know that a nomination does not guarantee a formal invitation to run for office.

Remember that all Division officers serve on a volunteer basis; please do not nominate colleagues who express serious concerns about service or who have conflicting priorities.

NOT A VOTING MEMBER YET?

An Associate ATA member can become a voting member of the Association through the ATA Membership Review Process. It's a relatively easy request to make with minimal paperwork. And the best part about becoming an ATA voting member? It's a chance to participate in the Association by letting your voice be heard.

To find out more about the ATA Membership Review Process, click on <http://tinyurl.com/ryfs4>

HOW TO NOMINATE A CANDIDATE

A Nominating Committee has been appointed to actively seek nominations for candidates. The 2011 SLD Nominating Committee is:

- Fred Grasso (frdgrasso@satx.rr.com)
- Jennifer Guernsey (jenguernsey@gmail.com)

Any Division member may make a nomination, and self-nominations are welcome.

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The section also provided examples from the “**pa-donkaffsky jargon**” [intentional misspelling of phrase literally meaning *the jargon of scum*], a recent counter-cultural phenomenon that started on a Russian LiveJournal page and was used mainly by the Russian Internet community, but now is affecting the spelling and writing style of some Russian writers, the media, and college students (e.g. *пpевед, парк им. Горькова*). The jargon is based on colloquial Russian and plays with the orthography of common words, simplifying them so they are spelled phonetically (*тогда* becomes *тада* [*then*]), merging two or more words into one (*ржунимагу* [*LOL, or laughing out loud*]), as well as intentionally complicating the spelling (*яд* becomes *йад* [*poison*]).

Beside changes in active vocabulary, the Russian language is also undergoing changes in the **semantics** of words. Elizabeth illustrated this by explaining how quickly the adjective *элитный* (dictionary definition: *best plants, seeds, and animals with select characteristics that are most suitable for cultivation/breeding*) has edged out and acquired the meaning of the adjective *элитарный* (dictionary definition: *best representatives of a social group, faction, etc.*), although recently the latter word has begun to fight back against the impostor.

In another interesting section of the presentation, Elizabeth discussed loanwords. On the one hand, there are loanwords that are gradually adapting to the language. A fascinating but complex example of this is the word *кофе*. In colloquial Russian, modifiers and predicates of the noun *кофе* have been actively following not the traditional standard masculine rules (since the noun initially came into Russian in the form of *кофий*), but the ones for neuter exceptions. During the second half of the 20th century, several attempts were made to “legalize” the word’s neuter status at least in the colloquial language. A few years ago, the Russian Ministry of Education made an attempt to officially recognize the neuter noun as an alternative standard for literary Russian, but, meeting opposition from the linguistic community, had to withdraw its ordinance and simply affirm the existence of the current spoken usage. This was conducive to the use of a “half-legalized” neuter noun *кофе*, at least in the popular media and the works of some authors. Some loanwords seem to be on the way to assimilation although they are not yet able to produce their “own” derived word forms (e.g., the fairly recent

noun *конструкция* immediately produced the adjective *конструктивный*, but the newcomer noun *конструкт* has not produced any adjectives so far). On the other hand, there are loan words that have been adopted uncritically, especially in the area of modern technologies (e.g., the English noun *motherboard* has become simply *мать* in the speech of some computer specialists and users, producing the amusing situation described in the box below.

Finally, Elizabeth discussed in detail the phenomenon of contemporary Russian “**hyperforeignism**,” i.e., misapplication of foreign punctuation in violation of Russian syntax and punctuation rules, as well as excessive use of foreign words when perfectly suitable counterparts have either long existed or recently been created in the language. These “hyperforeignisms” can be seen on the following levels:

- vocabulary: *воркион, чирлидер, тьютер;*
- sentence and phrase construction: *у тех, кого я собираюсь преподавать; с интересного ракурса; практиковала английский язык;*
- capitalization and punctuation: *Совет Директоров; как соотносятся план выражения, речь рассказчика, и план содержания; на основании проведенного исследования, я смогла прийти к следующим выводам.*

Overall, the presentation was extremely interesting as analysis of the state of contemporary Russian. It will definitely be very useful both for language teachers and for translators and editors, helping us become aware of possible errors we might come across in the work of our colleagues (alas, this does happen from time to time) and reminding us to refresh our knowledge of the established rules of our working language and keep abreast of ongoing changes.

Editor’s note: Time did not permit Elizabeth to present the material she had collected on changes in Russian syntax. She promises to put this information in an article for a future issue of SlavFile.

Galina Palyvian is an ATA certified English to Russian translator specializing in software and website localization, IT, telecommunications, international relations, market research, and advertising. She is the official Russian reviewer for the Skype localization team and is proud to have passed 3 of 3 translation and editing examinations for the United Nations. Galina can be reached at galyapalyvian@gmail.com.

Никогда не забыть мне оцепеневшей пожилой женщины – пассажирки трамвая, прямо над головой которой один молодой человек с искренним огорчением так сообщил другому о поломке материнской платы компьютера: “Представь, столько работы, а тут еще мать сдохла, пришлось выбрасывать и новую покупать.”

[I will never forget the elderly woman, a passenger on a streetcar, who was petrified with horror – right above her head one genuinely upset young man told another one about his computer’s motherboard crash in the following manner: “Imagine, how much work that required, and on top of that my mother croaked; [I] had to throw [her/it] away and buy a new one.”

Source: <http://bezoshibok.ucoz.ru/publ/1-1-0-2>



MORE THAN WORDS

Michael Ishenko

Shostakovich: East and West

As I drove my wife to the train station the other day, our local classical music station was playing Shostakovich's *Festive Overture* (www.youtube.com/watch?v=U7o_3aBIeyU). Having listened for a while, we both agreed that, even though the overture was supposed to sound joyful, it didn't. Celebratory, triumphant, ceremonial—yes, but we could hear no true ring of joy or elation in the fanfare. In fact, there have been suggestions over the years that the overture surreptitiously celebrated the death of Stalin a year earlier, even though no one knows this for certain. As the overture reached its jubilant conclusion, the excited voice of the radio host proclaimed: "Wow! You know, every time I listen to the *Festive Overture*, I conjure up an image of a Hollywood logo, like MGM, filling up the huge silver screen."

Apparently, even such universal means of communications as music can translate into totally different cultural codes. Although we have lived in the United States for almost twenty years, neither my wife nor I could possibly associate the *Festive Overture* with a Hollywood logo or the silver screen. A military parade on Red Square in Moscow, perhaps? Yes, more likely. Similarly, the famous introduction to Richard Strauss's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* is widely associated by Russian listeners of my generation with the erudite Soviet-era television game «Что? Где? Когда?» (*What? Where? When?*) popular in the 1970s and 80s, whereas for most Americans it would most likely trigger visions of apes and monoliths from Stanley Kubrick's famous *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Another music-related example of cultural differences: a televised gala performance led by a latter-day Straussesque conductor in Vienna, Austria. This maestro, well-known for popularizing classical music, played another Shostakovich piece, "The Second Waltz" (from the so-called *Jazz Suite No. 2*) (www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmCnQDUSO4I&feature=related). This noble, nostalgic waltz was recognizable in the former Soviet Union and habitually featured as a musical theme, in particular, to invoke Russia's pre-revolutionary past. As such, many Russian listeners of my generation tend to associate it with Russia's "good old days" and all those Russians who were excommunicated, exiled, or executed by the Bolsheviks following the 1917 coup. The waltz appears to be well-liked in the West, too, especially after another Stanley Kubrick film, *Eyes Wide Shut* (his final). But when I saw the Viennese audience begin to swing beer mugs from side to side and sway Oktoberfest-style to the sound of one of the very few waltzes I truly like, I must admit I experienced a mild cultural shock.

Easy Does It

In the previous two issues of *SlavFile* (Fall 2010 and Winter 2011), "More Than Words" dealt mostly with cultural translation from Russian into English. I will now reverse the direction by going back to one of the very first translation assignments I received shortly after I found my first American job with a San Francisco translation agency almost twenty years ago. The assignment was a one-sentence job that read: "California raisins are delicious, healthy, and easy to eat." Those of my American colleagues who are native English speakers will probably be surprised to learn that the final three words to be translated happened to be quite a challenge. Indeed, what exactly does *easy to eat* mean? That raisins are soft and, as such, easy to chew? That raisins are small and, therefore, easy to swallow? That they are easily digested? Is there a way to say this in Russian? «Калифорнийский изюм вкусен, полезен для здоровья и... легко усваивается?» No, *to eat* ≠ *to digest*. «Изюм легко есть» sounds perfectly ridiculous in Russian. It just doesn't sound right! To be honest, I don't remember exactly how I translated *easy to eat*, but I do remember it wasn't very close to the original.

After that episode, I began to pay attention and, shortly thereafter, discovered some other uses of *easy* that sounded quite outlandish to me at the time. The radio host I mentioned above once said that a certain piece of music was *easy to listen to*. *Легкая музыка?* But *music that's easy to listen to* ≠ *light music*. Besides, the music the host was talking about was not *light* at all. A TV anchorman described some locally displayed Impressionist paintings as *colorful and easy to look at*. *Красочны и радуют глаз?* Again, *appeal to the eye* ≠ *easy to look at*. Perhaps, what both men meant was *легки в восприятии*? But this kind of assessment of a work of art would probably appear naïve or immature to an educated native Russian. (Again, I refer mainly to my own generation of Russians.) Yet this usage obviously sounds perfectly normal to Americans.

I suspect that what I had encountered was in fact a cultural rather than purely lexical challenge. *Easy* appears to be a kind of an iconic word in American culture. Just listen to TV commercials for a couple of days, and you will most likely agree with me. Could it be because life here is far from easy?

Feedback from my Winter Column: *Родина* Revisited

To my pleasant surprise, I received a relatively large amount of reader feedback on the subject of *родина*, which I touched upon just in passing as I questioned the use of the words *motherland* and *fatherland* in contemporary English (see my column in the Winter 2011 issue of *SlavFile*). According to one reader's response, neither the British nor

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Americans tend to think of their countries so much in terms of physical land as a place that is managed or governed in a certain way. So the source of American patriotism, she goes on to say, is the pride that Americans take in their government and high degree of freedom, rather than a patch of earth that is “theirs.” In other words, *родина* for Americans is “not so much about turf—it’s about a way of life.”

Intrigued by this somewhat unexpected theory, I wrote to one of my British correspondents about it, and his view of *родина* was predictably European: “of course we think of England and the UK as a physical place.” He agreed, however, with the point I made about *motherland* and *fatherland*: he would never use (or have used) these two words in reference to the UK. He says *fatherland* is a “pariah word” to him, “instantly conjuring up the Nazi regime and era and psyche.” As for *motherland*, my English friend claims that “no Brit expatriate refers to his country as the *motherland*, even though Britannia is obviously female. I don’t think they would say *homeland* either. If referring to it in a to-or-from kind of way we would just say *home* (and another Brit would understand from the context that you were referring to the country of the UK as a whole): ‘back home to England’ or ‘back home in England’ or ‘back in the UK.’ Non-use of an ‘emotional’ word such as *motherland* or *fatherland* has nothing to do with inability to relate emotionally to one’s country. I just think it is such an obvious natural instinctive emotional attachment that it does not need to be spoken in that way.”

