

## CONFERENCE NEWCOMER'S REPORT

Todd Jackson

I have to confess: I was a little skeptical about attending my first ATA conference in Denver last October. At that point, I had been working as a U.S.-based freelance Russian>English translator for less than a year after spending the previous five years in Moscow as an in-house translator for one of Russia's biggest news agencies. I had never attended any major conference before and was unsure exactly what benefits I could expect to derive from this one.

I had already made several contacts in the translation world, and business was going relatively well. A couple of translator friends, however, told me that, as a freelancer just starting out, I absolutely had to attend the ATA conference. They said a large share of their work had come directly from the contacts they made at the conference and that it was a very rewarding experience overall.

So I figured, if nothing else, I could network (also something I had never done before) and find some new clients. As is often the case, I went in with one set of expectations and came out with an entirely different impression. Sure, I networked and passed out my resumes and cards to innumerable agencies, but what surprised me most and made attending the conference so worthwhile were the wonderful people I met and the feeling that I was now part of a larger community. Communicating with fellow translators online is one thing, but meeting them in person and having the kinds of conversations that you simply cannot have with anybody else was truly the highlight of the week.

After living in Moscow for several years and not driving much, I generally leap at any opportunity for a road trip. It was a 15-hour drive from Chicago across the beautiful Great Plains (yeah, it's flat, but I was raised in Indiana so it looks pretty good). My wife and her sister came along for the ride so they could do some sightseeing in Denver and the surrounding area.

We stayed at a comfortable hotel just outside the city and about 15 minutes from the conference downtown (hint for anyone wanting to save money: four nights at this hotel cost the same as one night at the Hyatt). Driving towards the city the next morning, we were blown away by the spectacular Denver skyline rising up against the backdrop of the snow-covered Rocky Mountains. That view never gets old.

The Hyatt Regency Hotel is a massive glass building right in the middle of downtown Denver. It was bustling with people, but there were plenty of signs directing ATA attendees to the registration booths on the second floor.

Everything was well organized and the registration volunteers were extremely friendly. I got my ATA badge, including the "Certified" and "First Time Attendee" ribbons, as well as the yellow sticker identifying me as a Russian language translator (which we decided needs to be replaced with a darker color next year since you can barely see it) and was off to my first pre-conference seminar. (I only realized after I had signed up for two that each seminar cost an additional \$50.)

I decided to attend Judy Jenner's highly informative presentation "Lessons from Business School: The Entrepreneurial Linguist." She gave tips on how translators should market themselves to attract more clients, in particular direct clients. Judy also provided several useful websites where translators can search for work and discussed some of the basics of accounting, an area in which I was still feeling a little lost as a novice freelancer.

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Todd Jackson enjoying Colorado's mountain scenery

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## NEWCOMER'S REPORT

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It was at this seminar that I began making my first of many contacts at the conference. I was paired up with the very kind French translator sitting next to me for an exercise in which we discussed challenges translators face in their work, and we spoke again several times over the next few days. When the seminar ended, I had the pleasure of meeting two fellow Russian translators who promptly invited me to have lunch with them. We found a cafe a few blocks away and spoke Russian during most of the meal. I think we all appreciated actually speaking the language instead of sitting behind a computer trying to decipher it in written form.

After lunch, the three of us attended Corinne McKay's "Beyond the Basics of Freelancing." Corinne spoke about different ways to boost name recognition and visibility and how to incorporate new aspects of social media into our translation businesses. She also stressed the importance of finding direct clients and gave advice on how to persuade them to choose to work with you rather than an agency. At the end of her seminar, she held a drawing for Chris Durban's excellent book *The Prosperous Translator*, which I actually won out of 40 or so people. It was the first time I had won a contest like that since I picked my own number in a cakewalk when I was seven!

The next events on the schedule were the welcome reception and the SLD division open house. The food was good, and it was nice to have a beer after the long day. A chain reaction was set off as the translators I met earlier began introducing me to other translators. The division open house was apparently new this year, and it seemed to be quite a hit. Having all the Slavic translators in one place made it very easy to interact and allowed us to form an instant bond. I had the opportunity to meet translators I had worked with earlier but had never spoken to in person. Let's hope ATA repeats the division open house next year.

I arrived at the Job Marketplace on the second day just after it opened, and it was already teeming with people. I laid out my cards and resumes on the Russian table and immediately began making the rounds. I was a bit overwhelmed by all the booths and different organizations represented, but I tried to visit each one to see what they had to offer. I networked with people from translation companies, government agencies, translation software suppliers, universities, and several other organizations, and have already been contacted by a number of them. After a year of searching for translation work online and establishing relations with different companies, it was a joy seeing so many potential clients in one place and being able to talk with them in person.

I had lunch with an even larger group of Russian translators that afternoon. They all knew each other from previous conferences, while I was the only newcomer and very grateful they welcomed me. Apart from getting to know everybody, we discussed a wide range of topics, but one of the main themes was translation software. As someone who was still undecided about the best software to use, I found this conversation particularly useful and learned a great deal about the different options out there.

Even though I had already passed the certification exam, I was very interested in the grading process, so I decided to attend the "Taking the Russian>English Certification Exam" seminar presented by Nora Favorov and James Walker. (See a review of and material from this presentation on page 4.) As actual graders, they were able to give an expert

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## NEWCOMER'S REPORT

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perspective on the challenges and pitfalls people face when taking the exam. It was interesting to get a more in-depth view of what may seem like a rather secretive grading process. This session also offered reminders of common mistakes that even experienced translators sometimes make and reinforced the idea of just how complex translating can be (especially without the use of any electronic resources).

The next event was the annual SLD meeting, which was very informal and relaxed. After addressing administrative and organizational issues, we had an open discussion about the division's plans for the next year, content for the *SlavFile*, and future ATA conferences in Boston, San Diego, San Antonio, and Chicago. I met several more translators at the SLD meeting and really began to get a good feeling for the many diverse personalities in our group.

In the evening, I attended a Happy Hour event hosted by a translation agency I work with. It was a nice break from the formal atmosphere of the conference, and I had the pleasure of meeting several German and Argentinean translators. It was also a prelude to the highlight of the week: the annual SLD dinner.

The organizers of the dinner could not have selected a more apropos restaurant than Red Square Euro Bistro. Advertised as a vodka bar, it had a Russian-speaking bartender (who even laughed at my lame attempt to order a "Tolstaya Shina" beer) and several Russian-themed entrees (although the beef stroganoff was more like a steak than the mayonnaise-drenched slivers of beef I remember eating in Moscow). It was tough deciding where to sit at dinner because there were so many people I wanted to talk to. It ended up being a wonderful evening with a lot of laughs, some great conversation and, of course, Vadim Khazin's burime verse (see page 7), which I quickly learned was a very entertaining annual tradition.

After two days of non-stop conference action, I decided on Friday morning (my last day) that I needed a small break. I had been looking at maps of the mountains just outside of Denver ever since we arrived and figured I couldn't visit Colorado without spending at least a little bit of time in the hills. So we got up early and drove west from an elevation of roughly 5,000 feet to a snowy 11,000 feet in about an hour. We had hoped to drive up the highest paved road in North America at 14,000 feet, but it was closed for the winter. On the way back, we stopped briefly at the stunning Red Rocks Park just off I-70, where I almost hyperventilated after jogging up endless stairs in the thin mountain air. It was a very refreshing way to start the day and I ended up being only 15 minutes late for the morning seminar.

Lunch once again provided some of the more interesting conversations of the week. It was a warm, sunny day, and we decided to sit outside at a Mexican cafe and take in the sights and sounds of downtown Denver. I decided to wander the Job Marketplace some more before the afternoon

sessions and make sure I hadn't missed any interesting booths. I was also happy to see that almost all my business cards and resumes had been taken from the Russian language table. I was able to quickly print off some more resumes at the FedEx office in the hotel lobby.

I was particularly excited about my final seminar of the conference: Elizabeth Macheret's "Contemporary Russian: Enhanced Vocabulary, Endangered Syntax." I've always been fascinated by how the Russian language has transformed so much in recent years, partially because of the influence of American culture and partially out of sheer convenience. Elizabeth used numerous examples to illustrate these changes in addition to the disregard for the rules and syntax of the language that has become much more noticeable over the last few decades. I personally fear there will be even more drastic changes in the language in coming years as the younger generation grows up with a lexicon dominated by computer lingo.

This session sparked some very interesting discussions, which I wish we could have continued for a few more hours. I would love to see more seminars next year that offer in-depth analysis of the nuances of the Russian language and tips on how translators should cope with these challenging issues.

Unfortunately, the last session I planned to attend on Friday was cancelled and I was unable to attend the Saturday seminars because I had to return to Chicago by Sunday. But I feel like I accomplished a great deal in the three days I attended the conference. I was able to market myself in a way I had never done before and am already reaping the benefits of the contacts I made there. I learned more about interaction with clients, rates, and translation tools. Most importantly, however, I met dozens of kind people who offered advice and guidance and welcomed me into their community. In any profession, it's tough to understand the challenges from the outside looking in; thus, meeting so many likeminded individuals who have been living in that world for a long time and understand what it's all about was an immeasurably rewarding experience and only served to reassure me that being a translator is the best occupation in the world.

After my initial skepticism, I can now say with full confidence that the ATA conference is a tremendous opportunity for translators to get out from behind what is often a two-dimensional environment that consists of sitting at a computer all day and actually see and touch the translation world. I'm already looking forward to Boston later this year.

*Todd Jackson runs Mosely Translations, a small Chicago-based freelance business specializing in Russian>English translations. He has studied the Russian language and culture for over twelve years and lived in Moscow for nearly ten years, working as an in-house translator at Russia's biggest news agency, where his translations covered virtually every aspect of the rapidly growing Russian economy.*

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# CONFERENCE PRESENTATION REVIEW

## Is the Certification Exam for You?

### Review of “Taking the Russian>English Certification Exam”

*Presented by James Walker and Nora Favorov*

*Reviewed by Jennifer Davis*

As a recent member of ATA and a newbie translator, I was thrilled to see Nora Favorov and James Walker’s presentation entitled “Taking the Russian>English Certification Exam” on the schedule of the 51<sup>st</sup> annual conference in Denver. At that point, I hadn’t even considered taking the exam. I was just getting started as a translator and was slowly growing my client base mostly through friends and contacts in Russia. My main concerns about the exam were twofold: the cost (It costs \$300. Would this truly be money well spent?) and the level of difficulty (What if I didn’t actually pass it? Could I still look at myself in the mirror and call myself a translator?).

Favorov and Walker are both seasoned translators and exam graders: the former is current Language Chair for Russian-English grading and the latter a former chair. They made valid arguments in favor of the exam: certification is a means of standardizing translator status. (Doctors and lawyers have to take exams in order to practice...why not translators?) Being ATA-certified is one way to hold translators accountable. We’ve all read terrible translations in our day—a fate that could have probably been avoided (at least in most cases) if only ATA-certified translators had been hired. In spite of all these reasons, the number of people who take the Russian>English exam is actually quite low (surprisingly so to me)—only 15 people last year. (Editor’s note: The number of people taking the Russian >Eng-

lish exam varies considerably—from 7-15 over the past four years. The number for English>Russian over the same period has varied from 14-27.

The exam consists of three 225 to 275-word passages. The first text is general, the second is scientific or medical, and the third is a legal or business text. All passages are supposed to be free of arcane terminology that would not be found in a standard scientific/technical, medical, legal, or business dictionary. Candidates are required to translate the general (A) passage but may choose either the second or third passage, according to their strengths. Russian cultural references may be used in the passages. The good news: exam takers are welcome to bring as many dictionaries as they can carry.

But here’s what makes certification tricky: evaluation of a written exam can never be totally objective. The ATA tries to solve this problem by requiring that two people grade the exam, and if one assigns a particular passage translation a passing grade and the other a failing one or if there is a large discrepancy (15 points or greater) in scores, the two translators are required to confer. If the discrepancy persists, a third grader is called in to grade the test (without seeing the error markings of the other graders). Graders assign a certain number of points for each error made in a passage. Points are assigned to errors based on their severity and the extent to which passage meaning and/or usefulness is affected: the worse the error, the higher the number of points. Therefore, the lower the score, the better. Each passage receives an independent score, and both must pass (receive no more than 17 error points) for the candidate to receive certification.

One of the best ways to prepare for the test is by familiarizing yourself thoroughly with the material on the ATA website pertaining to certification. The presenters particularly emphasized the need to thoroughly understand core documents. These include the *Rubric* and the *Flowchart for Grading*, used by graders to guide point and overall decisions; the *Framework for Error Marking*, which explains the nature of different error categories; and, for those translating into English (from any language), the current *Into-English Grading Standards*, which specify exactly what graders should and should not give error points for. Rather than supplying links to these documents (since they



### Ukrainian into English Certification

A committee has been formed to establish a new language combination, Ukrainian into English, in the ATA Certification Program. More than 50 translators interested in becoming certified in this language pair have already signed up. The ATA Certification Committee has appointed our colleague Jim Walker the ad hoc liaison to guide us through the procedure.

If you work in this language combination and have not signed up yet, please do so by sending an email to the committee chair Alex Svirsky at [arsvirsky@gmail.com](mailto:arsvirsky@gmail.com), or call with any questions 720-276-8724. By signing up you express interest in taking the exam, but you do not obligate yourself to do so.

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*The following advice is from the session's PowerPoint presentation. The entire presentation can be found on the Additional Resources section of the SLD website.*

ADVICE ON TAKING  
THE ATA CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

**1. Seek out editors**

Unless you've had many thousands of words of your English language writing edited and critiqued by a competent native English speaking editor, it is hard to know whether or not you write sufficiently well in English to be a professional translator.

**2. Take the practice test**

You have the option of taking a graded practice test in up to three passages (A—general, B—technical, medical, scientific, & C—business/legal). You will get to see how the test has been graded and what kinds of errors you made. It costs \$50/passage to have a practice test graded.

**2a. Replicate the experience**

At least once take the practice test:

- By hand;
- Without electronic or internet resources;
- Time yourself: give yourself no more than 1 hour per passage.

**3. When you take the test: First read the passage carefully and understand its logic.**

Many failing candidates clearly did not take the time to appreciate the main point being made in the passage. If your translation doesn't make sense to you, it's probably wrong.

**4. Bring all your basic references.**

Even if you consider yourself more of a sci/tech (B passage) type than a business/law (C passage) type or vice versa, you might wind up deciding to select a passage in one of your "weaker" areas. Be sure to have a sci/tech dictionary, a business/law dictionary, and an idiom dictionary.

**5. Pay attention to the Translation Instructions**

Test passages must be written in a style that is appropriate to the ultimate purpose of the passage. The instructions should help you decide how formal your style should be, whether colloquialisms are permissible, and guide you in choosing between specialized and lay terminology.

**6. Be faithful to overall meaning, not to individual words or syntax.**

- Учебные предметы ≠ School objects but Academic subjects
- Придуманные им правила игры ≠ Thought up by him rules of the game but (The rules of the game that he thought up...)

may be moved in an upcoming redo of the ATA website), we recommend that you go to the Certification tab at [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org) and look for them in the sidebar running along the right side of many of the certification pages. It should also be noted that although this presentation was specifically concerned with the Russian>English test, most of the tips and advice given are equally useful for other ATA certification tests.

The presenters offered several tips for preparing for the exam. Most importantly, have your writing edited beforehand in order to become a confident, concise, clear writer in your own native language. *Great* translation is *great* writing above all else. Secondly, take the practice exam and have it graded (for an additional \$50 per passage). The box to the left quotes some of the tips the presenters offered. In addition, an article published in the Fall 2004 *SlavFile* and available to all on the *SlavFile* page in the Slavic Languages Division section of the ATA website provides an extensive analysis of actual past exam errors and their grading.

After the presentation, I felt less apprehensive about taking the certification exam. It seems to be a worthy challenge and not nearly as frightening as I thought.

Jennifer Davis is a freelance writer and Russian>English translator who lived in St. Petersburg from 2000-2008. Her specializations include media and journalism, the arts, winter sports, marketing materials, and copywriting. See [www.beet-salad.com](http://www.beet-salad.com) for more information or send a message to [jennifer@beet-salad.com](mailto:jennifer@beet-salad.com).

**UPCOMING ATA CERTIFICATION EXAM SITTINGS**

Candidate must have been a member of ATA for at least four weeks prior to the exam date and all candidates not currently ATA certified must have offered proof of eligibility in order to register for the exam. All sittings have a maximum capacity and admission is based on the order in which registrations are received at Headquarters. For further information contact ATA Headquarters at 703-683-6100.

- La Jolla, CA. Saturday, March 26, 2011.  
Registration deadline March 11, 2011.
- Philadelphia, PA. Saturday, April 02, 2011.  
Registration deadline March 18, 2011.
- Kenton, OH. Saturday, April 02, 2011.  
Registration deadline March 18, 2011.
- Spartanburg, SC. Sunday, April 10, 2011.  
Registration deadline March 26, 2011.
- Seattle, WA. Saturday, April 16, 2011.  
Registration deadline April 1, 2011.

# CONFERENCE PRESENTATION REVIEW

## Review of the 2010 Susana Greiss Lecture “The Persuasive Art of Translation”

*Presented by Russell Valentino*

*Reviewed by Lucy Gunderson*

*Russell Valentino, the 2010 SLD Greiss Lecturer, is a professor in the Department of Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures and chair of the Department of Cinema and Comparative Literature at the University of Iowa. He has published translations from Italian, Russian, and Croatian into English. He is also editor of The Iowa Review and runs a small press called Autumn Hill Books, which focuses on contemporary works that have been translated into English.*

As both a scholar and practitioner of translation, Russell Valentino has given deep consideration to how to bridge the gap that separates theory and practice. As Mr. Valentino explained, theorists care more about the overarching concepts of the discipline, while translators are most interested in the specifics of language. In his lecture, Mr. Valentino suggested that rhetoric is a tool that can be used to close the distance between these two disciplines in constructive ways.

In its broadest sense, rhetoric is the effective and compelling use of language. Rhetoric of inquiry, as Mr. Valentino explained, addresses the organization and presentation of material. It involves questions of timeliness, audience, tropes, and claims to authority.

The three components of rhetorical persuasion are *logos* (persuasion through reason), *pathos* (persuasion through emotion), and *ethos* (persuasion through the speaker's character), the latter being the most important component for translators. *Ethos* reflects the knowledge, competence, and character of the speaker and is thereby key to his or her ability to persuade and convince. As a conduit for the speaker, the translator must not only render the original author's persuasive devices, but must also represent this author as a person of authority.

To achieve this, translators must be able to convince readers of their own competence. There are several ways to go about this. One is to write a preface to the translation, thereby demonstrating to readers that the translator has the knowledge needed to perform the translation that follows. Another is to do nothing, leaving the work to speak for itself. In this case, translators claim their authority as writers or poets, rather than as scholars. Finally, translators can use the text itself to establish their authority. Mr. Valentino gave one example of a poem where the translator inserted brackets into the translation that were not present in the original. His interpretation of this was that the translator was trying to show how hard she was working to translate the poem and asking the reader to stick with her and trust her.

Translators, having entered into an implicit agreement to get readers to respect the original author's competence and character, may want to protect their authors from looking foolish by correcting any factual errors. However, there is little the translator can do when the author has committed moral transgressions.



Mr. Valentino encountered this problem recently when he was asked to translate a poem written by Radovan Karadžić in 1973 titled “A Morning Bomb.” It was hard for him to take on this project, even though the poem was written long before Karadžić committed any war crimes. However, the poem itself is by no means an inferior one, and Mr. Valentino decided that the factor of timeliness (soon after Karadžić's arrest) made translating it morally acceptable. The author's voice in this poem comes across as one belonging to a kind of Nietzschean “superman” in the original, and Mr. Valentino did try to render this voice. However, he attempted to distance himself personally by inserting what he referred to as “flabby lines” in the translation. I have to say that I disagree on this point. Like lawyers who defend criminals because of a larger belief in the legal system, I think translators should stand fully behind the works they are translating or not translate them at all.

In any case, Mr. Valentino argues that while translators have to become advocates because their own credibility and sincerity are at stake, they also have choices as to the extent to which they advocate for a work by determining the distance that they place between it and themselves.

This lecture really made me think about and reevaluate my role as a translator. I had always thought that translators should feel compelled to keep their personalities out of the works that they are translating. The greatest insight that I gained from this talk is that in fact translators cannot ever remain invisible. They are constantly faced with choices that result in conscious, tangible decisions. Indeed, the choice to remain invisible in itself amounts to a statement, a claim to authority.

Lucy Gunderson is an ATA-certified Russian-to-English translator based in New York. She specializes in international relations, journalism, and business. She has a BA in Russian Studies, an MA in Russian Literature, and a Certificate in Translation Studies. She is currently the Russian tutor in the Introduction to Translation class at the University of Chicago. She can be reached at [russophile@earthlink.net](mailto:russophile@earthlink.net).

# BURIME

written at the ATA Slavic Division dinner in Denver (October 28, 2010):

**Vadim Khazin's annual poem composed in a space of less than two hours  
to fit pairs of rhymes given to him by SLD Banquet attendees**

Денвер нас радует чудесною погодой;  
Здесь звери каменные всяческой породы:  
Где-то медведь\*, а где-то конь иль лошадь  
Своей фигурой украшают площадь.  
And now we're in a lovely situation:  
We're not attending some dry boring presentation  
Instead we're with our colleagues at a party  
Where everyone is really quite a smarty  
Иль, может быть, княгиня или князь,  
Который не ударит лицом в грязь.  
Пусть не кипит у нас тут самовар  
And no one here is yet a movie star,  
Пусть инструмент у нас – компьютер, а не скрипка,  
На наших лицах нарисована улыбка;  
Нам эти встречи доставляют радость,  
Пусть даже вы не заказали сладость.  
А если выпьете три стопки водки с хреном,  
Смело себя почувствуете man'ом.  
Кто-то доволен будет здесь салатом;  
Другому плохо, что не дали сервелата;  
The third, although perhaps against his will,  
May ask the waiter for some dill,  
Или, иначе, будет требовать укропа,  
После чего водичку выпьет он с сиропом.  
Даме одной вдруг захотелось спаржи –  
Должно быть, в голове одни лишь маржи.  
Though whether we prefer tomatoes, lime or pickle,  
We'll all try not to fall prey to a sickle,  
Под пулю или под кухонный нож –  
А то начнётся подлинный балдэж.  
So let us stay engaged in переводы,  
С которыми чтоб не было развода.  
Каждый из нас всегда пусть будет смелым,  
Пусть даже цвет его любимый – белый,

*Vadim Khazin*  
*Red Square Euro Bistro*  
*Denver, Colorado*



Or even yellow, brown or blue or green  
And always know just what the source may mean.  
And let this restaurant whose name begins with “red”  
Provide us with more food than simple bread  
And may we always sensibly avert  
Consuming any dangerous dessert  
That may contain ingredients like soap  
Or even, God forbid, addictive dope...  
May we always have ourselves as bosses  
And never know disasters or real losses.  
А наши дамы, сделав не спеша макияж,  
Сядутся пусть в изящный экипаж  
And take a trip perhaps to Mozambique  
On some strange whim, one might just call a freak,  
Or maybe, other urges will have spoken,  
And send them on a journey to Hoboken.  
We hope while there they won't fall prey to tricks  
Like being underneath a load of falling bricks.  
Let us forget bad things, remote or recent,  
Let nothing that befalls us be indecent.  
Let us always have good cause to laugh,  
While in our business being strict and tough,  
Let's always find things droll and funny,  
And always have a flow of money  
And may our clients always rush to pay,  
And may we always have the final say!



The 2010 SLD banquet was held at the Red Square Euro Bistro in Denver, Colorado. Despite the name and a lot of red in the decor, the restaurant had little in common with its grandiose namesake and struck just the right balance between chic and homey. We had a room all to ourselves - ourselves being 46 SLD members and spouses plus a few ATA conference attendees who happened into the restaurant and joined the party. The food was great, as were the beverages. The empty chairs seen in the picture to the left belong to people lining up at the bar to try one of the restaurant's diverse varieties of custom vodka infusions, everything from fig, to beet, to the more standard horseradish and red pepper. Many thanks to Elana Pick and Becky Blackley for organizing this very successful evening.

The 2011 SLD banquet will be held in Boston on October 27 or 28. Bostonians! Please contact Becky and Elana with your suggestions.

The images on this page are courtesy of Fred Grasso.

\*See photo on page 8.

# SLD MEETING MINUTES

Denver, Colorado

October 28, 2010

Photograph courtesy of Jeff Sanfacon



1. Call to order
2. Request for volunteer to take the minutes
3. Acceptance of agenda
4. Approval of minutes of last year's meeting

Becky Blackley, SLD administrator, called the meeting to order and asked for a volunteer to take the minutes. Jen Guernsey volunteered.

The agenda for the meeting was accepted, and the minutes of the 2009 division meeting were approved.

## 5. General comments from the administrator – Becky Blackley

Becky mentioned that copies of the *SlavFile* were made available at the Division reception and that leftover copies were available for the taking at this meeting.