Another reader used Google’s Books Ngram Viewer (<http://ngrams.googlelabs.com/>) to run a search for the usage of *motherland*, *fatherland*, and *homeland* in texts published between 1800 and 2000. The results were quite fascinating. She writes that “around 1820 *fatherland* started to be used far more frequently in English than the other two. Then, between 1900 and 1910, *homeland* started to rise in usage until, in 1935, the use of *homeland* surpassed *fatherland*.” She then arrives at an interesting conclusion: apparently, it is no “coincidence that the English-speaking world started to replace *fatherland* with *homeland* just before the First World War and basically stopped using *fatherland* just before the Second World War. By then, the word *fatherland* probably had taken on a very negative connotation and was offensive to the English ear.”

Google’s new tool aside, one of the most venerable and reliable sources for tracing English word history has always been and still remains the inimitable, complete *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, which points to the first record of *fatherland* in English as **1623**. (For comparison, according to *OED*, the first use of *motherland* dates back to **1711**; *homeland*, to **1670**.) Interestingly, one of the meanings of *fatherland* listed in *OED* (but *not* in Webster’s Third International Dictionary) is this:

b. Used to translate the Dutch or German *vaderland*, *vaterland*; **the Fatherland**: now usually = Germany.

Remarkable, isn’t it? Similarly, here’s how one of the meanings of *mother* is defined in *OED*:

d. Said of a country, city, etc., in relation to its natives; *spec.* in **Mother Russia**.

Another English phrase that comes to mind concerning the Russian *родина* is *old country*. I caught myself using it the other day. I think this phrase is very American, as most Americans trace their origins back to immigrants, and immigrants always have an “old country.” Somehow I find this expression the most suitable to use; it sounds fairly light-hearted and a little tongue-in-cheek to me and helps to avoid being overly emotional, pretentious, grandiloquent, or plain confusing (as in the case of *motherland* and *fatherland*).

I think every native Russian will agree that the term *родина* stands out as a sacrosanct notion in Russian culture. This doesn’t mean that Russians are more patriotic than any other nations, of course; but there seems to be something about *родина* that adds special intensity, fervor, and even vehemence at times. As one of my Russian friends said, Russians always speak about their country *с надрывом*. Patriotism is or can be juxtaposed with cosmopolitanism, which has different connotations in the two languages. A generally “positive” definition is given to the word *cosmopolitan* in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (1: having worldwide rather than limited or provincial scope or bearing; 2: having wide international sophistication; **WORLDLY**; 3: composed of persons, constituents, or elements from all or many parts of the world). This contrasts sharply with the outright “negative” definition given to *космополитизм* in one of the most authoritative Russian dictionaries of approximately the same period as the Merriam-Webster (early 1980s): «реакционная буржуазная идеология, проповедующая отказ от национальных традиций и культуры, патриотизма, отрицающая государственный и национальный суверенитет и выдвигающая идеи “мирового государства”, “мирового гражданства”» (“a reactionary bourgeois ideology advocating denial of national traditions and culture and patriotism, renouncing state and national sovereignty, and promoting the concepts of ‘world state’ and ‘world citizenship’”) (U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences Institute of the Russian Language’s *Dictionary of the Russian Language*, in 4 volumes, Moscow, Russky Yazyk, 1983). The phrase *безродный космополит* (“rootless cosmopolitan”), attributed to 19th century Russian literary critic V. Belinsky and widely used by Stalinist propaganda in the late 1940s as a reverse euphemism for Jewish intellectuals, who were targeted by yet another Stalinist purge—in particular, as part of the so-called “doctors’ plot” campaign—appears to remain in active use in present-day Russia even decades after Stalin’s death in 1953.

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MORE THAN WORDS *Continued from page 5*

In addition to the three associations I quoted from the *Comparative Russian Dictionary of Associations* in the Winter 2011 *SlavFile*, here are a few more that I believe are fairly indicative of what Russians tend to associate with their *родина*: *любимая, одна, СССР, большая, наша, патриот, родная, всегда одна, единственная, край родной, красивая, милая, много-много, могучая, самая лучшая, своя, святое, великая, где родился, мой дом, моя земля, моя страна, моя, Россия, навсегда, начало, она одна, опять, отечество, место рождения, отчизна, долг, мать, боль, это свято, хорошая, у меня она есть*, etc. Interestingly, the word *родина* has been used with new adjectives in Russian culture lately. The first relatively new attribute that comes to mind is the adjective *историческая*, used mainly as reference to Israel in relation to those Jews who began to flee from the former Soviet Union en masse in the 1970s. I checked out a Russian question-and-answer Internet forum, otvet.mail.ru, and found what I believe is a symptomatic question-and-answer exchange on the subject:

Question: Что такое «историческая родина»?
Какие еще родины бывают?
(What is “historical homeland”? What other homelands are there?)

Best Answer: Родина бывает только одна. Это там, где ты родился и вырос. Других Родин не бывает.
(A homeland can only be one: It is the place where you were born and grew up. There are no other homelands.)

There is another relatively new word combination with *родина*: *биологическая родина*, i.e., the place where one was born. I believe this phrase, too, is related to emigrants and emigration from Russia. As far as I can tell, it is built on the model of the expression *biological parent*, which, according to Google’s Books Ngram Viewer, has seen a sharp rise in usage since the 1960s. Conveniently, *биологическая родина* allows the speaker to suggest a shift in loyalties while continuing to maintain his or her ethnic or national identity. Here is what Russian and Ukrainian writer and journalist Vitaly Korotich, who was editor-in-chief of the popular *Ogonyok* magazine in Moscow during the *perestroika* era, wrote on the subject of *родина* recently (see www.bulvar.com.ua/arch/2010/51/4d11304c697e3/):

52nd ATA Annual Conference
Boston, Massachusetts
Marriott Copley Place
October 26-29, 2011

Среди множества писем, которые я получаю до сих пор, есть и с обвинениями в том, что я способствовал распаду Советской Родины, за которую авторы некоторых писем проливали кровь на войне. Помню, я ответил одному из них, что **Родина у каждого единственная и не может быть ни советской, ни антисоветской, ни первой, ни второй, ни новой, ни бывшей, ни исторической, ни биологической**, но на это замечание мой корреспондент обиделся еще больше.

(Among the piles of letters that I continue to receive, there are some containing accusations that I have contributed to the break-up of our Soviet Homeland, for which the authors of some of these letters shed their blood during the war. I remember answering to one of them that **every person has but one Homeland that cannot be either Soviet or anti-Soviet, first or second, new or former, historical or biological**, but my comment seemed to have offended my correspondent even more.)
[*Emphasis added.*]

* * *

So, even if we assume that we know each and every meaning and usage of the words *easy* or *homeland* in English and the words *легкий (простой)* or *родина* in Russian, do the harmonies produced by the variety of these meanings, nuances, and connotations strike chords that sound identical in both languages? It appears that we create words to denominate notions or phenomena in order to reflect the world we live in, but the words in turn create new worlds that differ significantly from one another. I plan to elaborate on this matter in one of the future *Slav-File* issues and certainly look forward to your thoughts and suggestions.

Michael Ishenko translates from English into Russian, from Russian into English, and from Ukrainian into English. He lives in the San Francisco Bay Area and can be reached at ishenko@aol.com.

Translation Forum Russia 2011

St. Petersburg, Russia.

September 23-25, 2011.

For further information go to <http://tconf.com/2010/11/translation-forum-russia-2011-announcement/> (English) or <http://tconference.ru/2010/11/translation-forum-russia-2011/> (Russian).



ADMINISTRIVIA

Becky Blackley, SLD Administrator

*Spring has sprung, the grass has riz.
I wonder where the flowers is.
The birds is on the wing—absurd!
In fact, the wings is on the bird.*

I always think of this little ditty with the arrival of each new spring.

I learned it as a child from my mother, and my sisters and I would run around the yard, chanting the poem with delight. It still makes me laugh. I hope you're all enjoying the new season. Now, on to the serious....

First of all, this year is an election year for our division. If you're interested in running for office, or if you want to nominate someone else, be sure to read the information on the election procedure starting on page 2 of this issue.

Also, don't forget about these two translators' gatherings coming up in the summer and fall. The first one is the International Federation of Translators (FIT) XIX World Congress, which will be hosted by the ATA in San Francisco, August 1–4, and will provide opportunities to network, mingle, and socialize with other translators and interpreters from all over the world. For more information, go to www.fit2011.org/index.htm (English) or www.translators-union.ru/fit/fitnews/2009/11/19/fitnews_51.html (Russian).

And if you're interested in traveling out of the country, you might consider attending Translation Forum Russia 2011, to be held in Saint Petersburg, September 23–25. Here you will be able to discuss current global translation and interpreting issues with freelancers, agencies, university professors, and software developers. I already know of several SLD members who will be attending this conference, and we hope to see many of you there. (Please let me know if you decide to attend, so I can have a list of all the SLD members at the conference.) For more information on Translation Forum Russia, go to <http://tconf.com/2010/11/translation-forum-russia-2011-announcement/> (English) or <http://tconference.ru/2010/11/translation-forum-russia-2011/> (Russian).

Finally, during the winter days when I was snowbound at home, I did some exploring in the iTunes App Store just for fun. I have some basic apps on my iPhone, but I decided to look for books and movies, hoping to find some in Russian. At first I was disappointed, when it seemed that iTunes didn't have any foreign language films. Then I decided to change the way I was searching, and instead of looking for "Russian films" in the "Movies" category, I ran a general search for "Фильмы." And lo and behold, I found a treasure trove of classic Russian films. I hadn't found them earlier because, for some reason, the Russian language films are under "Apps," not "Movies." If you work with other Slavic languages, try searching for the keywords in those languages, instead of in English. I bought a few films and put

dozens of others on my "wishlist" to buy later. Sadly, most of them mysteriously disappeared from both my "wishlist" and from iTunes. However, there are still quite a few great films to choose from.

I also found a lot of Russian-language books in the "Apps" category at amazing prices. There were the complete works of Chekhov for only \$0.99, as well as the complete works of Bulgakov, Dostoyevsky, Gogol, Zamyatin, Turgenyev, Ostrovsky, and works by Tolstoy, Gorky, Lermontov, Kuprin, Ilf and Petrov, Nekrasov, Akhmatova, Goncharov, Griboyedov, and Pushkin, including some audio books (with the accompanying written text). And I found more contemporary authors in the iBooks app. There you have to search for the author's name in Cyrillic to find books in Russian. Since I was reading Москва 2042 by Vladimir Voinovich at the time, I tried searching for "Войнович" and found the book was available. It was a lot of fun reading it on my iPad, because iBooks lets you bookmark pages, highlight passages, and add "post-it notes" to the text. That's great for marking new expressions to learn.

And, as often happens, while searching for one thing, I found something else—an app from iTunes U, called The Five-Minute Linguist, a series of audio recordings from the College of Charleston. There are 51 episodes, with topics that include the following:

1. How Do Babies Learn to Talk?
2. Why Should Americans Learn Languages?
3. Whatever Happened to Esperanto?
4. Is there a Language Crisis in America?
5. What Does It Take to Learn a Language Well?
6. How are Language and Thought Related?
7. What's the Difference Between Dialect and Language?
8. What Causes Foreign Accents?
9. Should We Be Studying Russian? (also Chinese? Arabic?)
10. How Good Is Machine Translation?
11. What Does It Take To Be an Interpreter?
12. What Does It Mean To Be Bilingual?
13. Can You Make a Living Loving Languages?