## 6. Report from the *SlavFile* Editor – Lydia Razran Stone

Lydia Razran Stone, *SlavFile* editor, provided a written report of *SlavFile* activity for the year as well as some statistics from past years. She reported that this year there were four issues of the *SlavFile*, for a total of 91 pages. There was an average of 11 different authors in each issue, but there were just 23 authors total during the year, and she emphasized that *SlavFile* is always looking to diversify its authorship and the languages represented. There were three new columns this year: *Word Buzz*, by Yuliya Baldwin, focusing on new words and usages in Russian; a column on cultural and nonlinguistic issues in translation, by Misha Ishenko; and a film column by Susan Welsh. In addition, two columnists resumed contributions after a break: Roy Cochrun, who reviews dictionaries, and Liv Bliss, who writes *Beginner's Luck*. Lydia noted that she would like to see more articles in/on the Division's non-Russian languages and on translation tools and technology.

## 7. Website update – Nora Favorov

Nora still wants to hand responsibility for website content generation over to someone else, as her schedule no longer permits her adequate time for this task. She noted that the website needs work, as neither the webmaster Dina Tchikounova nor Nora herself has been able to put much work into it. She requested that anyone with comments or interest in helping contact her.

In response to a question about website content, Nora said she envisioned glossaries that were edited and commented upon, as well as the core content of the *SlavFile* and division information for prospective members.

Tom Fennell volunteered to help with the website. He also proposed a Twitter feed of our favorite translations of a particular word.

Maksym Kozub wanted to know how the website fits in with other media and sites such as Twitter and ProZ.com. Nora replied that this is currently an open question.

## 8. 2011 Annual Conference in Boston

### Elections

Becky stated that next year will be an election year for the administrator and assistant administrator positions and indicated that she is looking for volunteers to serve in these positions, noting that information on the positions can be found on the ATA website. Becky indicated that Jen Guernsey and Lucy Gunderson have volunteered to serve as the nominating committee. [Lucy later recused herself, as she was interested in running for a position, and Fred Grasso volunteered to serve on the nominating committee in her stead.]

### Banquet Committee

Becky reminded us that we had previously decided to hold our SLD banquet in the hotel, as other divisions normally did. However, that decision was rendered moot because the ATA has ceased holding such division functions in the hotel. Hence we will continue with our previous practice of identifying a local restaurant at which to hold the banquet. She asked for local volunteers for the four upcoming conferences, Boston 2011, San Diego 2012, San Antonio 2013, and Chicago 2014. The following volunteered or were suggested as local contacts

- Boston – Ellen Elias-Bursac volunteered; she would like to work with the assistance of someone else.
- San Diego – Elizabeth Macheret volunteered to help; Robert Taylor was suggested as a possible local contact.
- San Antonio – Fred Grasso volunteered.
- Chicago – Todd Jackson volunteered.

### ATA Conference presentations and speakers

Becky then thanked all those who presented at the conference this year and asked for suggestions for topics for next year. Maksym Kozub volunteered to do a presentation next year on either financial translation or IT/social media. Becky suggested requesting conference suggestions in *SlavFile*, and noted that suggestions for Greiss lecturers could be sent to *SlavFile* as well.

*Continued on page 9*





## ADMINISTRIVIA

Becky Blackley, SLD Administrator

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!  
С НОВЫМ ГОДОМ!  
З НОВЫМ ГОДАМ!  
З НОВИМ РОКОМ!  
ŠŤASTNÝ NOVÝ ROK!  
ŠŤASTLIVÝ NOVÝ ROK!**

**SZCZEŚLIWEGO NOWEGO ROKU!  
ЧЕСТИТА НОВА ГОДИНА!  
СРЕЌНА НОВА ГОДИНА!  
СРЕЃНА НОВА ГОДИНА!  
SREĆNA NOVA GODINA!  
SRETNA NOVA GODINA!  
SREĆNO NOVO LETO!**

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season and are now looking forward to an exciting and productive 2011. The last time I “spoke” to you was just before the annual ATA Conference in Denver. The 2010 meeting had some new features, most notably a special divisions’ reception, which immediately followed the opening reception. This event allowed division members to meet in a more intimate setting and provided an excellent opportunity for new members and first-time conference attendees to meet other SLD members at the very beginning of the conference. We were able to introduce them to colleagues with similar interests and generally ensure that they would find familiar faces at each of the subsequent division sessions. This reception was a nice addition to the conference and was very well received. Our other division social event, the annual banquet, was held at the Red Square Euro Bistro, where we enjoyed good food, good spirits, and good company. You will find coverage of the various SLD sessions elsewhere in this and following 2011 issues.

It’s not too early to start thinking about this year’s conference, to be held at the Marriott Copley Place in Boston, October 26 through 29. If you have any good ideas for

SLD sessions (either ones you want to present yourself or requests for topics to be presented by others), please let us know. The deadline for submitting presentation proposals to ATA will be in early March. You can send your suggestions either to me at the email address below or to Elana Pick at [pick.ep@gmail.com](mailto:pick.ep@gmail.com).

In addition to the ATA Annual Conference, there will be a couple of other major events for translators and interpreters this year that might interest you. First of all, the ATA will host the International Federation of Translators (FIT) XIX World Congress, an event that occurs every three years. It was first held in 1954, and this will be only the third time that it has been in North America and the first time in the U.S. According to the FIT website, the “XIX World Congress—*Bridging Cultures*—will bring together translators, interpreters, terminologists, and other professionals from all over the world to discuss topical issues. Over 75 educational sessions will be offered in a variety of categories. Events and activities will allow for opportunities to network, mingle, and socialize.” It is scheduled for August 1–4 at the Hilton Union Square in San Francisco. For more information, go to [www.fit2011.org/index.htm](http://www.fit2011.org/index.htm) (English) or [www.translators-union.ru/fit/fitnews/2009/11/19/fitnews\\_51.html](http://www.translators-union.ru/fit/fitnews/2009/11/19/fitnews_51.html) (Russian).

The second event of interest is **Translation Forum Russia 2011**, a national translation industry conference created through the merger of two major translation-related events: The Round Table on Translation Practices in Samara and The Interpreters and Translators Forum in Ekaterinburg. In 2010, it was decided to hold one annual event hosted jointly by three companies: All Correct Language Solutions (a translation agency in Samara), the Business Bureau of the Association of Interpreters (in Ekaterinburg), and ProVerbum training center for translators and interpreters (in St. Petersburg). The conference location rotates between the three cities. Last year’s conference in

*Continued on page 10*

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### SLD MEETING MINUTES

*Continued from page 8*

#### 9. Additional business/open discussion

Maksym Kozub is soliciting signatures from people who are interested in taking a Ukrainian>English certification exam. Vadim Khazin noted that the process of establishing a certification exam requires signatures from 50 interested parties as well as the identification of three to four graders. Maksym offered to talk to Marta Zielyk about serving as a grader.

Becky brought up the division reception following the opening reception, a new feature of this year’s conference. She thought it was successful, and particularly liked it as a way to identify first-time attendees.

At Becky’s suggestion, the first-time attendees present at the meeting introduced themselves.

Nora Favorov stated that she has one more copy of a CD version of both volumes of Pavel Palazhchenko’s dictionary available for purchase [and as of late January she still does].

Tom Fennell expressed concern that the Russian table in the Job Marketplace was too small. Becky noted that the lettering on the Russian table sign needed to be outlined in black, because it was yellow against white and thus poorly visible. She said she would talk to ATA about the issue. [SLD members subsequently moved the Russian resumes to a larger, unused table, outlined the sign lettering, and notified Jamie Padula of the problems and their solution.]

The meeting was adjourned.

## ADMINISTRIVIA *Continued from page 9*

Ekaterinburg was attended by delegates from across Russia and the CIS, representing all sectors of the industry, including agency managers, software developers, freelance and staff translators and interpreters, university professors, and consultants. The organizers anticipate 400–600 delegates at this year's conference, which will be held in St. Petersburg, September 23–25. The program will cover a variety of topics, including global trends in translation, a study of the Russian translation market with a focus on fast-growing sectors, new software (translation environment tools), managing translation quality, and workshops and master classes for translator and interpreter training.

Several SLD members, including me, are planning on attending this Russian conference. In addition to the professional development aspects, for non-native Russian speakers, it also will present a great opportunity to use the language in its native setting. If you decide to attend, please let me know so that we can plan some kind of SLD get-together 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). For a post-conference summary of last year's event by an attendee from the U.S., go to [www.lion411.com/2010/09/translation-forum-russia-2010.html](http://www.lion411.com/2010/09/translation-forum-russia-2010.html).

And, finally, my husband spotted the following announcement in the *New York Times*. Anyone interested in the usage of words and phrases in English or Russian should find this new database very useful.

(From the *NY Times*, Dec. 16, 2010)

*With little fanfare, Google has made a mammoth database culled from nearly 5.2 million digitized books available to the public for free downloads and online searches, opening a new landscape of possibilities for research and education in the humanities.*

*The digital storehouse, which comprises words and short phrases as well as a year-by-year count of how often they appear, represents the first time a data set of this magnitude and searching tools are at the disposal of Ph.D.'s, middle school students and anyone else who likes to spend time in front of a small screen. It consists of the 500 billion words contained in books published between 1500 and 2008 in English, French, Spanish, German, Chinese and Russian.*

*The intended audience is scholarly, but a simple online tool allows anyone with a computer to plug in a string of up to five words and see a graph that charts the phrase's use over time—a diversion that can quickly become as addictive as the habit-forming game Angry Birds.*

The direct link to the search tool is <http://ngrams.googlelabs.com/>. The link below will take you to the newspaper article.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/17/books/17words.html?\\_r=2&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=a26](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/17/books/17words.html?_r=2&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=a26)

...and yes, it is addictive.

See you in the spring!

Becky (beckyblackley@gmail.com)

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**REMEMBER: PROPOSALS FOR THE 2011 ATA CONFERENCE MUST BE SUBMITTED BY MARCH 14**

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## UPCOMING CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

### **52nd ATA Annual Conference**

Boston, Massachusetts  
Marriott Copley Place  
October 26-29, 2011

### **International Federation Of Translators (FIT)**

XIX World Conference *Bridging Cultures*  
San Francisco, California  
Hilton San Francisco Union Square  
August 1-4, 2011

### **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).

## POETRY IN TRANSLATION (BY OUR MEMBERS)

*From the editors: Genowefa Legowska sent us this very touching poem in Polish that a friend of hers wrote and she translated. We are delighted to publish it.*

Genowefa writes: *Mirosława Kruszevska is a poet and journalist from Gdansk, Poland, now living with her husband Bogusław Kruszevski near Seattle, WA. She has published poetry and journalistic pieces in Poland and writes for Polish publications in the U.S.A. Mirka (her nickname) emigrated from Poland with her family in 1981. Before coming to the U.S.A. she and her family spent some time in the Traiskirchen Refugee Camp in Austria, then famous among people of Eastern Europe. The poem "My Son" ("Mój syn") was first published in her bilingual book of poetry Trapped in Freedom ("W pułapce wolności").*

*This is a slightly changed and improved (I hope) version of my original translation.*

*Mieszko is now 32 years old. He became a computer specialist and doesn't write much anymore. He will on occasion translate one of his mother's poems, if he likes it.*

Genowefa Legowski is a Polish to English and English to Polish (certified) translator, interpreter and language teacher and a former Polish Editor of SlavFile. She lives in Wyoming and can be reached at [bartlego@yahoo.com](mailto:bartlego@yahoo.com).