This is a fascinating series that will be of interest to translators, interpreters, and linguists alike. So, if you have an iPhone, an iPod, or an iPad, check out iTunes U. There's lots to be learned at this "university."

Enjoy the warm weather!

Becky



PODSTROCHNIK: TRANSLATION BETWEEN THE LINES (Part 2)

Susan Welsh

In the last, Winter, issue of SlavFile, we published part one of a review of Director Oleg Dorman's TV series, exploring the life of literary translator Lilianna

Lungina (1920-1998). This series won the Russian Academy of Televisions 2010 TEFI prize (the equivalent of an EMMY), which Dorman turned down. The first part of the review can be found [here](#) or in the Winter issue of SlavFile on the SLD page of the ATA website.

• Lilianna Zinovyevna and her mother were evacuated from Moscow to Naberezhnye Chelny at the outbreak of World War II. After a traumatic and impoverished life there, they return to Moscow, where, in the summer of 1944, Lilianna observes a column of German prisoners of war being marched from the Belorussian Station to Three Station Square, amid crowds of onlookers. She describes the scene:

First came the old generals in crumpled uniforms with the epaulets ripped off, wearing the caps of the Wehrmacht. They marched in the Prussian step, with their unshaven chins thrust forward, tucking first one hand and then the other into a pocket; it was cold, and fingers grew numb in the wind. And behind them, pell-mell, came a throng of those of lower rank. Some leaned on makeshift crutches, some had their arms in slings, covered with dirty bandages. Some were barefoot. Blackened faces, emaciated to the bone, sunken cheeks, dark circles under the eyes, ghastly looks.... With great difficulty, they dragged themselves along; some still tried to hold themselves erect, while those who lacked the strength were bent over from cold and pain.... It was a pitiful sight, but I told myself not to pity them, reminding myself that they had pitied no one.

What I saw next struck me more than anything else. Some old ladies, haggard old women, like black moths, approached the convoy of prisoners and held out pieces of bread. You can imagine how, during the war, there was not enough bread to go around, so the old ladies were giving a share of their own meager, minuscule rations. The soldiers drew back, not knowing what was expected of them. But the old ladies, crossing themselves, insisted that the men take some. And some younger women also held out cups of water. Despite the hatred of the Germans, the horror at what they had actually done, which was being inflated even more in the newspapers—but still, God knows what terrible things they had done—there were old ladies and not-so-old women who brought prisoners bread and water, who pitied them; that struck me, an impression that has stayed with me for a lifetime.

• Her discovery, toward the end of the war, that anti-Semitism was now becoming official state policy (in the Army) and was not merely the aberration of some deranged individuals. Both she and her husband, Sima, came from secular Jewish families, and their ethnic/religious origins had never previously been an issue. At first, she could not believe it: “It’s totally against Soviet ideology! The Nazis are the anti-Semites, and they are the ones we’re fighting!” But as the postwar period unfolded, the ugly truth became obvious to all, and the campaign against “rootless cosmopolitans” took off. When Lilia tries to get work as a translator, she learns that quotas for Jews are now in effect, and the company to which she applies has already met its limit. But since they had no Scandinavian translators there (compared to many French translators, for example), hiring her could be justified to the “higher-ups.”

• Her forced participation in “culture” enforcer Andrei Zhdanov’s 1946 persecution of poet Anna Akhmatova and satirist Mikhail Zoshchenko. All members of the IFLI Philological Faculty are summoned for a meeting to condemn the two as “alien influences.” Lilia knows that she can neither raise her hand in support of their ostracism, nor can she bring herself to defy the authorities. She arranges to leave the hall before the vote, telling those sitting around her that she has a horrendous migraine. “And even that cowardly act cost me enormous effort, that’s how afraid I was to leave the hall.”

• Her observations on Stalin’s death in 1953. Unlike many Soviet citizens—even, unbelievably, in the camps!—who weep and think the world will now surely come to an end (“I think it was mass hypnosis,” she says), Lilia and her husband are relieved that the dictator had died. But like everyone else, they want to see him lying in his coffin (“we felt the need to live this story through to the end”). They witness untold thousands, or was it millions, rushing toward the Hall of Columns where the body is lying in state, the crowd becoming a mob, pushing and shoving. The Lungins manage to extract themselves and go home, learning later that some 400 people were trampled to death. “Above and beyond the millions whom Stalin destroyed during his lifetime,” says Lilia, “even after his death he dragged so many people after him.”

• Her role in the emergence of the dissident movement, including her acquaintance with leading figures from Yevtushenko to Solzhenitsyn. Of particular interest is her description of the network in which she participated, which sent parcels to political prisoners:

It was very difficult to live in a camp without outside help, with no parcels coming in. And so an entire

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system was organized to collect personal items and money, and all the honest people around us, and we too, of course, participated. On certain dates, there were people who assembled it all and sent it off. And this also fostered trust. I, for example, collected a little money from academic circles: My uncle, Academician Frumkin, and his wife, my aunt Amalia Davydovna—we can talk about it now, since both have long been in their graves—gave money very willingly, but repeated a hundred times: No one must know where it came from. Only anonymously, only if nobody knew who gave it. And many more were like that. When the opportunity arose to do it, not directly themselves, but through others, it turned out that many were willing to help. Carefully, concealing their involvement.

- Her joyful collaboration with Astrid Lindgren in the translation of many of Lindgren’s delightful stories for children. Lindgren, says Lilia, is a person right out of her own books. She comes to visit in Moscow, and Sima and Lilia accompany her by trolley back to her hotel. Astrid gets out, and starts to dance along the street. “At 1:00 a.m. Saying good-bye to us. And it was so infectious that Sima and I could do nothing but reply, dancing some sort of pirouettes in the empty trolley.”

Izdatel'stvo Azbuka-Classika SPB
Lungina's translation of "Pippi on the Run."



The Film

The film itself is a monologue. Lilia, talking to the camera at age 77, seems to remember everything. Often in the narrative, when discussing something especially important, she says, “I’ve remembered this for my whole life.” But of course, she has remembered *all* of it for her whole life. She speaks apparently without notes, without prompting (and



yandex.ru/users/jekakuznetsova
<http://aitapress.ru/story/56810>

Oleg Dorman says that the first time he heard Lilianna Zinovyevna’s story, he felt like the first person to hear Homer’s Iliad, and determined to make sure others could hear it too.

without the “er ... um ... uh” that peppers most people’s speech, notes Parfenov in his foreword to the book).

It’s as though you had dropped by her apartment for a coffee, sat on her sofa, and stayed to hear her life story. That is more or less what happened to Dorman, who had been Semyon’s film student and got to know the family in 1983. They talked over breakfast, leaving both Semyon and Dorman to exclaim: This should be a film! Dorman reports that he went home feeling so moved by her story, that “it couldn’t just be told to me.” He felt like “the first person who had listened to Homer’s *Iliad*!” When filming eventually began, he says that his role was quite minimal (video of forum at Boston College, April 26, 2010, <http://frontrow.bc.edu/program/dorman/>).

The filming was done over five days at her home. The film was produced with virtually no money; the illustrious cameraman Vadim Yusov worked without pay, because he believed in Dorman and the project. Yusov points out that Dorman, to allow the lengthy monologue to “breathe,” assembled a rather astonishing array of photos and other artifacts from the lives of Lungina, her parents, her husband, and her friends. He also incorporates contemporary music and film footage of places she lived, studied, and worked. Some of this cinematographic material would mean more to a Russian than to a foreigner, but Lilianna’s narrative propels the story forward so vigorously that it was hard for this foreign reviewer to turn off the TV or put the book down. (In fact, cameraman Yusov watched all 15 episodes without interruption when the film was finally completed, so enthralled was he with his subject and the artistry of the production.)

The Future

What next for the director who has thrown down a gauntlet to both the TV establishment and Russia’s political elites? Time will tell. I interviewed Dorman after his refusal of the TEFI award, and he expressed his deep disgust with what he sees as the repressive environment and deliberately fostered cynicism of the past decade, which he calls a return of “Soviet power.”

I asked him what he would say to a young person, just starting a career in—let’s say—filmmaking, who is considering whether or not to emigrate. Dorman replied: “I have stayed only because to leave would be, for me personally, a kind of escape, a defeat. However, I am not at all sure that staying here is, in itself, a display of strength. I have told young people on more than one occasion: You should live where you can be the most productive.”

And what was Lilianna Zinovyevna’s prognosis for Russia’s future? Hopeful, but worried. Despite the irrepressible optimism that suffuses her monologue, she begins her tale on a somber note, as she describes her reason for undertaking this project:

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Izdatei'stvo Corpus/Lungin family
Semyon Lungin and Lilianna Lungina. She likens their marriage to the cameos made by a master craftsman of legend: He always made them in pairs. After being scattered about the world, those that came back to their "other half" were guaranteed happiness. "Sima and I had that feeling," she says.

"Generally it seems to me that now, at the end of the century, when there is such frightful mental confusion and when our country is hurtling along to who knows where—there is a feeling that it is hurtling, at constantly accelerating speed, toward some kind of abyss—perhaps it is really important and useful to preserve as many of the fragments as we can of the lives we lived, from the 20th century and even, through our relatives, from the 19th. Maybe the more people bear witness to this experience, the more we will be able to preserve from it, and in the end, combine these fragments into a more or less complete picture of what it means to live a life that is actually human, a life with a human face, as people say nowadays. And thus to give something, to help the 21st century in some way."

While there are no crystal balls in this business, it is certain that *Podstrochnik* is a contribution to this worthy goal. It should be circulated to a much larger audience, both in Russia and abroad.

The film, "Подстрочник. Лилианна Лунгина в многосерийном фильме, режиссер Олег Дорман" ("Podstrochnik. Lilianna Lungina in a multi-part film series directed by Oleg Dorman"), is only available online, such as [here](#). The author of this review, Susan Welsh, can be reached at welsh_business@verizon.net

CALL FOR OFFICER NOMINATIONS

Continued from page 2

To nominate a candidate for SLD office, you may contact the Nominating Committee listed above or download the Nomination Form from [the SLD Home Page](#). The Nomination Form may be mailed or faxed to ATA Headquarters:

Jamie Padula
 American Translators Association
 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590
 Alexandria, Virginia 22314
 Fax (703) 683-6122

SLD ELECTION SCHEDULE

Following the publication of the slate of candidates to the SLD membership, there will be a 45-day window of time in which written petitions from additional candidates will be accepted. Each candidate's petition to be added to the ballot must be accompanied by signatures of 15 SLD members in good standing.

In the case of an uncontested election, Division officers will be declared by acclamation.

In the case of a contested election, ballots will be sent to the membership no later than September 15, 2011.