### Mój syn

*By Mirosława Kruszevska*

Mieszkowi

mój syn Mieszko wychowywał się  
w obozie dla uchodźców politycznych  
nigdy nie biegał z latawcem po łące  
nie hodował chrabąszczy w słoikach po dzemie  
nie wiercił się w kościele  
nie awanturował dziko w sklepach z zabawkami  
nie przeszkadzał rodzicom i gościom przy stole  
nie wyciągał arogancko rąk po najlepsze kąski  
i nie domagał natrętnie czegoś do picia

mój syn nie zakradał się także z kolegami  
do cudzego sadu na jabłka i czereśnie  
nie budował indiańskich szałasów  
i nie zachwycały go książki Karola Maya

pierwszą postacią literacką  
którą z miejsca pokochał  
był dobroduszny przyjaciel małego prosiaczka  
mówiący o sobie samym  
że jest misiem o bardzo małym rozumku - -  
była to pierwsza książka  
którą przeczytał samodzielnie po polsku  
jeszcze w wieku przedszkolnym  
i pierwsza którą położył pod poduszką

około czwartego roku życia  
zaczęło go dręczyć pytanie egzystencjalne:  
dlaczego ludzie umierają?  
babcia z Polski poradziła nam  
aby mu powiedzieć że człowiek nie umiera  
tylko staje się aniołkiem  
popatrzył jakoś tak dziwnie  
i nic nie powiedział

potem zaczął zastanawiać się  
czy dinozaury miały cycuszki  
i co jedzą dżdżownice  
ale na szczęście  
był wtedy z wizytą u nas dziadzio  
i wybawił wszystkich z kłopotu  
bo dziadzio wszystko wie

### My Son

*Translated by Genowefa Legowska*

To Mieszko

my son Mieszko grew up  
in a political refugee camp  
he never ran through a meadow with a kite  
he never kept beetles in empty jam jars  
never fidgeted in church  
never had fits in toy stores  
he did not interrupt his parents and guests at the table  
did not arrogantly demand the best pieces of food  
did not pester anybody to get him a drink

my son did not sneak out with his friends  
into a neighbor's orchard to steal apples and cherries  
he did not build Indian teepees  
and was not charmed by Karl May's books

his first literary figure  
with whom he fell in love instantly  
was the friend of a good-hearted piglet  
who used to describe himself  
as a bear of very little brain  
this was the first book  
my son read by himself in Polish  
even before he went to preschool  
and the first one he put under his pillow

some time around the fourth year of his life  
an existential question began to torment him:  
why do people die?  
Grandmother from Poland advised us  
to tell him man does not die  
he just becomes an angel  
my son looked somewhat puzzled  
but said nothing

later he began to wonder  
if dinosaurs had little breasts  
and what worms eat  
lucky for us  
Grandpa was visiting  
and saved us all from this problem  
after all Grandpa knows everything

*Continued on page 12*

w końcu ni z gruchy ni z pietruchy  
sześciolatek osaczył mnie konkretem:  
dlaczego na filmie jak pan całuje panią  
to ją rozbiera  
czy na golasa jest przyjemniej?...  
niestety nie było nikogo w pobliżu  
kto przyszedłby z odsieczą  
zaplątałam się we własnych zeznaniach

było i tak że na podwórku musiał bronić  
młodsze brata  
wracał do domu upokorzony i uparcie milczący  
dlaczego nie przyłożysz mu temu łobuzowi  
który prześladuje twojego braciszka  
przecież jesteś silniejszy - -  
stanowcze "mama przecież wiesz dobrze  
że ja nie mogę uderzyć innego człowieka!"  
odebrało mi mowę

dziś mój syn ma czternaście lat  
i zadaje coraz mniej pytań  
rok temu napisał swój pierwszy wiersz  
poza tym nic się nie zmieniło -  
jak dawniej kocha śmiesznego misia  
i głupiutkiego prosiaczka  
a także wszystkie inne zwierzęta  
które otacza opieką  
nie może tylko znieść ognistych mrówek  
tropikalnych  
"bo te cholery tak gryzą i są wszędzie  
że można się wściec"

pogodziłam się już z tym  
że mój syn nie ma w Ameryce przyjaciół  
z którymi mógłby porozmawiać  
przestałam też zwracać uwagę i dziwić się  
na widok bezpańskich psów  
które wpadają zziębnięte do naszego ogródka  
i kładą się u jego nóg  
jakby chciały chwilę odetchnąć  
nie pytam go "synu co z ciebie wyrośnie"  
lepiej nie zadawać głupich pytań

out of the clear blue sky  
at six years old, he cornered me with a serious problem:  
why in the movies when a man kisses a woman  
does he take her clothes off  
is it more pleasing when you're naked?...  
unfortunately there was nobody around  
to come to my rescue  
and I made a mess of my explanation

at times on a playground he had to defend  
his younger brother  
he'd come home humiliated and stubbornly quiet  
why didn't you beat up this bully  
who harasses your little brother  
you are much stronger—  
firmly: "you know very well mama  
I can't hit another human being!"  
I was speechless

today my son is fourteen  
and asks fewer and fewer questions  
a year ago he wrote his first poem  
other than that nothing has changed—  
he still loves that funny little bear  
and the stupid piglet  
and all other animals  
he takes under his wing  
although he cannot stand tropical  
fire ants  
"because these beasts bite like crazy and are everywhere;  
they can drive a person mad"

I'm now used to the fact  
that my son does not have friends in America  
with whom he can talk  
I learned not to be surprised and to ignore it  
when I see homeless dogs  
run breathless into our yard  
and lie down by his feet  
as if they want to rest for a moment  
I don't ask "son, what is going to become of you?"  
it is better not to ask stupid questions

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**See Page 25**

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## PODSTROCHNIK: TRANSLATION BETWEEN THE LINES (Part 1)

Susan Welsh

Film:

*Подстрочник. Лилианна Лунгина в многосерийном фильме, режиссер Олег Дорман (Podstrochnik. Lilianna Lungina*

in a multi-part film series directed by Oleg Dorman), 2009  
15 TV broadcasts, 5 hours 20 minutes. Only “bootleg”  
DVDs are available, plus online postings, such as:  
[http://video.mail.ru/mail/bubich\\_vera/1432/1431.html](http://video.mail.ru/mail/bubich_vera/1432/1431.html)

Book:

*Подстрочник. Жизнь Лилианны Лунгиной, рассказанная ею в фильме Олега Дормана (Podstrochnik. The life of Lilianna Lungina as told by her in the film by Oleg Dorman)*

An edited transcript of the film, but with about one-third additional material.

Moscow: Izdatelstvo Astrel, CORPUS, 2009; 383 pages, hardbound, \$24.95

No index, but a searchable copy is at  
<http://lib.ololo.cc/b/211635/read>.



Director Oleg Dorman’s 16-part TV series *Podstrochnik*, which explores the life of literary translator Lilianna Zinovyevna Lungina (1920–1998), has created quite a storm in the world of Russian literature and television. Interest in the film was further heightened when, on September 25, 2010, Dorman rejected the TEFI-2010 prize—the equivalent of the Emmy—awarded to him by the Russian Academy of Television, charging, in an open letter, that members of the jury and other leaders of the TV industry were personally responsible for the fact that the film languished for 11 years before seeing the light of day. These same people, he wrote, are among those who have made television “the main factor in the moral and social catastrophe of the past ten years.... They have no right to award a prize to *Podstrochnik*. Lilianna Zinovyevna’s success does not belong to them.”

The reasons for the 11-year stall have not been fully elucidated. Whether due to bureaucratic indifference or politically motivated malice, or both, the film was ignored. Sometimes Dorman was told by TV producers, “I watched it at home, I liked it; but the public doesn’t need it.” Lilianna Lungina died on Jan. 13, 1998, just five months after the filming, and never saw even a minute of this marvelous work.

Journalist Leonid Parfenov, whose intervention, along with that of writer Grigory Chkhartishvili (better known by his pen-name Boris Akunin), finally convinced Rossiya TV to show the 16-part series over four successive nights in

July 2009, writes in his foreword to the book that TV producers deemed it financially too risky to show the film. “You know how it is, they said, you know what mass audiences will think about an old Jewish lady.”

Well, what did they think?

The fact is people loved it. Many of the viewers were young, exactly the audience that Lungina and Dorman hoped to reach. *Izvestia*’s Irina Petrovskaya titled her article “An Extraordinary Miracle” (July 10, 2009). Maiya Belenskaya at *Novaya Gazeta* called it “one of the best documentary films in the history of Russian-Soviet film,” and urged that it be shown in schools (March 5, 2010). Parfenov and others remarked on the superb quality of Lungina’s Russian language. The book, which has sold 80,000 copies, was #1 on the bestseller lists in Moscow and St. Petersburg for 3–4 months, and was voted the best Russian non-fiction book of 2009 by readers at OpenSpace.ru. Dorman himself told *Izvestia* that had he seen the film as an ordinary viewer, he would have “been wild with joy and ready to live forever in a country that has such people in it” (February 1, 2010). And Dorman reported that a young Russian woman living in Europe had posted this message to the blog of Zhenya Lungin, Lilianna’s youngest son: “The way my life has been going lately, I was about to put an end to it. I was that close. And suddenly, I heard your mama on television. Believe me, I am not hysterical and not crazy. But I have to tell you that your mama saved me” (interview on the website Jewish.ru, February 2, 2010).

### A Unique Story

Many fascinating memoirs have been produced by Lungina’s generation in the Soviet Union—the World War II generation, the generation that lived through the Stalin years, the gulag, the “thaw” and its aftermath, and the collapse of the USSR. The rich fare includes Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s classic *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (not a memoir, but close), Evgenia Ginzburg’s *Journey into the Whirlwind* (“Крутой маршрут”), and many more. But Lungina’s story is quite different.

For one thing, she did not go to the camps. By some miracle, neither she nor her close family members were ever arrested. Her father was a Communist Party member, for whom, by 1937, arrest was perhaps *more* likely than for those who were not. Her mother feared the Bolsheviks and never joined the Party. Lilia and her parents had lived abroad, had relatives in Palestine and friends in Europe, and spoke several languages: not good things on your CV during those years, as Stalin’s repression and xenophobia

*Continued on page 14*

grew stronger. But she was never arrested, and so she had the experience of current events and “normal” everyday life that nobody can have who is confined for 10 or 25 years in prison or a forced labor camp.

Therefore Lilianna, a keen observer with a phenomenal memory, tells a side of her generation’s story that Ginzburg or Solzhenitsyn did not experience, and her story is every bit as gripping as theirs. It seems that she knew “everyone” in the Soviet intelligentsia, at least its literary domain, and many who were in the “dissident” camp. And she does not hesitate to name the names of erstwhile colleagues on the other side of the moral divide. (Could that have something to do with why her film was put on the shelf for so long?)

But more profoundly, Lilianna’s story conveys an entire sweep of history, in a century of unimaginable trauma but also efforts to achieve a better world, to be truthful, to create artistic beauty, to develop science and technology for the benefit of man, to raise living standards, to achieve peaceful cooperation among nations. Having lived in Western Europe as a girl, fluent in at least four languages, educated to treasure the best of European and Russian culture, and with an abiding love of her fellow man, she is a universalizing and inspiring personality. This quality of her soul shines through the twinkle in her eye. It is this universal humanity that draws the audience close, especially young viewers who are searching to find universal principles and meaning, in a world where these intangibles seem in very short supply.

Who, then, was Lilianna Lungina? Born Lilianna Zinoviyevna Markovich (1920, in Smolensk), she describes herself, with a characteristically impish chuckle, as a “German girl” or later, a “French-Jewish-Russian girl.” Her father, an engineer and Communist, had learned German in a World War I POW camp. He was sent to Berlin in 1925 to promote trade, and the family lived there until their daughter was 10. But when Lilia’s father brushed aside the warning of an anonymous visitor not to return to Russia and did so for what he thought would be a brief interlude, he was forbidden to leave. Lilianna’s mother, fearful of what the future held, refused to go. She remained abroad with Lilia, mostly in Paris, until she finally rejoined her husband in 1934. She knew that neither of them would leave the USSR again.

After high school, Lilia attended the prestigious Institute of Philosophy, Literature, and History (IFLI), where she met many young people who would become leading lights of the Soviet artistic world. At each step along her way, she was blessed with excellent teachers and made lifelong friendships. She married filmmaker Semyon Lungin, and they had two children, Pavel and Yevgeny (“Zhenya”). The 48-year marriage was zestful, merry (*весельный*), she says, even at the financially and politically worst of times. She became a famous translator, from Swedish, French, and German into Russian (best known are her translations from Swedish of Astrid Lindgren’s classic stories for children,

*Karlsson on the Roof* and *Pippi Longstocking*). As the dissident movement emerged and went through its various phases, the Lungin home became an informal meeting place for an independent-minded set of political and literary friends.

### **A Few Highlights**

What, then, makes Lungina’s tale so special? Here are just a few highlights:

- Her arrival with her mother at the Soviet border in 1934, at the age of 14, returning to Russia from Paris. Entering the train station, she sees with horror that the floor is covered with the bodies of people dying of starvation. “Mama, I don’t want to go. Let’s go back. I’m afraid, I don’t want to go on,” she says. And Mama replies, “We’re on the other side of the border, darling, we’re in the Soviet Union now. There is no way back.”
- Her interrogation at the Lubyanka prison while still a student at IFLI in 1939. Several of her schoolmates have already been arrested. She receives a call at home from the school’s *кагэбэшник* (KGB agent), asking her to come to school immediately to do a translation from French. She protests that she has the flu, has been in bed for a week with a fever. He insists and sends a car for her. She asks for the French document; there is none. An “absolutely faceless young man” appears: “Come with me.” They drive to the Lubyanka. She recalls the elevator ride up six, seven, maybe eight floors, the long corridors with identical doors: no numbers, no markings of any kind; one door after another, one corridor after another. She is taken to a room where suddenly another “faceless” individual appears, her interrogator, who presses her to become an informer against her teachers and fellow students. She refuses. To her surprise, she is released. Leaving by elevator again, she looks down the shaft and sees that there are 8-10 more stories below ground: “terrifying!”
- Her evacuation from Moscow, at the outbreak of World War II, to Naberezhnye Chelny. When they arrive, no one will rent them lodgings, because local residents are suspicious of Muscovites. Lilianna learns, to her amazement, that the Terror had not been confined to the big cities. Here there is not a single family, whether Russian or Tatar, that does have one of its members in prison. Finally the Markoviches find a woman who will give them a room in exchange for personal belongings—not money. “What good is your money to me?” She wants shoes, then a dress, then a sweater. “And when we have nothing left?” Lilia asks. “Then you leave,” was the reply.