July 2. Deadline for nomination of officers

July 7 (16 weeks before Annual Meeting of the division) Nominating Committee submits report to ATA Chapter and Division Relations Manager, along with a written acceptance letter from each candidate

July 21 (14 weeks before Annual Meeting of the division) Slate of candidates published to membership along with a written candidate statement from each candidate

September 4 (45 days after publication of slate) Deadline for receipt of petitions to add candidates to slate; each petition must include a written acceptance letter from the candidate to be added

September 15 (6 weeks before the Annual Meeting of the division). Ballots for opposed elections sent to membership by ATA Headquarters. Inspector of Elections and at least 1 assistant must be appointed by the division administrator

October 20 (7 days before the Annual Meeting of the division). Deadline for receipt of ballots by Inspector of Elections in care of ATA Headquarters

October 26-29 (day of annual meeting of the division at ATA's 52nd Annual Conference, Boston, Massachusetts) Inspector of Elections or delegate announces election results or officers are elected by acclamation

WHY GET INVOLVED?

We hope you will take this opportunity to consider stepping forward as a volunteer during the coming year, if not as a candidate for office, then perhaps as a mentor to a new member or a contributor to the Division newsletter. There are many ways to be involved, and volunteering is a wonderful way not only to share your experience but also to expand your network of contacts.

As always, your support of the Slavic Languages Division and ATA is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

2010 ATA CONFERENCE PRESENTATION REVIEW

LAUNCH CAMPAIGN!

Developing and Using Rocket and Space Terminology

Presentation by Alex Lane

Reviewed by Jen Guernsey

First, a confession: I have virtually no interest in rocket and space terminology. Why, then, the sensible reader will ask, did I go to this conference session? There are three reasons: one, I feel a certain loyalty to presenters from our division; two, I know Alex Lane to be an engaging speaker; and three, I had nothing more interesting to do.

Alex began the presentation with a detailed description of the Baikonur Cosmodrome—its location, layout, and features, including some nifty photos. Throughout the presentation, there were anecdotes and descriptions that gave a sense of what his work as an interpreter for NASA there entails. This aspect of the presentation brought to mind those Take Your Kid to Work Day events, where the kids are able to tour the workplace and get a feel for the work Mom or Dad does. This is not to imply that I felt infantilized, merely that it was interesting for me in that wide-eyed-kid sort of way.

After the Tour de Baikonur, Alex spent a good deal of time providing suggestions for tracking down terminology and solving other translation/interpretation conundrums. (Later in the presentation, when he discussed a number of confounding terms and phrases, it was easy to see why it would be critical to develop good terminology resources and research techniques.) His first suggestion was simply to be a good observer—to keep eyes and ears open for terminology and usage, and to carry around a notebook to jot things down.

The next suggested resources were people. The most obvious resource, Alex noted, is the other interpreters on site. He also suggested taking advantage of the subject matter experts at hand (something I wish I had more access to in my own work). But he emphasized that in either case, good



Alex Lane receives a sprinkling of holy water at the service held to bless the launch vehicle at the pad.

terminology research takes time and involves asking clarifying questions and verifying the information received. This advice is relevant not merely to an interpreter at Baikonur, but also to a translator like me working in her basement, where it is all too tempting to pull the first sensible-looking alternative out of Multitran and call it a day, rather than research further. He also noted that diplomacy plays an important role here; it serves no one to get into an argument about terminology. Alex emphasized the particular difficulties of getting good information out of subject matter experts, who may assume that you won't understand what they are talking about and therefore oversimplify their explanations; who might not do a good job of explaining things; or who might even be flat-out wrong despite their "expert" status.

Finally, Alex described several documents that are useful sources of terminology and usage. For his particular work at Baikonur, such documents are the Interface Control Document (basically, a project "bible" that defines performance requirements, physical/functional interfaces, and environmental interfaces), and the daily schedule. Of course, in my own work (pharmaceutical and medical translation), I won't be using an Interface Control Document. But it is a good reminder that with a little research, I can track down overarching documents—a country's general pharmaceutical regulations, for instance—that can serve as a source of terminology and usage. Again, Alex inserted the caveat that one should not use such resources blindly. As they say, trust but verify.

Communications: Procedures

- Procedure words
 - "loud and clear"
 - not just a turn of the phrase
 - signal strength (1-5) & readability (1-5)
 - "five by five"
 - equivalent to Russian "вас слышно хорошо"
- Spelling alphabets
 - Alfa, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo, ...
 - Анна, Борис, Василий, Григорий, Дмитрий, ...

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LAUNCH CAMPAIGN

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Upon reviewing Alex's PowerPoint slides for this article, I was surprised at just how much terminology he had managed to slip into the presentation. Somehow, he covered the terminology without being dull and plodding, as a recitation of terminology can often be. To the right you will find a table of most of the terms he cites; he has also posted the slides on his blog at <http://www.galexi.com/2010/11/07/ata-conference-presentation/>. These slides are highly recommended, even for those of us who are not space junkies. Many of the terms' equivalents in the other language are not at all obvious and are not direct translations; consider, for instance, "integrated launch vehicle," which is rendered in Russian as ракета космического назначения (a "rocket for space purposes"). In some cases, a single thing in one language has multiple possible names in another. Hence, the aforementioned importance of good terminology resources and research skills. Alex also spent some time distinguishing between terms that might be mistaken for one another: fuel/propellant, согласование/утверждение, hazard/danger/risk, safety/security.

Alex finished up his presentation by giving more insight into the actual feel of the interpreting work and the launch itself by describing some specifics of the radio communications that occur during a launch. For instance, he described how the operators define and report that signals are coming in loud and clear, and his PowerPoint featured some actual audio of both the Russian and English of the scripted conversations that are part of the pre-launch procedure. To top it off, he ran a short video of a rocket launch—the whole point of the entire exercise, after all.

In sum, despite my lack of particular interest in the subject matter, it turns out that I made a good choice by attending this presentation. Alex is still the engaging presenter I remember, so the presentation was fun and entertaining. But not only that, I gained a real feel for the work he and other linguists do at Baikonur and in this field in general, as well as some good hints for tracking down appropriate terminology.

Russian	English
Космическая головная часть (КГЧ)	Ascent unit Space head unit Orbital block Space nose cone
Разгонный блок	Upper stage Orbit-raising kit
Компоненты топлива	Propellant
Горючее	Fuel
Окислитель	Oxidizer
Согласование	Concurrence, agreement
Утверждение	Approval, endorsement
Опасность	Hazard, risk
Опасный	Hazardous
Безопасность	Safety OR security (depends on context)
Тележка	Cart OR dolly
Воздуховод	Air duct
Гаргрот	Wiring duct
Контрольно-проверочная аппаратура	Checkout & test equipment (COTE) Calibration & test equipment (CTE) Test & checkout equipment (TCE)
Технический комплекс (ТК)	Processing facility
Технологическая заправочная площадка (ТЗП) РБ «Бриз-М»	Breeze-M fueling area
Головной обтекатель (ГО)	Payload fairing (PLF)
Космический аппарат (КА)	Spacecraft (SC)
Переходная система (ПС)	Payload adapter (PLA)
Разгонный блок (РБ) «Бриз-М»	Breeze-M upper stage (US)
Ракета-носитель (РН)	Launch vehicle
Транспортно-установочный агрегат (ТУА)	Transporter-erector
Обход	Walkdown (in preparation for...)
Приемка	Acceptance (e.g., of a facility)
Набор готовности	Launch countdown
Инструктаж	Briefing (not <u>instruction</u>)
Выдача расхода	Dynamic propellant flow
Автономные операции	Standalone operations
Автономные испытания	Component-level tests
Ракета космического назначения (РКН)	Integrated launch vehicle
Ракетно-космический комплекс (РКК)	Launch system
Стартовой комплекс (СК)	Launch complex
Вывоз РКН на СК	Rollout
Выкатка	
Ферма обслуживания (ФО)	Mobile service tower (MST)
Стартовой стол	Launch pad
Подпольное помещение	Vault
Выносной командный пункт (ВКП)	Blockhouse ("the bunker")
Карточка оператора	Script
Выведение	Ascent
Включение	Burn
Опорная орбита	Parking orbit
Промежуточная орбита	Intermediate orbit
Переходная орбита	Transfer orbit
Целевая орбита	Target orbit
Отделение	Separation
Маневр увода	Collision-avoidance maneuver

Practical Challenges of Legal and Medical Interpreting

Presentation by Natalia Petrova (natapetrova@yahoo.com)

Reviewed by Vadim Khazin

Those of us involved in court interpretation in New Jersey know Natalia Petrova as one of our best Russian court interpreters. This presentation showed that the scope of her professional activities goes far beyond this; she works not only in New Jersey but also in Delaware and Pennsylvania and does medical as well as legal interpreting.

Her presentation, attended unfortunately by few Slavic Division members but many representatives from other language groups, consisted of two sections. First she described some general aspects of legal and medical interpreting (modes, settings, the role and rules of interpreter ethics). One important point Natalia emphasized in this section was that an interpreter's role is to be a facilitator of communication and only that, NOT a teacher, counselor, supervisor, editor, mind-reader, or hero(ine).

However, sometimes interpreters encounter tough situations where it is difficult to know what to do. All practitioners in both legal and medical areas have had their own experiences, and Natalia, of course, could not and did not provide comprehensive answers to how to handle them. Nevertheless, in the second section of her talk she provided quite a number of suggestions, describing "practical challenges" as she calls them, or case studies from both legal and medical environments based on her own vast experience. This section, judging by the reaction of the audience, was the most interesting and instructive. I will cite some examples for which everyone may have their own solution. However, Natalia's solutions are briefly provided.

First, legal. What to do if you are hired to interpret for a plaintiff claiming loss of hearing in one ear caused by his former partner's assault, but while talking to this plaintiff you do not notice any hearing problems?

Natalia's solution: I did nothing. The principle of impartiality and confidentiality does not allow me to express in any way my own opinion on the case. The plaintiff kept playing a half-deaf person; he even asked the judge to allow me to move over and stand closer to the side of his allegedly better hearing ear, and I did just that.

What to do if you are assigned to interpret for a criminal defendant's parents and in the middle of the trial, after a dispute between the parties about the accuracy of the translation of a lengthy e-mail correspondence between the defendant and a witness, the judge asks you to help in this matter?

Natalia's solution: Since the judge, pressed by the media and the parties to finalize this case after two split juries, badly wanted not to reschedule the proceedings by involving a third party for this task (as should be done by all codes), I agreed, as an exception, to do this after looking at the translation and finding it to be mostly satisfactory. The hearing was interrupted for only the 3 hours I needed to edit the translation to the satisfaction of both parties.

Now, medical. What to do if you are assigned as a Russian interpreter for a female patient who, as it appears, speaks Moldavian/Romanian, not Russian, but is accompanied by her Russian-speaking husband?

Natalia's solution: Again, it was against the rule to use the relay method of interpretation but, since the patient urgently needed surgery, I decided not to abandon the case, compelling them to look for a Romanian interpreter, so I interpreted for the husband, who then interpreted for the wife.

What to do if you are interpreting for a patient who seeks to have the state pay his hospital bill, claiming unemployment and lack of insurance or funds, but then, after the social worker leaves, confesses to you that in reality he has a construction business and plenty of money?

Natalia's solution: Guided by the principle of confidentiality, I did not reveal this information to anybody.