*To be continued.*

READERS WHO DO NOT WANT TO WAIT TILL OUR SPRING ISSUE TO READ THE SECOND PART OF THIS FASCINATING STORY WILL FIND IT ON THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES PAGE OF THE SLD WEBSITE.

# MORE THAN WORDS

By Michael Ishenko



## Bringing up associations

My consideration of extralinguistic and culturo-linguistic topics for this column has prompted me to recall an incident from some time in the late 1970s. I walked into a bookstore in my

home town in the former Soviet Union and hit upon a book that I still regret not buying. (The reason I didn't buy it was that I didn't have enough cash on me in those cash-only days, so I hurried home to get some, but when I showed up in the store an hour or so later, the only available copy had already been sold.) The book was titled *A Dictionary of Associative Norms of the Russian Language* («Словарь ассоциативных норм русского языка» под ред. А. А. Леонтьева, М., Московский университет, 1977) ["DAN"]. According to the preface to a similar dictionary published much later (*The Russian Associative Dictionary* ["RAD"] by Yu. Karaulov *et al.*), DAN "raised the veil obscuring the linguistic faculties of the thinking, speaking, and understanding man, [...] offered a picture of word combinability in the living speech of native Russian speakers, and made it possible to pinpoint [...] elements of a naïve linguistic picture of the world the Russians have, as well as traits of their national character, [...] allowing us to gain access to the native speakers' social memory and consciousness and to get an answer to the question, 'How do the Russians in present-day Russia think?'" (Ю. Н. Караулов и др., «Русский ассоциативный словарь», М., 1994, с. 2, in my almost word-for-word translation). The good news, however, is that I recently located a more comprehensive dictionary which is based on the two aforesaid books plus a third. This newfound dictionary was published just two years ago, in 2008, by the Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences and is titled *A Comparative Russian Dictionary of Associations* (Г. А. Черкасова, «Русский сопоставительный ассоциативный словарь», М., Институт языкознания РАН, 2008). It is accessible on the Internet at [www.philippovich.ru/Projects/ASIS/RSPAS/zapusk.htm](http://www.philippovich.ru/Projects/ASIS/RSPAS/zapusk.htm).

Each of the three underlying dictionaries was the result of a survey conducted mostly among college and university students whose native language was Russian. These test subjects came from various regions of Russia and represented over 30 branches of learning. The respondents were offered "stimulus words" and asked to enter in their survey forms the first word or phrase that came to their mind in response to that stimulus. Their response time was limited to 5 to 7 seconds. The students were requested to write nothing at all if they came up with no answer within the short reaction time allowed. The resulting responses were used as the basis of dictionary entries and were listed next to each stimulus word in order of frequency.

After browsing through the 1970s dictionary in the bookstore, my first reaction was, "I certainly wish I could lay my hands on something similar for English." After all, reading associations was like sneaking a look inside the brain of a native speaker. Naturally, I would have preferred the native speaker to be English rather than Russian, because my own language was Russian and I was a student of English at the time (still am). However, no matter how hard I tried, I could never get a hold of an English "dictionary of associations." There were dictionaries of collocations, word finders, even a combinatory dictionary (one of my most treasured)—but nothing as direct, explicit, or succinct as a dictionary of associations.

As I leafed through the dictionary that I didn't want to let go of (asking the clerk to hold it for me would hardly have worked under the circumstances), I caught sight of some truly remarkable associations—real jewels for a student of Russian. To name just a few (the first two in the list below are the ones that struck me most back in the '70s):

- (1) **дядя** > *самых честных правил*
- (2) **слава** > *КПСС*
- (3) **родина** > *мать зовет, ДДТ*
- (4) **город** > *на Неве*
- (5) **утро** > *туманное*

Of the multiple associations listed under each of the above entries, I chose just those of a "Russian-only" nature to illustrate my point. The remaining associations, though not as striking culturally, still appear quite instructive as most of them represent the most frequent and commonplace word combinations, something that any learner of Russian should be interested in. However, they don't seem to call for any "cultural advisor assistance," whereas the above five examples require the plumbing of deeper layers of cultural information.

(1) It seems that only native Russians, educated in Russia or the former Soviet Union, would come up with this kind of association. A. S. Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*, Chapter 1, first line: «Мой дядя самых честных правил...» (*My uncle, rich and well-respected, etc.*). And yes, we had to learn it by heart at school.

(2) Surely, any ex-Soviet can call to mind the huge red *СЛАВА КПСС* banners dominating urban landscapes during the Soviet era. No wonder *КПСС* appears third in the order of frequency in DAN and first (!) in RAD. A truly Soviet association.

(3) The first two associations are hardly surprising to those of us who can recall the war-time recruiting poster, "The Motherland Calls" («Родина-мать зовет!») showing an elderly woman, dressed in red and holding the text of the wartime Oath of Enlistment (<http://davno.ru/posters/1941/>). This poster has been widely reproduced in Russian history textbooks,

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war movies, and war museums and, as such, has become generally known to the public in the former Soviet Union.

The other *родина* association, ДДТ (literally, DDT, or dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, a well-known synthetic pesticide), refers to the name of a popular Russian rock band founded by Yuri Shevchuk (Юрий Шевчук). The band was founded in 1980 in the southern Ural city of Ufa but earned nationwide acclaim during *perestroika*, in the late '80s, especially with their iconic (*культовая*, as they say these days in Russian) song *Motherland* («Еду я на родину»). (The song is available on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ekb9BdrniMg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ekb9BdrniMg). You can look up the lyrics, too, at [www.lyrics.ru](http://www.lyrics.ru) [search for Родина].) Please let me know if you have any problems understanding the lyrics.

On a side note, I have the impression that the English words *motherland* and *fatherland* are hardly ever used in reference to their homeland by native English speakers. Correct me if I'm wrong, but, based on my English reading and translating experience, these two words seem to apply more often to Russia (in the case of *motherland*) and to Germany (and, more specifically, to Nazis in the case of *fatherland*) than to England, Australia, Canada, or the United States. Are they too emotionally or sentimentally charged for stiff-upper-lippers to use? I hope my American colleagues will enlighten me.

(4) The word combination *город на Неве* ("city on the Neva" [River], i.e., Leningrad and, later, St. Petersburg) appears to be as trite to Russians as "City by the Bay" (i.e., San Francisco) is to Americans.

(5) Some readers might conclude that *morning* brings up the association *foggy* (or *misty*) because of the Russian weather, but I beg to disagree. I believe this association stems from the popular Russian romance song (романс) *The Misty Morning* («Утро туманное») (lyrics by I. Turgenyev) (see [www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH9oYdCqN9c&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH9oYdCqN9c&feature=related) for the song and [www.litera.ru/stixiya/authors/turgenev/utro-tumannoe-utro.html](http://www.litera.ru/stixiya/authors/turgenev/utro-tumannoe-utro.html) for the lyrics).

Of course, I would appreciate any comments or questions on this subject.

### Feedback: The Bolivar quiz and Lit Gazeta

I am pleased to report that some *SlavFile* readers not only read the new *More Than Words* column published in the last *SF* issue, but also e-mailed me their comments. (See the [Fall 2010 SlavFile](#), pages 9-10.) One reader noted, in particular, that the Bolivar quiz was too easy, because Wikipedia has the answer, yet admitted she never would have guessed it without that. Well, the objective was not to make the quiz difficult, but rather to encourage readers to look for the answer, so I suppose this objective was indeed achieved. The same reader confessed that she had read *Literaturnaya Gazeta* regularly during the late 1970s and early 1980s, but never knew it ran a regular humor column. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that 95% of the newspaper's readership in the 1970s read page 16 only.



(Page 16 was *LG*'s last page and carried the humor column.) In the late '60s, page 16 came up with a fictitious archetypal Soviet writer, Yevgeni Sazonov (Евгений Сазонов), and his "epic" novel (роман века) titled *The Raging Torrent* («Бурный поток»). That certainly paved the way for big-time spoofing and parodying of various Soviet-era literary clichés and stereotypes. Some of that stuff was really funny. Consider, for example, the two permanent epithets attached to Sazonov's persona: *людовед* и *душелюб*. For the uninitiated, both were newly coined neologisms that, based on their respective compound structures, should mean, *someone knowledgeable about human beings* (*людовед*) and *someone who loves the human soul* (*душелюб*). Conversely, they are also very transparent allusions to the words *людоед* (cannibal) and *душегуб* (murderer). We all know how hopeless it is to try to "explain" humor, so I don't expect you to laugh, but you can take my word for it: it *was* funny.

Another funny page-16 rubric was the so-called *Ачунатки* (from the misspelled word *опечатки* = typos) that published a list of typos intentionally coined for humorous effect. One of the most hilarious made-up "typos" that I still can't forget was *всякой твари по харе*. The correct version (*всякой твари по папе* in one of the existing Russian translations of the Old Testament) is a reference to Genesis 6:19 (the story of Noah's ark) where it says that "of every living thing of all flesh, two of every [sort] shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep [them] alive with thee; they shall be male and female." So *всякой твари по папе* means, in this context, *two [animals] of every sort*. The intentional typo changes it to *по харе*; *хара* is a rude word that means *an ugly face*, a *tug*, and *дать по харе* (rude) means *to punch someone in the face*. Just as in English, *тварь* (beast) means both an *animal* and a *contemptible person*. Thus, changing just one letter (*n* to *x*) transforms the meaning of the phrase from the well-known biblical quotation to something that can be translated roughly as *every punk deserves a punch in the face*. Of course, after this lengthy, pedantic explanation this joke, too, will hardly make my readers laugh—but I can remember myself cracking up when I read it first and proclaiming it one of the funniest of all *ачунатки* ever written.

*Literaturnaya Gazeta* is available online ([www.lgz.ru](http://www.lgz.ru)) and page 16 is still there. You can find it under the same title, «Клуб 12 стульев» (*The Twelve Chairs Club*, a reference to the classical satirical novel by Ilf and Petrov, *The Twelve Chairs* [please don't read it in English—the translation I have on my shelf is quite horrible]). The Club's *stengazeta* (wall newspaper) «Пора и копыта» (*Horns and*

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# Special Education Terminology in Bosnian

Janja Pavetic-Dickey

In the U.S., education has always been an area where translation and interpretation services are frequently required. This trend is unlikely to change in the near future as the number of immigrants whose children enter the U.S. education system continues to rise. Many of those children speak English as a second language or with limited proficiency and are therefore entitled to appropriate language instruction as well as other special educational services. Just as importantly, the law obligates education agencies to provide parents of such children with all the necessary materials and correspondence in a language they understand or use as a primary mode of communication. It is this legal requirement that is the biggest factor in generating great demand for translation, especially if there is a dispute between the parents and the school district regarding the child's placement. Documents that are likely to arrive in the translator's inbox thus often fall within the area of special education, which, unfortunately for the translator, trumps other subareas of education in terms of terminological difficulty. It is a field peppered with acronyms and highly specialized terms, and deciphering those can sometimes be as daunting as the process of translation itself.

Within this context, South Slavic languages are no exception. In today's multilingual U.S. schools, South Slavic is mostly present in areas where the largest communities of refugees were settled following the war in the former Yugoslavia. Most of those refugees came from Bosnia, and Bosnian (rather than Serbian or Croatian) is thus frequently the language spoken by parents whose children attend school in those areas. Special education terminology in Bosnian is much more limited than it is in English, and there are rarely any conceptual or linguistic equivalents, not to mention acronyms. In English, special education terminology can be thought of as the intersection of terminology from two more traditional fields: law and mental

health. Thus, a translator who is reasonably versed in these two fields will have a somewhat easier time translating special ed documents than somebody specializing in mechanics or musicology, for instance. Furthermore, if instead of searching for a suitable equivalent for special ed acronyms, we accept that there are no equivalents and instead follow a general rule of always including the English acronym in parentheses after the Bosnian translation, our task of translating special ed documents becomes much easier. (A similar practice would also benefit translators working with other languages whose speakers are not familiar with such developed special ed terminology.) These English acronyms function as valuable orientation points for the target audience (both the Bosnian speakers and the Anglophone clients) because they provide clarity about key elements in these potentially very confusing texts.

On the legal side of things, the two acronyms that appear most frequently in special ed documents are IDEA, which stands for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Both are federal laws. The first ensures services to children with disabilities, and the second protects the privacy of student records. The text of both of these can be found on the U.S. Department of Education website at <http://idea.ed.gov/>. Although there is as yet no agreed-upon set of criteria on how titles of legal documents should be translated, a good rule of thumb is to follow the style and format of the target language, while at the same time ensuring that the legal and cultural meaning is conveyed accurately. The titles of the two laws mentioned above should

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*Hooves*), a subrubric to *The Twelve Chairs Club*, is an allusion to another Ilf and Petrov novel, «Золотой теленок» (*The Little Golden Calf*). If *SF* readers look up any page-16 humor and encounter any "cultural comprehension" problems, I will be happy to discuss them in future *SF* issues.

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*LRS pre-empts the privilege of being the first to comment on the topic of the cultural meaning of associations. She researched this technique as part of her master's thesis in psychology and learned how important it is to distinguish between purely verbal associations (e.g., saying Bob in response to Sponge) and associations based on actual mental associations among concepts (e.g., à la Freud, saying frightening in response to father). Since verbal associations (sometimes called clang associations) are faster than conceptual ones and are more stereotyped, they are likely to be the most common. Thus, cultural features or differences in common associations may reveal something culturally significant about mental structures only to the extent of disclosing what words (not concepts) are linked in people's heads, most likely through constant repetition such as of phrases in commercials or patriotic formulae.*

## SPECIAL EDUCATION TERMINOLOGY IN BOSNIAN

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definitely not be translated literally because there are no equivalent laws in Bosnia, and because Bosnian, like other South Slavic languages with a morphological case system, requires the use of prepositional phrases to describe the purpose of a law or other legal document, something that in English is achieved through a much more economical placement of modifiers. For instance, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act would be something like “Zakon o obrazovanju lica sa invaliditetom” (Act on the Education of Persons with Invalidity) (instead of “invaliditet” [invalidity], which is an old and still widely used term, the new and politically correct term “onesposobljenje” [disability] could also be substituted here for the English “disabilities”). Suitable translations of the English “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act” would be “Zakon o obrazovnim pravima i privatnosti porodica” (Act on Educational Rights and Privacy of Families) or “Zakon o pravima i privatnosti porodica u obrazovnom sistemu” (Act on the Rights and Privacy of Families within the Education System), which is slightly longer but stylistically closer to what a Bosnian law would be called if it existed. The second translation also makes clear what kind of rights are protected under this law, i.e., the rights of families within the system to control who has access to their children’s educational records. To arrive at a functional translation of each law it is necessary to look beyond the English title, which leaves much open to interpretation, and check the legal definitions online or in the still-authoritative *Black’s Law Dictionary*.

Another legal acronym that frequently appears in special ed documents is “FAPE,” which stands for “free appropriate public education” and is neither a law nor an act but a requirement that exists and is enforced under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (in Bosnian “Zakon o rehabilitaciji [invalida/lica sa invaliditetom]”). This law protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal funding. So if a school district receives federal funds, it is required under Section 504 of this law to provide “free appropriate public education” to each qualified person with a disability within its jurisdiction. The Bosnian translation of the term is “besplatno odgovarajuće javno obrazovanje” with the acronym “FAPE” added in parentheses.

Other frequently used legal terms include “procedural safeguards” and “procedural safeguards notice,” where the term “procedural safeguards” refers to procedural steps that are built into the IDEA to protect the rights of parents of students with disabilities to be involved in the educational decisions regarding their child. The procedural safeguards notice is simply a written copy of these safeguards that the school is required to provide to parents at least once per school year as a way of notifying them of their rights. In my opinion, the best way to translate “procedural safeguards” is quite literally, as “proceduralne garancije,”

because this is the term that is widely used in the legislature of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in the new laws that have been adopted as a way of harmonizing Bosnian legislation with the laws of the European Union. This translation also works well in the title of the document “Procedural Safeguards for Parents and Children,” namely “Proceduralne garancije za roditelje i djecu.” I have also come across different solutions, i.e., “postupak za zaštitu prava roditelja i djece” (procedure for the protection of rights of parents and children) and “proceduralne zaštitne mjere za roditelje i djecu” (procedural protective measures for parents and children). Though the latter is closer to the English original with protective measures being a different way of saying “safeguards,” I prefer “proceduralne garancije” for two reasons: 1) it is shorter and less cumbersome, 2) it is widely used in Bosnian laws as well. The “procedural safeguards notice” would then simply be translated as “obavijest o proceduralnim garancijama.” Another type of notice that is mentioned and abbreviated in many special ed texts is “written prior notice” or “WPN” and stands for a document that must be signed by parents before a school district takes any action regarding a child. To translate this term into Bosnian we need to reverse the customary adjective order (where “prior” precedes “written”) and say “pismena prethodna obavijest” in order to preserve the structure of the source phrase.

Closely connected with the notice of procedural safeguards is the term “consent” (“pristanak/saglasnost”) or “parental consent” (“roditeljski pristanak/saglasnost”), which is again a legal document or form that shows that parents agree to an evaluation or the initial provision of special education and related services to their child with disability. An education agency is not allowed to conduct an evaluation or place a child with a disability in a special program or school without possessing a copy of this form signed by the parents. This represents one of the most important procedural safeguards under the IDEA. An agency can only proceed with an evaluation without this parental consent form if it can demonstrate that “reasonable measures” (“razumne mjere”) have been taken to obtain consent.

Other legal terms that might pose a problem in translation of special education documents are “due process hearing” and its variations “impartial due process hearing” and “expedited due process hearing,” as well as the related term “hearing officer,” which also appears in the phrase “impartial hearing officer” or “IHO.” Again, as with other legal terms, the first step before attempting a translation should be a review of the legal definitions of these terms in English. A due process hearing is an official review process governed by administrative laws that helps parents and school districts resolve special education disputes. A suggested Bosnian translation of “due process hearing” is “zakonom propisana rasprava.” “Rasprava” is a legal term used to refer to court hearings (“sudska rasprava”) and is

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fitting here since we are dealing with an official hearing at which parents and the school district may be represented by legal counsel and present evidence and testimony, and the result of which is legally binding. The only problem with this translation arises from the fact that the term “process” is omitted from the translation, since its meaning has been incorporated in the term “rasprava.” This is because there is no stylistically acceptable way to express the relationship between “due process” and “hearing” in Bosnian without the translation becoming cumbersome and too long to be incorporated into other composite phrases (for instance, we could say “rasprava unutar zakonom propisanog postupka” (“hearing within due process”) or “rasprava kojom se izvršava zakonom propisani postupak” (“hearing to enforce due process”), but imagine the length of a sentence or document in which the term is repeated multiple times). Again, English is much more economical in this regard due to the lack of a morphological case system. On the other hand, we cannot say something like “rasprava o zakonom propisanom postupku” (“hearing about due process”) because the parties are not discussing due process at the hearing; instead, the hearing is the implementation of due process, the act of allowing due process to take place, as it were. Because of this, in Bosnian we can substitute “hearing” (rasprava) as one element of the process for the whole without compromising the accuracy of translation. An impartial due process hearing would then be “nepriistrana zakonom propisana rasprava” while an “expedited due process hearing” would be “ubrzana zakonom propisana rasprava.”

Such hearings are presided over by a hearing officer. Hearing officers may be attorneys or educators with advanced legal training whose decisions have the effect of law. Hearing officers must have no conflict of interest in resolving hearing issues (hence the term impartial hearing officer or IHO) and are required to disclose any associations they have with either party in a hearing. In cases where there is reasonable doubt that an IHO may be impartial, he or she will be replaced with a different IHO. A suggested translation of the term “hearing officer” is “raspravni službenik” or “službenik za rasprave,” while an impartial hearing officer would be “nepriistrani raspravni službenik/nepriistrani službenik za rasprave.” Sometimes IHOs recuse themselves if they believe they cannot be objective or even if they are concerned about the appearance of impropriety. “Recusing” is the process by which a judge, or in this case a hearing officer, is disqualified from hearing a case, on his or her own motion or upon the objection of either party. In translating the verb “recuse” into Bosnian, we need to pay attention to the context, i.e., who initiated the request for replacement of the hearing officer. If the hearing officer has been disqualified because of an objection by the parent or the school district a suitable translation would be “diskvalifikovan na osnovu pristranosti.” However, if an officer recuses himself

the Bosnian “diskvalifikovati” does not work because it does not convey the volitional nature of the act; “odbiti na osnovu pristranosti” works much better in cases where the initiative comes from the hearing officer.

In addition to difficulties with legal terminology, another aspect of special education terminology that may pose a problem in translation, mostly due to a large number of acronyms, is what I propose to call administrative special ed terminology. It includes names of various state agencies and bodies involved in special education, the type of work they do, and the products of their work. The biggest and highest authority in charge of special education in the U.S. is obviously the “ED” or the Department of Education. In Bosnian, the equivalent body encompasses not only education but also science and sometimes sports, and is called “Ministarstvo prosvjete” or “Ministarstvo obrazovanja” (nauke i sporta, which should not of course be included in translations referring to the U.S. Department). Within the ED, several agencies deal with special education matters, namely the Office of Special Education Programs, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, and the Rehabilitation Services Administration. All of these are likely to appear in special education documents with their acronyms (see table on the following page), but translating them, once you decipher the acronyms, presents no particular difficulty.

Administrative special ed terms that do present some difficulty in translation are the terms used for various products and services that the aforementioned agencies provide. There are appropriate acronyms for most if not all of these, such as IEP, BIP, FBA or EIS. You might thus be asked to translate a document in which an LEA or EIS must do a FIA or a FBA to develop an IEP and ensure FAPE! If you think this is confusing, wait until we begin discussing mental health terminology in the next issue of *SlavFile*. For now, let us focus on the above acronyms and some related terms and their possible translation into Bosnian.

The acronym that appears most frequently in special ed documents is without a doubt IEP, which stands for individualized education program (or plan) and is a document that describes in detail the educational needs of an individual child with disabilities. As shown in the table above, IEP should be translated into Bosnian quite literally as “individualizirani obrazovni program” while the IEP team which develops the IEP must be translated more descriptively as “tim za izradu individualiziranog obrazovnog programa.” The IEP team develops the IEP after conducting a full individual evaluation (FIA) of the child or a functional behavioral assessment (FBA), also known as functional behavioral analysis. “Full individual evaluation” can be translated into Bosnian as “potpuna individualna procjena” while a suitable translation of FBA would be “funkcionalna procjena/analiza ponašanja.” The service that under the IDEA provides evaluation and intervention for children who are not yet identified as needing special education but who

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## SPECIAL EDUCATION TERMINOLOGY IN BOSNIAN

Continued from page 19

need additional academic and behavioral support is called EIS or early intervening (or intervention) services. These can be provided by LEAs or local educational agencies, which are different from SEAs or state educational agencies, and can sometimes be referred to as CEISs, which stands for coordinated early intervening services (“koordinirane usluge ranog interveniranja”). The Bosnian translation of all these terms is fairly straightforward and given in the table to the right. One early intervening strategy is called “Response to Intervention” and abbreviated “RTI.” A suggested translation into Bosnian is “odgovor na intervenciju,” also given in the table.

In the next issue we will discuss the mental health terminology that forms an important area of special education terminology.

Janja Pavetic-Dickey, along with her husband Stephen M. Dickey, is our co-editor for South Slavic. She is a former UN staff interpreter and translator for Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian and currently freelances as a medical/legal translator, post-edit linguistic reviewer, and interpreter. She welcomes feedback and submissions of interest to other translators and interpreters working in South Slavic languages. Janja can be reached at [jpdickey@sunflower.com](mailto:jpdickey@sunflower.com).

English Special Ed Acronyms	Suggested Bosnian Translation
BIP—Behavior Intervention Plan	Plan za intervenciju u ponašanju
ED—Department of Education	Ministarstvo prosvjete/Ministarstvo obrazovanja
EIS—Early Intervening Services, also sometimes Early Intervention Services	Usluge ranog interveniranja/Usluge rane intervencije
FAPE—Free Appropriate Public Education	Besplatno odgovarajuće javno obrazovanje
FBA—Functional Behavioral Assessment, also known as Functional Behavioral Analysis	Funkcionalna procjena ponašanja/Funkcionalna analiza ponašanja
FERPA—Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	Zakon o obrazovnim pravima i privatnosti porodica
FIE—Full Individual Evaluation	Potpuna individualna procjena
IDEA—Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	Zakon o obrazovanju lica sa invaliditetom/onesposobljenjem
IEP—Individualized Education Program, also Individualized Education Plan	Individualizirani obrazovni program/Individualizirani obrazovni plan
IHO—Impartial Hearing Officer	Nepristrani raspravni službenik
LEA—Local Educational Agency	Lokalna obrazovna agencija
OSEP—Office of Special Education Programs	Ured za programe specijalnog obrazovanja
OSERS—Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services	Ured za specijalno obrazovanje i rehabilitacijske usluge
RSA—Rehabilitation Services Administration	Uprava za rehabilitacijske usluge
RTI—Response to Intervention	Odgovor na intervenciju
SEA—State Educational Agency	Državna obrazovna agencija
WPN—Written Prior Notice	Prethodna pismena obavijest

### ATTENTION: Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, Bulgarian and Macedonian Translators and Interpreters

#### Contributions sought for a South Slavic Focus issue of *SlavFile*

Preparations to publish a South Slavic focus issue of *SlavFile* in the summer of 2011 are currently underway. We would like to encourage all of you who work with these languages in an area that might be of interest to other South Slavic translators and interpreters, or even better to SLD members in general, to contact us as soon as possible with ideas or offers of possible submissions. This is a wonderful opportunity to publish your own work or let us know what areas you would like to see covered in an issue focusing on South Slavic languages. Deadline for submissions will be the first week in May, but please contact us sooner and let us know what you would like to write.