The final example, which amused the audience the most, deserves a word-for-word retelling:

"You are in the waiting room of a proctology surgeon's office. Your patient is a male approximately 70 years old. He looks very fit and tells you stories about marathons he has run and other sports he participates in. Then he starts reciting lyrical poetry to you and tells you how much he wishes he could recite it in English (he does not speak a word of English), and all of a sudden you feel his hand on your knee."

This, I think, was a really tough situation that could not have happened to a male interpreter but only to an attractive lady, such as Natalia. And indeed, how should or could she react to such unexpected and unwarranted behavior, especially as there was no other free seat she could take and she could not leave the room?

Natalia's solution: I explained to him harshly that his harassing behavior was inadmissible, and threatened that if I were to complain he would end up at the security office. He was frightened and apologized. Later a chair was provided for me on the opposite side of the reception counter.

By the way, Natalia's practice has been to protect herself in unusual situations, when the rules had to be broken, by requesting that an appropriate statement be provided and signed by on-site officials.

In conclusion, Natalia Petrova should be commended for putting some of her own professional experiences under a microscope for us, an exercise that was quite useful, as well as entertaining, to the interpreters who attended her session.

Dr. Vadim Khazin (vkhazin@gmail.com) works as a freelance translator and interpreter (mainly English↔Russian and English↔Ukrainian) and has a number of certifications in both areas. He is an ATA certification test grader for both English-Russian and English-Ukrainian, and is the Chair of the latter group.

THE UNFORTUNATE MUTILATION OF HARRY POTTER

by Jen Guernsey



Recently, I gave a presentation to my son's sixth-grade class on translating, interpreting, and the Russian language. As part of the presentation, I wanted to introduce the kids to the concept of machine translation and to the notion that translation entails

much more than a straightforward, one-on-one correspondence of words. To that end, I used a Russian translation of Harry Potter, which I had obtained to pass around to the kids, and I ran the first two paragraphs through Google Translate a couple of times to demonstrate the mangled results. Mangled they were, as you can see below, but honestly Google Translate did a better job than I had expected.

The entire process of translating and re-translating reminds me of a video I saw recently in which 500 people in sequence were asked to trace a line that had been drawn. As you can see from the video, which you can access [here](#), after 500 iterations, the line bore absolutely no resemblance to the original. I don't have the patience to run a translation through 500 iterations of Google Translate, but I suspect that the results would be similarly distorted. Enjoy.

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PUBLISHED RUSSIAN TRANSLATION

Мистер и миссис Дурслъ проживали в доме номер четыре по Тисовой улице и всегда с гордостью заявляли, что они, слава богу, абсолютно нормальные люди. Уж от кого-кого, а от них никак нельзя было ожидать, чтобы они попали в какую-нибудь странную или загадочную ситуацию. Мистер и миссис Дурслъ весьма неодобрительно относились к любым странностям, загадкам и прочей ерунде.

Мистер Дурслъ возглавлял фирму под названием «Граннингс», которая специализировалась на производстве дрелей. Это был полный мужчина с очень пышными усами и очень короткой шеей. Что же касается миссис Дурслъ, она была тощей блондинкой с шеей почти вдвое длиннее, чем положено при ее росте. Однако этот недостаток пришелся ей весьма кстати, поскольку большую часть времени миссис Дурслъ следила за соседями и подслушивала их разговоры. А с такой шеей, как у нее, было очень удобно заглядывать за чужие заборы. У мистера и миссис Дурслъ был маленький сын по имени Дадли, и, по их мнению, он был самым чудесным ребенком на свете.

ORIGINAL ENGLISH

Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much. They were the last people you'd expect to be involved in anything strange or mysterious, because they just didn't hold with such nonsense.

Mr. Dursley was the director of a firm called Grunnings, which made drills. He was a big, beefy man with hardly any neck, although he did have a very large mustache. Mrs. Dursley was thin and blonde and had nearly twice the usual amount of neck, which came in very useful as she spent so much of her time craning over garden fences, spying on the neighbors. The Dursleys had a small son called Dudley and in their opinion there was no finer boy anywhere.

MY TRANSLATION OF THE RUSSIAN

Mr. and Mrs. Dursley lived at number four, Yew Street, and always stated with pride that they, thank God, were absolutely normal people. You would never expect them, of all people, to end up in any sort of strange or mysterious situation. Mr. and Mrs. Dursley were quite unapproving of any strangeness, mysteriousness, or other nonsense.

Mr. Dursley was the head of a company called Grunnings, which specialized in the manufacture of drills. He was a plump man with a very full mustache and a very short neck. Regarding Mrs. Dursley, she was a gaunt blonde with a neck almost twice as long as was appropriate for her height. However, this deficiency suited her quite well, since Mrs. Dursley spent a large portion of her time keeping an eye on the neighbors and listening in on their conversations. And with such a neck as hers, it was very convenient to look over others' fences. Mr. and Mrs. Dursley had a small son named Dudley, and in their opinion, he was the most marvelous child in the world.

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**ONCE THROUGH GOOGLE TRANSLATE
(PUBLISHED RUSSIAN > ENGLISH)**

Mr. and Mrs. Dursley were living at number four on Yew Street and is always proud to say that they, thankfully, completely normal people. Much from someone who, and from them it was impossible to expect them to fall into some strange or mysterious situation. Mr. and Mrs. Dursley disapprovingly refers to any odds, riddles and stuff.

Mr Dursley was headed by a company called Gran-nings, which specialized in the production of drills. It was a stout man with a mustache and a very short neck. As for Mrs. Dursley, she was a skinny blonde with a neck almost twice as long than normal for her height. However, the lack of it came in handy, since most of the time Mrs. Dursley watched the neighbors and listened to their conversations. And with such a neck as she was very convenient to look for other people's fences. Do Mr. and Mrs. Dursley was a little son called Dudley and in their opinion, he was the most wonderful child in the world.

**TWICE THROUGH GOOGLE TRANSLATE
(PUBLISHED RUSSIAN > ENGLISH > RUSSIAN > ENGLISH)**

Mr. and Mrs. Dursley had lived at number four on Yew Street and is always proud to say that they are, fortunately, quite normal people. Much of who and from them it was impossible to expect them to fall into a strange or mysterious situation. Mr. and Mrs. Dursley disapprovingly refers to any chances, puzzles and more.

Mr Dursley was headed by a company called Gran-nings, which specializes in the manufacture of drills. It was a fat man with a mustache and a very short neck. As for Mrs. Dursley, she was a blonde with a skinny neck, almost two times longer than normal for her height. Nevertheless, its absence is very useful, since most of the time, Mrs. Dursley looked neighbors and listened to their conversations. And with such a neck as she was very convenient to seek the protections of other people. Do Mr. and Mrs. Dursley was a little son called Dudley and in their opinion, he had the most wonderful child in the world.

**ATTENTION: Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Slovene,
Macedonian and Bulgarian translators and interpreters**

Contributions sought for a South Slavic focus issue

The summer issue of SlavFile will be a South Slavic focus issue. We are therefore actively looking for contributors and would like to encourage all South Slavic translators and interpreters interested in submitting something to contact us. Articles on any aspect of translation or interpretation likely to be of interest to other South Slavic translators, or, better yet, SLD members in general, are welcome, as are glossaries and dictionary, book and film reviews. The deadline for submissions is early June, but please contact us as soon as possible and let us know what you would like to write. We already have four articles scheduled* but would love to have one or two more. If you cannot make this deadline, but would like to contribute a South Slavic article to a later issue, we would be delighted to have you do so.

*Articles scheduled to appear in our South Slavic focus Summer issue:

“Bulgarian Translation and Interpreting in the U.S.” by Emilia Balke

“Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian Translation Miscellanea” by Stephen M. Dickey

“Contemporary Slovenian Poetry in Translation” by Martha Kosir

“Special Education Terminology in English and Bosnian: Part Two”

by Janja Pavetić-Dickey

Contact Janja at jpdickey@sunflower.com



Мы едем, едем, едем в далёкие края

We go, go, go to faraway lands
(from “A Song of Friends” by Sergei Mikhalkov)

Yuliya Baldwin

Of course, tourism has been around for centuries, but recently a passion for tourism seems to have taken hold of Russia, especially **массовый туризм** (mass tourism). And today, wherever you're heading for your vaca-

tion, you are bound to come across Russians. A nation that was once banned from travelling abroad is now excitedly staking its claim across the world. This last summer I was genuinely impressed by how many of my Russian friends and acquaintances with comparatively moderate incomes have already travelled to France, Germany, Croatia, Spain, India, Turkey, Israel, Cuba, Brazil, and Egypt (before the Facebook revolution), to name a few destinations. Honestly, with a meager Bahamas' cruise and a trip to Florida that year, I felt like a recluse who has suddenly found herself among vibrant cosmopolitans.

Everything about the tourist industry in Russia has changed—the numbers of Russian travelers, the range and variety of services, the standards and expectations and, no doubt, the vernacular facilitating and describing it, which is the subject of this article.

Let's start with **виды туризма** (types of tourism) as they are listed by **Российский союз туристической индустрии** (the Russian Union of the Tourist Industry). The agency offers its clients:

- автобусные туры** bus tours
- автомобильный туризм** car tours, car tourism
- горнолыжный туризм** ski tourism
- деловой туризм** business tourism
- детский туризм** children's tourism
- железнодорожные туры** rail tourism, railroad tours
- круизы** cruises
- культурно-познавательный туризм** cultural tourism
- лечебно-оздоровительный туризм** medical tourism, medical travel, health tourism
- образовательный туризм** educational tourism, student exchange programs
- пляжные туры** beach tours
- приключенческий туризм** adventure tourism
- экстремальный туризм** extreme tourism

- космический туризм** space tourism
- рекламный тур** sales promotion tourism
- религиозный туризм** religious tourism
- свадебный туризм** honeymoon tours
- сельский туризм (агротуризм)** rural tourism, agritourism
- событийный туризм** event tourism
- спортивная охота и рыбалка** hunting and fishing tourism
- туры для лиц старшего возраста** senior tourism
- экологический туризм** ecotourism
- яхтенный туризм** yachting tourism, nautical tourism
- VIP-туризм** VIP-tourism

Most of the above tourist escapades are self-explanatory and “old-fashioned.” A few, no doubt, are quite novel and exotic. You can find descriptive sketches of those on the pages of the modern “bible of knowledge,” aka Wikipedia. Just as an example, [medical tourism](#) is defined there as “travelling across international borders to obtain health care.” To obtain better or just decent medical treatment, Russians travel to Germany, England, Switzerland and even India. Yet by far the most popular healthcare destination is Israel. This country's medical clinics offer a full range of high quality services from plastic surgery, *in vitro* fertilization, coronary artery bypass to cancer treatment, etc., and boast of presenting little or no linguistic issues to Russian speakers since they have medical staff fluent in that language. Another special interest group of tourists—**агротуристы** (agritourists)—is usually trying to reunite with nature and enjoy a few days or even months of peaceful, serene country life in places not ruined by civilization. Various tourist companies offer **дома в деревне** (country homes) or **избы** (log cabins), often with **баня** (sauna), for rent, and tourists can choose from a wide array of activities that include picking mushrooms and berries in the woods, fruits and vegetables in the gardens, milking goats or cows, riding horses, bee-keeping, planting potatoes, or scything and baling hay.