Contact Janja Pavetic-Dickey at [jpdickey@sunflower.com](mailto:jpdickey@sunflower.com) or Nora or Lydia at the addresses on the masthead.



## “Pain-Full” Linguistic Traps in Patient Histories

Yuliya Baldwin

In my work as a medical interpreter helping Russian-speaking clients communicate with their healthcare professionals, I have come to recognize several problems that arise when I help clients fill out their medical history forms. Patient histories used to be, and in the Russian healthcare system still are, an element of oral medical discourse—a doctor actually talks to a patient and asks him questions directly, retrieving fuller and more detailed information while being able to clarify it on the spot, sensing when a patient doesn’t understand a term, responding to body language, etc. At the present time in the United States, medical histories have turned into very formal, complicated “do-it-yourself” written questionnaires. This change was obviously intended to save time for the healthcare provider. On the other hand, it transfers responsibility to the patient, who has to navigate through a jungle of medical terms that are often too difficult even for a native speaker of English. Just imagine the helplessness and frustration of a patient with poor-to-no English proficiency and a rather vague comprehension of medical terminology even in his native language.

The expectation is that interpreters fill out a medical history for a low-proficiency English speaker prior to the patient-doctor interview. The first challenge for the medical interpreter is a consequence of the fact that there is no standard medical history questionnaire in the American healthcare system, even within the same healthcare system. An interpreter may well encounter several different versions of such forms in a family or outpatient clinic, a medical specialist office, or a hospital. Another challenge is the limited time: in many cases the interpreter is given only five to ten minutes to question the client and fill out a multi-page medical form before the encounter with the physician.

Patients may fail to give the interpreter accurate information because of unfamiliarity with medical terms, the inherent limitations of yes/no questions, and the cultural sensitivity of certain issues. Medical interpreters face their own set of related challenges—they must possess knowledge of medical and technical terminology on both the professional and the conversational level in both languages as well as cultural empathy. I am confident that my colleagues would agree that the client is frequently unable to answer certain questions unless the interpreter explains them in detail. For instance, I have often been asked to tell a patient what

kind of disease is meant by the terms “lupus” or “sickle cell trait,” etc., and it has never sufficed to simply give the Russian translations, i.e., “волчанка” and “серповидноклеточная анемия,” since the patient is equally unfamiliar with the Russian words. Surely these are questions that should be answered and put in plain words by healthcare professionals rather than interpreters.

The rest of this column will discuss one of the problems that medical interpreters may face when helping clients with medical history assessment, namely, linguistic traps relating to the concept of pain. The concept of pain (боль) and its ramifications is naturally most often at the core of a patient’s visit to a doctor. Nevertheless, some interpreters may have never given much thought to the linguistic and technical aspects of this concept, nor to the diversity of types of pain and its importance in the recording of medical histories. The medical interpreter has to keep in mind that the accurate translation of pain type (характер боли) may well help the patient to describe his state more precisely and assist the provider with his diagnosis.

For example, under the headings “History of Acute Pain/History of Chronic Pain” used by one of the biggest hospitals in North Carolina, we find eight specific types of pain: aches, burns, radiates, sharp, stabbing, throbbing, tender, and acute. In my practice I have witnessed an interpreter pretending to stab himself with an imaginary knife as a result of failure to recall the proper translation of ‘stabbing pain’ in Ukrainian. It should be noted that this made the patient laugh, which was certainly a positive achievement. Overall there are more than 50 descriptions of pain I have come across on many occasions in the healthcare environment when history of pain was in question. Even though most medical descriptions of pain types correlate with everyday vocabulary both in English and Russian, there were a few times when I was puzzled and struggled to find the closest equivalent when interpreting.

This caused me to realize that if it is considered highly relevant in the source language to distinguish between so many kinds/types of pain when assessing a patient, the professional medical interpreter should be able to match the variety in the target language. After some research, I have identified some of the terms most often encountered on medical history forms to describe pain and their appropriate equivalents found in the Russian official medical vernacular:

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**REMEMBER: PROPOSALS FOR THE 2011 ATA CONFERENCE MUST BE SUBMITTED BY MARCH 14**

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## “PAIN-FULL” LINGUISTIC TRAPS IN PATIENT HISTORIES

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1.	<i>aching</i>	тупая/болезненная
2.	<i>acute</i>	острая
3.	<i>attack</i>	приступообразная
4.	<i>burning</i>	жгучая, жжение
5.	<i>chronic</i>	хроническая
6.	<i>cramping</i>	схваткообразная
7.	<i>cutting</i>	режущая, рези
8.	<i>dull</i>	тупая
9.	<i>faint</i>	слабая
10.	<i>gnawing</i>	постоянно ноющая
11.	<i>grueling</i>	изнурительная
12.	<i>intense</i>	сильная
13.	<i>local</i>	местная
14.	<i>moderate</i>	умеренная
15.	<i>nagging</i>	ноющая/щемящая
16.	<i>nauseating</i>	тошнотворная
17.	<i>piercing</i>	колющая
18.	<i>pressing</i>	давящая
19.	<i>pulling</i>	тянущая
20.	<i>sharp</i>	резкая/острая
21.	<i>shooting</i>	стреляющая
22.	<i>splitting (headache)</i>	голова раскалывается
23.	<i>stabbing</i>	колющая
24.	<i>sudden</i>	внезапная
25.	<i>squeezing</i>	сжимающая
26.	<i>tender</i>	слабая, болезненное место, побаливает
27.	<i>throbbing</i>	пульсирующая, дергающая
28.	<i>tugging</i>	тянущая
29.	<i>twisting</i>	скручивающая
30.	<i>unbearable</i>	невыносимая

Доктор Айболит (Dr. Ow-It-Hurts), Russia’s answer to Dr. Doolittle, dealt with pain with empathy rather than questionnaires.

Certain pain descriptors may prove quite linguistically challenging for medical interpreters—*epigastric* (боль под ложечкой), *fasting* (боль натошак), *girdle* (опоясывающая боль), *lumbar* (боль в пояснице), *sacral* (боль в области крестца), *joint* (боль в суставах), *pressure* (боль при надавливании, not to be confused with *pressing*—давящая боль). However, translations that, though accurate, sound foreign and/or technical may confuse clients with lower levels of education or competence. In such cases an interpreter may need to go beyond just translating into the target language and provide some explanation on a conversational level, i.e. *spasmodic*—спазматическая боль (приступы острой боли, быстро следующие один за другим), *colicky*—коликообразная боль (повторяющиеся приступы острой боли в животе).

There is such a thing as an *acceptable pain level* (терпимый уровень боли), *onset* (начало, возникновение боли), *duration* (продолжительность, длительность), *frequency* (частота возникновения), *intensity* (сила) and *localization* (локализация, в каком месте болит); pain can also *subside* (стихать), be *diminished* (уменьшаться/приглушаться/притупляться), be *relieved* by something (облегчение/снятие/купирование боли) or be *aggravated* (усиливаться).

Surely we have only scratched the surface of the pain vocabulary, but by now we can begin to appreciate its depth and complexity and raise awareness of what a *pain* medical discourse can be.



Clip art from solnushki.ru

# SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone

This year’s very enjoyable and enlightening preconference seminar by Greiss lecturer Russell Valentino, *Translation as Writing and Rhetoric*, was, in essence, a workshop. Participants were invited to attempt a number of intralinguistic translation exercises designed to increase “fluency and creativity.” In the first one of these, we were asked to rewrite the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm into modern English using as our model George Orwell’s “scientific” translation of a quote from Ecclesiastes, “[T]he race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong...but time and chance happen to them all.” Orwell’s rendering: “[S]uccess in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but...a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account.”

I was delighted with this assignment as it allowed me to exercise a long-unused skill I had acquired in a couple of decades of working and writing for agencies of the Federal Government—call this the facile production of *bureaucratic*

*systemese*. Systems theory is defined by Wikipedia as “an interdisciplinary theory about the nature of complex systems in nature, society, and science, and is a framework by which one can investigate and/or describe any group of objects that work together to produce some result.” In my jaded view, the worst kind of writing based on this theory involves abstracting the topic from all identifiable particular features and couching the discussion in the most convoluted syntax and barren but prolix generalizations possible. Here is my version of the Psalms’ first stanza.

This translation increased original word count by nearly a factor of 2. And when I was working for the government I never even thought of charging by the word!



Caricature of Lydia by Katya Korobkina

23 <sup>rd</sup> Psalm: King James Version	Systemese (subtype Bureaucratic) Translation
The Lord is my Shepherd,	It is most rational to allow the superordinate principle to determine directionality, priority, and other integral system features.
I shall not want;	This is the most efficient management structure for achieving maximum compliance with requirements of subordinate entities.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters;	The aforementioned structure has been demonstrated to assure high levels of satisfaction with regard to physical necessities
He restoreth my soul.	as well as higher order desiderata.
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.	As a byproduct of such satisfaction, a desirable level of appropriateness to the highest priority of the superordinate principle is virtually automatically ensured.

**Errata.** While looking for the exact bibliographic citation for one of the dictionaries I mention in our Idiom Savants column, I came upon a translation error that astonished me, especially in a reference that I had never found at all unreliable. The Russian title page of D. I. Kveselevich’s Russian-English Phraseological (i.e. Idiom) Dictionary («Русско-английский фразеологический словарь», Русский язык, 2000) says exactly that. However, the facing English title page has “translated” Russian-English as “English-Russian”! It seem incredible to me that anyone capable of putting even this straightforward title into English would not know that the order of language names makes a critical difference in dictionary titles and that, furthermore, no one associated with the book caught the error. However, I still am unwilling to rescind my recommendation of this volume.

I discovered another error during the same week. I realized that I had been erroneously interpreting the French phrase commonly used in English *faux pas* (false step) as

the homonymous *faut pas*. I took this to be a truncated form of *il ne faut pas* (it should not be done), which seemed to fit the English usage perfectly. Do I have any justification for including this error in a column supposedly about matters Russian and Slavic? Well, only that I had always assumed that the phrase in question was the opposite of *comme il faut* (literally: as it should be /done/, meaning the socially correct thing) and I first came upon this latter phrase in Tolstoy’s *Childhood, Adolescence, and Youth*, which my father was using to try to teach me Russian about the same time I was studying French.

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Between major office cleanups, the 25 or so dictionaries and other references I use regularly can typically be found lying around on my desk, nearby tables and chairs and even the floor. The other estimated 400 or so references I have accumulated over the course of a longish career as a translator, writer, and would-be lexicographer line the walls of my overcrowded office, only rarely serving any function

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## SLAVFILE LITE

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other than the recently much needed one of insulation. And yet I continue to buy dictionaries. Why? Mostly because, when the subject interests me I like to read them or at least browse them generously. Also, new reference books come in handy when there is a column to fill, an event that occurs more frequently than clean-ups, I am afraid.

I acquired a dictionary recently that I would like to recommend: Dyadechko's *Winged Words of Our Time: An Explanatory Dictionary* (Л. П. Дядечко «Крылатые слова нашего времени: Толковый словарь» НТ Пресс, 2008.). This dictionary contains 1000 entries of terms (760 pages) that "have become winged before our eyes." The particular period of this transformation is surprisingly not further defined, but it would seem to include terms (or usages) not covered by previous winged dictionaries, primarily Ashukin and Ashukina's work, published initially in 1955, up to some time before the present work's publication date of 2008. As proof that this volume is at least relatively up to date, I cite the fact that it includes Putin's notorious «замочить (мочить) в сортире».

In his introduction, the author specifies exactly what he includes under the poetically inexact term of *winged words*: "Titles of books, brochures, paintings, and sculpture, etc.; quotes from literary, journalistic and other texts; names and reported speech of characters in works of literature, operas and operettas, television series, films and cartoons; expressions used by actual public figures as well as radio and TV characters that can be found cited in at least 4 or 5 contexts as linguistic units, divorced from their original source context."

From my standpoint, that of a dictionary browser, Russian-into-English mainly literary translator, and someone who knows classic Russian literature fairly well and 21<sup>st</sup> century Russian popular culture virtually not at all, this book is a wonderful addition to the "non-insulation only" subsection of my library.