Browsing various Russian websites and reading articles pertaining to the topic, I came across specific “tourist” vocabulary used quite habitually and overwhelmingly when talking about traveling, advertising tours, or blogging about personal traveling experiences. I'd like to share some of the most prevalent terms, some of which weren't so well known to me:

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авиарейс (<i>air</i>) flight	каюта cabin
авиатариф airfare	конгресс тур convention/conference/congress
английский завтрак (полный завтрак) English breakfast (full breakfast)	континентальный завтрак continental breakfast
аннуляция (отмена поездки) cancellation	круиз cruise
багажная квитанция (<i>baggage</i>) claim check	купе sleeping car, sleeper (<i>train car</i>)
береговое обслуживание (во время круиза) shore excursions and services	курортный сбор hotel/lodge occupancy tax (<i>local tax</i>)
бронирование отеля booking a hotel	низкий сезон low season
визовая поддержка visa support	оплата по факту оказания услуг pay as you go
время заселения check-in time	организованный туризм organized tour/tourism
все включено all-inclusive	основные гостиничные услуги hotel services and amenities
высокий сезон high season	открытые цены гостиницы rack rate
гид tour guide	первый класс first class
горящий тур last minute deal, hot deal	перевес багажа baggage overweight
гостиничный каталог hotel directory	плацкарта economy class (<i>train car</i>), couchette car
день заезда check-in date	поезд дальнего следования long-distance train
день отъезда check-out date	полный пансион full board (breakfast + lunch + dinner)
дорожный чек travelers check	полупансион half board (breakfast + lunch or breakfast + dinner)
зеленый коридор green channel	получение багажа baggage claim
индивидуальный туризм private tour/tourism	порт захода port of call
капсульный отель capsule hotel	порт отправления/прибытия cruise home port
категория гостиницы number of stars the hotel has (EU), hotel type (US)	портовый сбор port fees

Among novelties to Russia, adopted from the western tourist industry, the concept of «**все включено**» (all-inclusive) has become one of the most beloved and popular models with Russian middle class tourists. «**Все включено**» hotels that have grown up like mushrooms in Egypt and Turkey have literally resulted in the bankruptcy of many small businesses in tourist areas in these countries because Russian tourists never spend a cent off the hotel premises, not even to buy a cup of a real Turkish coffee or Egyptian tea. The DailyMail.co.uk, discussing objectionable table manners of Russian tourists, lists the fact that “they ate ‘almost everything’ [available] at all-inclusive dinners – even taking doggie bags to stock up on grub.” Betting on this traditional love for «**халява**» (freebies), profit-oriented **маркетологи** (marketing experts) enhanced the concept to what is called «**супер все включено**» (**super all-inclusive**) and «**ультра все включено**» (**ultra all-inclusive**). No doubt, you need to be a staunch Russian to delight in and value whatever difference, even theoretical, there might be between these two and the previous all inclusive.

Truly, the marvels of the modern tourism industry know no bounds, and neither do the wonders of airlines carrying us around the world “with breakfast in Moscow, dinner in New York and our luggage in Buenos Aires” as the Russian joke has it – «**чудеса авиации: завтрак в Москве, обед – в Нью-Йорке, а багаж – в Буэнос-Айресе!**»

Счастливого пути!

Have a good trip!

Ukrainian into English Certification

We continue making progress in establishing Ukrainian into English as a new language combination for ATA certification. Our list of translators interested in becoming certified and the application to establish the Ukrainian into English certification have been officially approved by the ATA Certification Committee.

We are looking for one or two more initial exam graders. If you feel that you are qualified to be a grader and can submit three professional references confirming that you are a skilled Ukrainian into English translator, please contact Alex Svirsky at arsvirsky@gmail.com or call him at 720-276-8724. Note that graders are paid for their work and qualify for a 20% discount on the fee when they themselves subsequently take the exam. They are also required to undergo some training.

SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone

March 8. This is the first year I can remember that none of my friends or colleagues born in the Soviet Union has “congratulated” me on International Woman’s Day. I do not feel bad about the actual omission; I myself only remembered when my bank’s Ethiopian-born manager noted the holiday on being asked the date. However, I hope it is the holiday and not I that is losing its popularity with this group.

After editing my column for the last issue of *SlavFile*, Nora Favorov wrote me, “Lite is perfectly entertaining but is missing your usual... cultural *моменты* harvested from the media.” Well, as I keep telling the Russian-speaking senior citizens I interpret for at a weekly free food distribution after they complain (usually about the paucity of bread and goroshek [canned peas]), we can only give you what we ourselves are given. Last time there were simply no equivalents of goroshek to be found in the media I peruse. This time I am happy to report that canned peas were there to be picked and I hasten to pass them on to you, regardless of their “Use By” date.

March 2, From a *Washington Post* article about sign language interpreters, in a boxed featured quote. “Sign language is not an exact science, a one-plus-one equals. The same sentence, given to three different interpreters, might result in three different interpretations.” Am I wrong that this implies that “ordinary” interpretation is a “one-plus-one equals” situation and that different interpreters’ renditions will be identical? Is it possible that outsiders will never learn the nature of our skill (or in this case perhaps I should say art)?

Now to the Slavic articles.

February 22. The *Washington Post*, among many other media, reported on the opening of an exhibit at the Russian National Archives celebrating the lives, achievements and friendship of two great liberators, Alexander II of Russia and Abraham Lincoln. The March 3 sesquicentennial of Alexander’s liberation of 20 million serfs took place this year less than three weeks after the 202nd anniversary of Lincoln’s birth. At the gala opening, James Symington, an 83-year-old former congressman from Missouri and great-grandson of Lincoln’s personal secretary, sang “Я помню чудное мгновение” to celebrate the two remarkable men. In front of the building on Bolshaya Pirogovskaya St. is a larger-than-life statute of the two liberators shaking hands (a symbolic reflection of the documented friendly relations between them). This is certainly a worthy theme for a museum exhibit and one that, to my knowledge, has never been presented at a U.S. museum. However, the rivalry of past years is not completely dead, even here. Not content with the two-year primacy of the Russian liberation, the sculptor, Alexander Burganov, made the Tsar, who, while tall, was three inches shorter than the U.S. President, ap-

pear the same height, or even, judging from the photo, a shade taller.

February 3. The *Post* news section gave almost a page to a story about a production in Kamchatka of a play based on Cinderella, which contained two jokes that evidently offended an aide to the local governor and that the troupe refused to censor on subsequent nights. I found these jokes to be mild to the point of being unfunny—a reference to the disreputable state of the theater and to the fact that the local government had agreed to set its clocks one hour closer to Moscow time for the convenience of the central hierarchy. The most revolutionary aspect of the production was that the young woman playing the romantic lead bordered on obese. Although I thought the whole story was a tempest in a teapot (or glass slipper), the refusal to bow to censorship evidently generated so much interest that the governor felt compelled to give the troupe extra money and the principals promotions to assuage public opinion. The only part of the whole ho-hum story that shocked me was the following phrase “Zolushka [based on the Russian word зола meaning ashes: LRS], as Russians know her, might be translated as “Goldie” [evident confusion with the Russian word золото meaning gold: LRS].” I know that times are tough for newspapers, but why send a reporter to Kamchatka who doesn’t understand Russian well enough to know the difference between ashes and gold, and, furthermore, doesn’t know enough to consult a dictionary or ask virtually any native speaker? And isn’t there any staff member reading stories from Russia who has a decent understanding of the language?

February 1. Now here’s one I bet most of you missed. I found it on the *Post*’s children’s page. “Poland’s state-run National Remembrance Institute has created [a] new game—called Kolejka, which means line—to help young Poles understand the hardships of life under communism... Players try to buy basic goods but food supplies run out before they reach the counter. Players needing the shop’s last pair of shoes can get edged out by someone holding a ...”friend in government” card.

Now a quote from the introduction to former Greiss lecturer Mickey Berdy’s new book. *The Russian Word’s Worth*. Moscow, 2010: Glas.

Maybe we foreign speakers of Russian are closet masochists, who secretly enjoy our own painful struggle to express ourselves in this language? Nah.

For some reason we just fell in love with the sound of the language or its complicated grammar, or the literature written in it, or the culture expressed through it, or



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SLAVFILE LITE

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perhaps even a significant other whose native language it was. And so we struggle on.

I will be reviewing this book in *SlavFile* just as soon as it again becomes generally available in the U.S. I would consider it cruel to whet readers' appetites without there being a chance of your being able to satisfy it.

In my last column I promised that I would briefly review some of the dictionaries I have bought lately. These are all what might be called off-beat; certainly not highly likely to be just the thing needed to complete a difficult and important translation assignment. This part of the column, indeed, might be called I Buy Dictionaries So You Don't Have To. However, I am glad to have them, their interest and amusement value is well worth their low, or at least relatively low, cost.

Prices given include the 30% discount offered to SLD members by Russia-on-line.com

Сеничкина, Е. П. Словарь эвфемизмов русского языка. (Dictionary of Euphemisms in Russian) Флинта, 2008, 464 с. \$27.97. I have noticed that dictionary reviews frequently mention the physical qualities of the book. This one is printed on acceptable paper in readable print with an apparently sturdy hard cover. The cover, however, is upside down; or else the cover is right side up and the inside of the book is upside down. It's difficult to say which, but the orientations do not match. To me this adds to the charm.

This monolingual dictionary is great fun to browse. Definitions contain euphemistic meanings and usage examples and notes, though not always the literal meaning of the euphemism or even the term it stands in for. For example, the definition of *блин* (literally a pancake but used as an exclamatory obscenity as a euphemism for *блядь*) translates as follows "exclamation or introductory word used in place of an obscene curse word." One has to go to the entry for *бл**ь* to find out that the basic taboo meaning is *whore*. Never is the actual Russian obscenity given. This seems unnecessary delicacy, but on the other hand probably keeps the book from being purloined by adolescents in search of "dirty words."

In the introduction the lexicographer proudly states that this volume is the first dictionary of euphemisms for Russian, although it was beaten out for primacy in the Slavic world by an analogous Polish work. This book gains its considerable heft through the inclusion of more types of words than I would consider are covered by a strict definition of *euphemism*. In general, most of these inclusions make the dictionary more entertaining to the casual browser and certainly could be justified on the basis of a broader definition. I would, however, argue with the inclusion of words (and by implication their identification as euphemisms) that are simply the Latinate medical or otherwise technical names for terms that have a vernacular name or

description, for example, *геморагия* (кровотечение), French or, lately, English borrowings originally used as linguistic affectations that to a greater or lesser degree have become part of the language despite Russian (non-taboo) equivalents, for example, *парвеню* for *выскачка*, *бизнесмен* for *предприниматель* or *коммерсант*. I do not think usages in which people decline to specify, e.g., saying "gas" instead of "intestinal gas," or "disease" instead of "venereal disease,"

need be listed as euphemisms. And the use of the phonetic Russian equivalent of the English killer to mean a hired assassin, while certainly worthy of note somewhere, is not a euphemism. I also consider 50 pages listing words where a positive adjective or derived noun or verb is negated and used in place of the corresponding negative adjective (e.g. *нехороший* for *плохой*) are rather a waste of paper. However all these are just quibbles.

Other categories of entries, all of which seem to have a legitimate claim to inclusion as euphemisms and also provide true informational and/or entertainment value, included in this volume are:

1. What I would call true euphemisms, replacements for taboo words of the *блин* type.
2. Soviet euphemisms putting a positive spin on all kinds of negative phenomena, both euphemisms shared with other governments and those particular to the Soviet system, e.g., *социальная профилактика* for arrest, from Stalin's time, *исполнять интернациональный долг* for armed intervention in another nation, or *пятый пункт* (fifth line, a reference to the line of the Soviet internal passport indicating "nationality") as a reference to being Jewish.
3. Euphemisms of the past, from a linguistically more elegant and perhaps more sycophantic time. For example, evidently in the nineteenth century Moscow barbers used to refer to customer's bald spots as *божий дар* (literally, a gift from God).
4. Flowery classical allusions that even in past centuries are unlikely to have been meant anything but ironically, e.g., *поклонник Бахуса* for a heavy drinker or drunk.

Although I cannot really say whether this dictionary contains a substantial number of terms and definitions likely to be useful to a translator with an already well-stocked library, I would highly recommend it to language enthusiasts who like to browse. Please note though that I cannot guarantee you will be lucky enough to get another copy with a uniquely oriented cover.



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SLAVFILE LITE

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Сверчиньская, Д. и Сверчиньский, А. Словарь пословиц на 8 языках. (Dictionary of Proverbs in Eight Languages) -АСТП, 2008, 416 с. \$6.97.

The eight languages are Russian, English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Polish and Latin. The book provides no definitions or explanation, just a list of eight proverbs considered equivalent. The first language according to which the proverbs are alphabetized is Russian, and fairly often two or even three Russian proverbs with meanings considered to be equivalent are given. There is only one proverb per entry in each of the other languages. It is worth noting that this book was originally written in Polish, and the Russian version was evidently created by changing which language was first, alphabetizing according to Russian rather than Polish theme words and adding additional Russian equivalent proverbs. This has created two problems that I see. The first is of trivial importance given the other mysteries in many entries: the English entry appears to have been derived directly from the Polish original rather than the Russian and can seem a surprising choice if this is not remembered. For example, the English equivalent of *Как собаке пятая нога* (Lit. translation: *Like a fifth leg to a dog.*) is given as *A blind man has no need of a looking-glass.* (Polish is the analog of the English: *Nic ślepemu po zwericadle.*) The second problem is much more serious. The original Polish book laudably contained an index in all eight languages with words referenced to an entry number. When the lead language was changed, the entries were re-alphabetized and renumbered. Unfortunately, all the indexes except the Russian one were left as before so they are impossible to use. As they say: Duh!

Although I would not say this book is of no value whatsoever, I would certainly advise approaching its phrasing of proverbs and equivalences equipped with a full salt shaker, rather than using them unverified in a translation. Every

proverb you find in it that is not very familiar to you should be checked on the Internet for wording and even existence.

I performed an informal survey of entries 265-330 (the letters K and L) and marked what I felt were 14 (22%) clear errors in the English and/or Russian entries. Errors were of the following types.

1. Failure to give the exact English equivalent of a Russian proverb, on the (incorrect) grounds that it is not in common use, and substitution of a different, less equivalent phrase. Russian: *Что посеешь то и пожнешь.* (Literal translation: *As you sow, so shall you reap.*) English (and all other languages): *Measure for measure.*
2. Where an English equivalent is not in common use, strange-sounding, incorrect or archaic English (evidently based on old English translations of European proverbs) is used to translate proverbs, obfuscating their meaning. Russian: *Самый короткий путь – знакомый.* (Lit. trans: *The shortest route is the one you know.*) English: *He that leaves the highway to cut short, commonly goes about.*
3. Citation of two Russian proverbs as approximately equivalent without explanation of the significant differences between them. Russian: *Самый короткий путь – знакомый.* (Lit. trans: *The shortest route is the one you know.*) and *Старый друг лучше новых двух.* (Lit. trans.: *An old friend is better than two new ones.*)
4. Citation of old English proverbs no longer in use when there exists a much better equivalent in common modern English: *Лучше лаской, чем таской.* (Lit. trans: *A caress is better than a beating.*) English: *Nothing violent is permanent.* Suggested better English equivalent: *You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.*
5. Literal translation of a Russian proverb into English suggesting a very similar proverb with a different meaning. Russian: *Кровь людская не вода.* (Lit. trans.: *Human blood is not water, meaning be very careful about spilling human blood.*) English: *Blood is not water.* Suggested English: *Blood is thicker than water;* meaning one's blood relations have the highest claim on one's loyalties.
6. Use of much less common phrasing of English proverb, making it sound like a translation when a simple Internet search would turn up the most used equivalent. Russian: *Кошка всегда на четыре лапы падает.* (Lit. trans: *A cat always falls on its four paws.*) English: *A cat falls on its legs* (10 Internet hits). Suggested English version: *Cats always land on their feet* (105 million Internet hits)
7. Combinations of more than one of these errors.
8. Similar errors in other languages.

In short: caveat emptor! Especially if the emptor is a translator.



IDIOM SAVANTS: MONEY TALKS, Part II

Vladimir Kovner and Lydia Stone

This issue's column continues our listing of "money idioms," and includes those English idiomatic usages that do not have even approximate Russian cash equivalents. We found so many of these that we deferred them from the last to the current issue to avoid making what turned out to be our longest issue ever even longer. In general we find that the list of English idioms on a given theme is most often longer, even considerably longer than the Russian list. We would be most grateful to anyone who suggests a theme (definable by one or a limited number of related key words) that would produce a longer Russian list. All suggestions will be published and, if at all possible, turned into a column. In addition, we invite other suggestions of all kinds as well as offers to supplement our lists (especially, with entries in another Slavic language) or to write a guest column. Russian phrases in bold are idioms.



том, как прошел рабочий день, он отвечал одно и то же: "Поработал – положил еще денежек в карман". (В России работа не обязательно ассоциируется с заработком: "Солдат спит, служба идет".)

ENGLISH MONEY IDIOMS WITH NO RUSSIAN CASH EQUIVALENTS

- 1. A fool and his money are soon parted.** It is foolish to spend money too quickly and/or someone who does so is a fool. *Has he spent his severance pay already? Well you know what they say about a fool and his money.* (посл.) **У дурака в горсти – дыра;** дурак быстро упускает свои возможности; у дурака деньги не задерживаются. *Он уже потратил свое выходное пособие? Вы же знаете, что говорят о дураках и их деньгах.*
- 2. A penny for your thoughts.** Remark to someone who appears lost in thought, as a way to get a conversation going. *After he sat in silence for at least 20 minutes, I could think of nothing better to say than, "A penny for your thoughts."* Готов заплатить, чтоб узнать, о чем ты задумался. (Очень часто эту фразу переводят коротко: "О чем ты думаешь/ задумался?") *После того, как он просидел молча почти 20 минут, мне ничего не оставалось, как спросить: "О чем ты думаешь"?*
- 3. A run for one's money.** Worthy competition, or a worthwhile experience. *"Well," he said graciously after winning the game, "you certainly gave me a run for my money."* Составить серьезную конкуренцию; заставить противника серьезно/ хорошо поработать, чтобы стать победителем. *"Ну, что ж,- сказал он благосклонно после выигрыша: ты оказался достойным соперником".*
- 4. Another day, another dollar.** A wry comment on the monotony of going to work every day and the financial necessity of doing so. Frequently said at the beginning or end of a workday. *His constant response to questions about his workday was "another day, another dollar."* День поработал – положил еще денежек в карман. Ироническое замечание о монотонности каждодневной работы и о финансовой необходимости этого. *На вопрос о*
- 5. Bet my bottom dollar, I would.** Phrase used to emphasize that one is absolutely sure of something. *I would bet my bottom dollar that the plumber doesn't show up until next week.* **Бьюсь об заклад; даю голову на отсечение;** держу пари. Выражение абсолютной уверенности в чем-либо. *Я готов биться об заклад, что водопроводчик появится не раньше следующей недели.*
- 6. Day late and a dollar short.** Description of an action that was too late and furthermore ineffective. *The steps the mayor undertook were a day late and a dollar short.* Слишком поздно и бесполезно; (разг.) **кто не успел, тот опоздал.** *Меры, предпринятые мэром слишком поздно, были к тому же и недостаточными.*
- 7. Dime a dozen.** So common as to be of low worth. *Let him quit if he wants to. His kind are a dime a dozen and we will find a replacement in a week.* **Как собак нерезаных; пруд пруди.** О чем-то, чего так много, что его можно получить бесплатно или безо всяких усилий. *Пусть увольняется, если хочет. Таких, как он, пруд пруди; мы за неделю найдем на его место другого.*
- 8. Dollars to (for) doughnuts.** Used to describe something that is considered a sure bet, so that a bettor would be willing to risk his money against winnings of mere pastry. *Dollars to doughnuts the plumber won't be here until next week.* **See "Bet my bottom dollar, I would". Даю голову на отсечение.** Используется, чтобы описать исход, наступление которого считается несомненным.
- 9. Don't take any wooden nickels.** Old-fashioned, jocular phrase said at parting, with original meaning of do not let yourself, as an innocent, be cheated by a "smooth operator." (Compare to Russian сленг: **деревянные деньги;** советские, российские деньги/рубли; неконвертируемая валюта.) *Have a good trip to New York; don't take any wooden nickels.* Старомодное ироническое напутствие при расставании, изначально означавшее "не дать ловкому мошеннику обвести себя вокруг

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пальца”. Не будь наивным; не будь ротозеем; **не дай обвести себя вокруг пальца**. *Хорошей тебе дороги до Нью-Йорка, и смотри не попадись на удочку.*

- 10. Drop a dime.** Report someone to the authorities; inform on someone, especially by making a phone call. *The employees decided they would have to drop a dime on their boss.* Сообщить в полицию или другой правоохранительный орган, на кого-то донести. *Сотрудники решили, что о начальнике придется позвонить куда следует.* Not to be confused with **At the drop of a dime**, meaning, instantly, on the most trivial pretext. *She loses her temper at the drop of a dime.* Мгновенно, по любому поводу. *Она выходит из себя по любому поводу.* (Both phrases come from the introduction of the automatic pay telephone, which originally cost a dime to use.)
- 11. Follow the money.** The modern version of Cicero’s phrase “Cui bono?” Who profits? Statement that the best way to find out why something was done or is being done is to determine who will make money on it and/or who has paid money to achieve it. *If you want to know why that bill was defeated in the State Senate, all you have to do is follow the money.* Современная версия знаменитой фразы Цицерона: **«Кому это выгодно?»** Утверждение, что лучший способ установить, почему что-либо было сделано или делается, – это определить, кто на этом зарабатывает, или кто заплатил, чтобы этого добиться. *Если хочешь знать, почему этот законопроект провалился в Сенате штата, попытайся выяснить, кому это выгодно.*
- 12. For my money.** In my opinion. *For my money, he is the best candidate.* По- моему; по моему мнению; по мне. *По-моему, он самый лучший кандидат.*
- 13. Funny money.** Counterfeit, money from an obscure or questionable source; artificially inflated or deflated otherwise questionable currency. The term may be used to refer to virtually any generally accepted substitute for cash, especially with the implication that one using e.g., a credit card would not be able to afford the purchase if cash were required. *Authorities say a Hamilton woman was arrested after trying to use funny money at a casino.* Фальшивые деньги/ купюры. *Представители властей сообщают, что при попытке расплатиться в казино фальшивыми деньгами была арестована жительница Хемилтона.*
- 14. Get off the dime.** Start acting, moving, especially after a period of indecision or stalling. *It is time for Congress to get off the dime and either pass or reject the bill.* Начинать действовать; **перестать топтаться на месте**; перестать тратить время впустую/понапрасну; **сдвинуться с мертвой точки**. *Пора Конгрессу сдвинуться с мертвой точки и либо принять, либо отклонить этот законопроект.*
- 15. Hush money.** A bribe paid to someone in exchange for silence. *I refuse to pay hush money, go ahead and tell the press about my past.* Заплатить за молчание. *Я отказываюсь платить за ваше молчание; можете рассказывать журналистам о моем прошлом.*
- 16. In for a penny, in for a pound.** Once one is involved or committed to something, one might as well be involved or committed fully. Used as a justification for doing so. *Once I decided that we needed a new sofa, I figured in for a penny, in for a pound, and bought all new living room furniture.* (посл.) **Взялся за гуж, не говори, что не дюж**; (посл.) **назвался груздем, полезай в кузов**; (посл.) **семь бед - один ответ**. *Решив, что нам нужен новый диван, я подумала, что не стоит останавливаться на полдороги и купила целый новый гарнитур для гостиной.*
- 17. Look like a million bucks.** Look great. *She delivered her baby last week but she still looks like a million bucks.* **Выглядеть на все сто**; прекрасно выглядеть. *Она родила на прошлой неделе, но выглядит прекрасно.*
- 18. Made of money.** Used in the negative to deny or decry requests for money on the grounds of limited finances. *That is the third increase in tuition in four years. Does the college think all parents are made of money?* Печатать деньги. **Денег куры не клюют**. Используется при отказе платить из-за отсутствия денег. *Это уже третье за четыре года повышение стоимости обучения. Не думают ли в колледже, что у всех родителей денег куры не клюют?*
- 19. Money in the bank.** A sure thing, something certain to be profitable. *Free publicity is like money in the bank for businesses.* Верное, наверняка доходное дело, как деньги в банке. *Бесплатная реклама очень выгодна для бизнеса, все равно, что деньги в банке.*
- 20. Money is a good servant but a bad master** (Francis Bacon). Money of course may be used to achieve ends but is destructive when considered an end in itself. *I cannot believe how much time he wastes studying the stock market trying to make more money, when he has all he could possibly need. Doesn't he know that money is a good servant, but a bad master.* **Деньги — хороший слуга, но плохой хозяин** (Френсис Бэкон); (посл.) **человек распоряжается деньгами, а не деньги — человеком**. Деньги могут служить достижению цели, а могут быть разрушительным фактором, если становятся самоцелью. *Невероятно, сколько времени он тратит на изучение рынка ценных бумаг, чтобы еще больше заработать, хотя чего только у него нет. Разве он не знает, что деньги — хороший слуга, но плохой хозяин?*

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- 21. Money is no object.** It does not matter how much something costs. *I need to make sure this package arrives in London by tomorrow; money is no object.* Деньги – не проблема. Неважно, сколько это стоит. *Я должен быть уверен, что посылка придет в Лондон к завтрашнему дню, сколько бы это ни стоило.*
- 22. Money is power. Money makes the world go round. Money talks.** The influence of money should never be underestimated. *How did he get such a light sentence for his offense? Let us just say that money talks.* Деньги решают все; кто платит, тот заказывает музыку. Каким образом он получил такое легкое наказание за свое преступление? Можно сказать, что деньги имеют вес.
- 23. Money grubber.** A person who is aggressively engaged in or preoccupied with making or saving money. *It is naïve to believe that everyone who goes to business school is a money grubber.* Жадный до денег; жадина; жмот; скряга; скупердяй; стяжатель. Наивно думать, что каждый, кто идет в школу бизнеса, — стяжатель.
- 24. Money pit (sink).** A possession or project that keeps requiring money to maintain and drains financial resources. *We finally decided that our sailboat was too much of a money sink and sold it.* Проект/работа, куда деньги исчезают, как в бездонную бочку, без видимого результата. В конце концов, мы решили, что наша парусная лодка поглощает деньги как бездонная бочка и продали ее.
- 25. More bang for your buck.** More relative value for your money. *If we spend just a little more on our vacation, I think we will really get more bang for our buck.* (Получить) максимум за свои деньги. Я думаю, что если мы потратим чуть больше, то отпуск удастся и впрямь на славу.
- 26. Nickel and dime to death.** To drain or destroy bit by bit, especially financially. *All the extra costs of remodeling are nickel and diming us to death.* Шаг за шагом/постепенно опустошить, разрушить, высосать все соки, особенно в финансовом отношении. Все эти дополнительные расходы на перестройку дома, хоть и небольшие по отдельности, в сумме выливаются в копеечку.
- 27. Pennies from heaven.** Unexpected good fortune, windfall, money obtained without effort. *Why is the insurance company sending us this check? Who knows? Let's just consider it pennies from heaven.* Манна небесная; неожиданная прибыль; подарок судьбы; (посл.) не было ни гроша, да вдруг алтын. Почему страховая компания прислала нам этот чек? Кто его знает? Будем считать это подарком судьбы.
- 28. Penny-wise and pound foolish.** Frugal and economical with respect to small expenses while taking less care with large ones. *I will go across town to buy vegetables on sale but spend \$20 extra to order gifts by mail. I guess I am pennywise and pound foolish.* Экономный в мелочах, а по большому счету расточительный; шампанское пьем, а на спичках экономим. Я езжу на другой конец города, чтобы купить овощи со скидкой, а на заказ подарков по почте трачу лишних 20 долларов. Пожалуй, я экономный в мелочах, но по большому счету расточительный.
- 29. Put one's money where one's mouth is.** Support what one is saying by taking action, particularly by placing a bet or donating money. *Well, if we support his candidacy, I guess we better put our money where our mouth is and make a substantial donation.* Поддержать свои слова действиями, например, делая ставку в азартном споре или жертвуя существенную сумму на политические или благотворительные цели. Итак, если мы поддерживаем его кандидатуру, я полагаю, мы должны подтвердить свои слова действиями и пожертвовать значительную сумму денег.
- 30. Right on the money.** Exactly correct. *Her guess was right on the money—there were exactly 2,060 jelly beans in the jar.* Совершенно правильно. Ее догадка была совершенно правильной: в кувшине было ровно 2060 конфеток.
- 31. See the color of someone's money.** Obtain proof that someone is able to pay. *Who can blame them for wanting to see the color of your money before they make the expensive changes you are demanding?* Убедиться в платежеспособности. Кто же их осудит за то, что они хотят убедиться в том, что у тебя есть деньги, прежде чем начинать такую дорогую переделку, как ты хочешь?
- 32. Spend a penny.** Euphemism for going to use the toilet (reference to pay toilets). More common in British English. *Where is Reginald? I think he went to spend a penny.* Пойти в туалет. Где Реджинальд? Он на минутку вышел (вышел позвонить; пошла поудрить носик).
- 33. The penny dropped.** Someone finally understood something (reference to early vending machines that operated only after the coin inserted hit a certain spot.) *The penny finally dropped and I understood what he was getting at.* Все теперь понятно; (до кого-либо) “дошло”. Наконец-то я понял, к чему он клонит.
- 34. The smart money's on.** Experts or people with inside information predominantly predict a particular outcome of some situation or contest. *In the present test of wills between Washington and Jerusalem, the smart money is on David rather than Goliath.* Специалисты или люди, обладающие конфиденциальной информацией,

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предсказывают определенные последствия какой-либо ситуации или результат состязания. В текущем состязании «кто первый дрогнет» между Вашингтоном и Иерусалимом специалисты предсказывают победу скорее Давиду, чем Голиафу.

- 35. Throw good money after bad.** To spend additional money on something in which one has already made an unsuccessful investment. *I finally realized that any more repairs to my car would be throwing good money after bad and I decided to buy a new one.* Тратить деньги впустую; упорствовать в финансово безнадежном деле; тратить дополнительные деньги на что-либо, что уже оказалось неудачной покупкой или вложением денег. *Наконец, я осознал, что отремонтировать машину снова будет пустой тратой денег и решил купить новую.*

- 36. Turn on a dime.** Have a very short turning radius. The reference is to the size of the dime rather than its function as currency. *My little compact car can turn on a dime, which is useful in parking lots and other congested places.* Развернуться на месте/на пяточке/на 180 градусов; быстро менять направление движения/мысли и т.д. *Мой маленький автомобиль может развернуться буквально на месте, что очень удобно на автостоянках и в других тесных местах.*

- 37. Turn up like a bad penny.** To appear, especially repeatedly, where not wanted. *Every time we were finally alone, her brother turned up like a bad penny.* Быть незваным гостем; появляться снова там, где тебя видеть не хотят; приходить без приглашения. *Каждый раз, когда мы наконец-то оставались одни, как незваный гость появлялся ее брат.*

WHAT DO SCIENTIFIC TRANSLATORS DO WHEN THEY RETIRE?

Well, hard to generalize, but at the age of 90 Bob Johnston, a petroleum engineer and translator of Russian, who has 8 scientific book translations and many scientific papers to his credit, has published a book of poetry. A sample from At the Rim, reviews and ordering information may be found on the publisher's web site Sunstonepress.com. We offer here one of Bob's poetic translations, originally published in the Mensa Bulletin. Bob may be reached at bobjohnston@desertgate.com.

Ольга Берггольц

Я сердце свое никогда не щадила:
ни в песне, ни в дружбе, ни в горе,
ни в страсти...
Прости меня, милый. Что было, то было
Мне горько.
И все-таки всё это - счастье.

И то, что я страстно, горяче тоскую,
и то, что, страшась небывалой напасти,
на призрак, на малую тень негодную.
Мне страшно...
И все-таки всё это - счастье.

Пускай эти слезы и это удушье,
пусть хлещут упреки, как ветки в ненастье.
Страшней - всепрощенье. Страшней - равнодушие.
Любовь не прощает. И всё это - счастье.

Я знаю теперь, что она убивает,
не ждет сострадания, не делится властью.
Покуда прекрасна, покуда живая,
покуда она не утеша, а - счастье.

1952

Olga Bergholtz

(Translated by Bob Johnston)

My heart I have never withheld in song,
In grief or in friendship, passion or pain.
Forgive me, my dearest; the past may be wrong.
My hurts are still with me,
but joy will remain.

And that which I long for with burning desire,
Or dread with a terror I cannot explain—
A specter, a shadow, a flickering fire—
My fears are still with me,
but joy will remain.

My tears and my sighing, my guilty recall
May lash me like branches in wind and in rain.
More terrible far is not caring at all.
Love never forgives,
but joy will remain.

I know now that love can hurt and destroy,
Alone in its power, alone in its pain.
But so long as it's beautiful, living in joy,
Not mere consolation—
then love will remain.