This would be the case even if I did not own the 1996 edition of Ashukin and Ashukina (A&A). To digress a minute from the main topic of this review, I would have to say that to me, only approximately 10%-20% of the citations A&A contains would be of any real use. The majority of entries are references to Greek, Roman, and (perhaps surprisingly for a work that came out during Soviet times) Biblical sources and to more modern non-Russian sources such as Voltaire, Heine, and Shakespeare. Most of these one would be able to find in an English reference book or on the web. The Russian literary sources are by and large so well-known that even I know them. In addition, common-knowledge political and general modern terms such as железный занавес are included. There are of course many entries that are new to me, quotes from Lenin, for example



(possibly because at least some of them are no longer in use). No information is given as to how these winged terms are used in conversation and/or print. It should be noted, perhaps, that the best information about the use in Russian of many traditional winged words (from literature, folklore and traditional proverbs, and even films) can be found in Genevra Gerhart's *Russian Context* (Slavica, 2002).

In contrast, Dyadechko includes many classical, Biblical, general, and pre-Soviet terms that meet anyone's definition of winged words but were unaccountably left out of A&A (see Nos. 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8 below) as well as numerous catchwords drawn primarily but not exclusively from Russian 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century popular culture—movies, TV, radio, songs, children's books, politics, and even Russian and other folksongs and sayings. It is possibly worth noting that according to my unscientific survey, the most quoted figure in this volume is Ostap Bender (and I have the feeling that Winnie the Pooh and his friends, in Zakhoder's translation, are not far behind).

The virtues of Dyadechko's work do not stop with the terms included. I am equally enthusiastic about the fact that the definitions include brief descriptions of how these catchwords are used in conversation and written material and then are further classified by a set of symbols for type of usage. For example, a smiley face indicates a phrase used in jest while a smiley followed by a frowny is associated with ironic use. A sun (for exaltation) followed by an → and then by the ironic sign is used for high-style (generally Soviet) phrases that were used as part of exalted praise in past times and now are used ironically. One example of such a phrase is несокрушимая и легендарная (indestructible and legendary) when used in reference to the Soviet or Russian armed forces. Other symbols characterize phrase source and realm of usage (e.g. "wide use in colloquial speech," "typically pronounced in imitation of speaker's accent").

Below are semi-random selections from Dyadechko's *Winged Words of Our Times* (including selected usage notes). Note: the English phrase in parenthesis directly following Russian entries is my translation of the entry. The subsequent English explanation is translated or paraphrased from the much longer Russian original.

1. Автомобиль—не роскошь, а средство передвижения. (An automobile is not a luxury, it is a mode of transportation.) Quotation from Ilf and Petrov's *Golden Calf*. Widespread colloquial use. 1. About an automobile, to say its advantages justify an expense. 2. Metaphorically to justify large expenditures on something considered necessary.
2. Американская мечта. (The American Dream.) Used in reference to a dream of success purportedly realizable only in the U.S.
3. Белеет парус одинокий. (A lone sail gleams white.) Start of Lermontov's poem, "The Sail." 1. Used to refer to something or someone isolated. 2. Metaphorically used to refer to something that stands out because of its color.

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## SLAVFILE LITE

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4. Больше света! (More light!) Last words of Goethe. 1. Request to increase amount of light available. 2. Request for more truth and openness.
5. Борис, ты не прав! (Boris, you are wrong.) Words addressed by Ligachev to Yeltsin at a CPSU Central Committee Plenary meeting, after the latter had criticized party policies. Widespread colloquial use. 1. Expresses lack of agreement with something proposed by the addressee (humorous, ironic). 2. Disapproving reference to the actions of someone named Boris.
6. Весь мир—театр, и все мы в нем актеры. (All the world's a stage and all the men and women, merely players.) Quotation from Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. Negative: comment on lack of sincerity in interpersonal relations.
7. Висит груша—нельзя скушать. (A pear is hanging down, but it cannot be eaten.) Riddle; answer: a light bulb. Humorous or ironic reference to something unattainable.
8. В начале было слово. (In the beginning was the word.) *Bible*, John 1:1. Used to refer to the importance of words in spiritual life.
9. Восток—дело тонкое. (The East is a delicate matter.) Quotation from movie *White Sun in the Desert*. 1. Reference to the difficulty of solving problems concerning Asia or the East in general, as a result of inscrutable (in European eyes) Asian behavior. 2. Metaphorically about a ticklish or delicate problem.
10. Дама сдавала в багаж... (A lady checked with baggage claim...) Start of children's poem by Marshak. Reference to problems with baggage encountered during travel.

Below are semi-random selections from Ashukin and Ashukina's *Winged Words*. English phrase in parentheses following Russian entry is my translation.

1. А счастье было так возможно, так близко. (Yet happiness was so possible, so close.) Quotation from Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*.
2. Аврора. (Aurora.) Roman Goddess of Dawn.
3. Блоху подковать. (Put horse shoes on a flea.) Reference to Leskov's *The Lefty* («Левша»).
4. Блудный сын. (Prodigal son.) *Bible*, Luke 15:11-32.
5. Борьба за существование. (Struggle for survival.) Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*.
6. Воздушные замки. (Castles in the air; equivalent to castles in Spain.) Expression coming from the French, attributed in the book to the castles awarded to a German general for military successes. (Note: I cannot find any corroboration on the Internet for this origin.)
7. Ворона в павлиньих перьях. (A crow in peacock feathers.) From fable of the same name by Krylov.
8. Все к лучшему в этом лучшем из миров. (All is for the best in this best of all possible worlds.) Voltaire's *Candide*.

9. Головокружение от успехов. (Dizzy with success.) Title of a speech by Stalin.
10. Десять дней, которые потрясли мир. (Ten Days that Shook the World.) Title of book by John Reed about the Russian revolution.

The one major fault I find with Dyadechko's book is the lack of an index, which would make looking up even very slightly inexact quotes or remembered phrases difficult. This is especially true since entries are alphabetized on the basis of first word even if it is a particle, exclamation, or preposition.

Despite this significant omission, I highly recommend this book to readers. It is a good value at its list price of \$34.95. I was able to purchase it at a December sale for 30% off at \$24.47 from Russia Online books. This sale will have officially ended before this *SlavFile* issue is published. However, Russia Online ([www.russia-on-line.com](http://www.russia-on-line.com)) has agreed to extend this sale on all volumes they carry mentioned in this issue through the winter for those who mention our publication.

Other Russian reference books I have recently ordered from them and may well review in future *SlavFile* issues are also available at a discount at Russia Online. The discounted price is the one given.

Сеничкина, Е. П. Словарь эвфемизмов русского языка. Флинта, 2008, 464 с. \$27.97.

Харченко, В. К. Словарь современного детского языка. АСТ, 2005, 637 с. \$7.66.

Летягова, Т. В. и др. Тысяча состояний души. Флинта, 2006, 424 с. \$19.56.

Даль, В. И. 1000 русских пословиц. РИПОЛ, 2010, 320 с. \$5.57.

Словарь пословиц на 8 языках. АСТП, 2008, 416 с. \$6.97.

Даль, В. И. Толковый словарь русского языка, 2008, 983 с. \$13.97.

Химик, В. Большой словарь русской разговорной экспрессивной речи. НОРИН, 2004, 768 с. \$24.47.

Other books mentioned in this issue and discounted through March for our readers by Russia Online are:

Page 13. SlavFilms. Дорман, О. Подстрочник. Жизнь Лилианны Лунгиной. АСТР, 2010, 383 с. \$17.47.

Page 28. Idioms. Ожегов, С. И. Словарь русского языка. МИР, 2008, 976 с. \$25.87.

Page 28. Елистратов, В. Толковый словарь русского сленга. АСТП, 2010, 672 с. \$27.97.

Page 29. Idioms. Квеселевич, Д. И. Толковый словарь ненормативной лексики русского языка, АСТ 2003, АСТ, 1022 с. \$27.97.

Please note in order to search for books on the Russia Online site you have to transliterate according to the system they use. In this system, я=ia, й=i, ы=i, ю=u and е is e even in initial position or after another vowel.

HAPPY 2011 EVERYONE!!!

# IDIOM SAVANTS: MONEY TALKS

Vladimir Kovner and Lydia Stone

This issue's Idiom Savants column pertains to money and perhaps was suggested by the cash-conscious holiday season, in full swing as we write. We have included only idioms that use money (*деньгу*), dollar (*рубль*), cent/penny (*копейка*), dime and nickel (*эпов*). If we had included words such as cash, buy, sell, cost, pay, gold, rich, poor, etc., and their Russian equivalents, our list would of course have taken up more than one entire SlavFile issue. We have found it interesting how many equivalents and near-equivalents there are in money idioms in the two languages. However, perhaps because of the 70-year respite from capitalism, if not from money, the number of unique Russian money idioms is far fewer than that of their English counterparts. Indeed, there were so many of the latter that to avoid exceeding the word limit for articles in this publication, we have decided to present these in our Spring column.

In addition, in order to conserve space without eliminating useful or interesting idioms, we have decided to curtail the amount of explanation we provide for each entry. In particular, we have eliminated example sentences and definitions for equivalent and near-equivalent idioms. For Russian idioms without such equivalents, we are now providing literal English translations on the assumption that some of those reading this column do not read Russian. We hope we are correct in assuming that Russian literal translations of English idioms are not required.

Finally, having thus created a bit of space, we thought that some readers might be interested in learning more about the sources and search procedures we use to create our lists. This discussion follows the idioms themselves.

As usual, we invite discussion of our definitions and equivalences, suggestions of idioms we have missed, lists of money idioms in other Slavic languages, suggestions for additional topics, and offers to write an Idiom Savants guest column.

## EXACT EQUIVALENTS

(First English variant is literal or near literal translation with the same idiomatic meaning, following variants are other idioms with same meaning.)

1. **Без копейки в кармане: Without a penny in his pocket (or to his name). Not have two pennies to rub together.**
2. **Без копейки остаться: To end up penniless.**
3. **Беречь (считать) каждую копейку: To count every penny. Be a penny pincher.**
4. **Быть при деньгах: To be in the money.**
5. **Время—деньги: Time is money.**
6. **Грести деньгу (деньги) лопатой: To be raking it (i.e., money) in.**



7. **Грязные деньги: Dirty money.**
8. **Денежный мешок: Money bags.** (Rude name for a rich person.)
9. **Деньги на бочку (выложить): (Pay) cash on the barrel.**
10. **Деньги не пахнут: Money has no smell.** More common in Russian than English. (From the Latin: *L. non olet*, it [money] does not smell. Titus, son of the Roman emperor Vespasian, had criticized a tax on public lavatories. Vespasian held a coin from the first payment to his son's nose and asked him whether the smell was offensive. Titus said no. Vespasian replied, "And yet it comes from urine.")
11. **До копейки (копейки): To the last penny.** Emphasis on paying or providing the entire sum required.
12. **Жениться на деньгах: To marry money.**
13. **Знать (не знать) цену деньгам: To know (not know) the value of money.**
14. **Не в деньгах счастье: Money won't buy you happiness.**
15. **Ни за какие деньги: Not for any amount of money/at any price.** Or more commonly: **Not for love nor money.**
16. **Ни копейки: Not a cent. Penniless. Not a red cent.**
17. **Отмывать деньги: To launder money.**
18. **Сорить (бросаться, швыряться, сыпать) деньгами: To toss (throw) money around. Money burns a hole in his pocket** (used about spendthrifts).

## BEWARE OF FALSE COGNATES

In these examples, the literal translation of the English idiom is a Russian idiom with a different meaning.

19. **Mad money:** money set aside for unforeseen contingencies or temptations (Russian equivalent: **Деньги «про запас»**). Compare: **Бешеные деньги: A fortune** and **Шальные деньги** (uncommon): **Easy money.**

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- 20. Blood money:** money paid to a hired killer, or as compensation for someone's death. Money obtained at someone else's great expense (Russian equivalent: **Деньги наемному убийце**). **Кровные деньги:** **hard-earned money.** Money earned through hard work.

### RELATED MONEY EXPRESSIONS THAT DO NOT EXACTLY MATCH

The phrase in parentheses immediately following the Russian idiom is a literal translation.

- 21. Бросать деньги на ветер** (to throw money to the wind): **Spend money like water.**
- 22. Были бы бумажки, будут и милашки** (if there is money, there will be a honey): **If you got the money, honey, I got the time.** (Amusing coincidence of antiquated Russian folk saying and U.S. country and western song.)
- 23. В копейку (влететь/обойтись/стать)** (to run to a little kopeck): **Cost a pretty penny.**
- 24. Грош цена в базарный день** ([cost] a penny on market day), **Гроша медного не стоит** (doesn't cost a penny): **A dime a dozen.**
- 25. Денег в обрез** (money is in short supply): **Money is tight.**
- 26. Денег стоит** (costs money): **That'll cost you.**
- 27. Денег куры не клюют** (he has more money than the chickens can peck up.): **To have money to burn.** (Compare: **Not chickenfeed: a significant amount of money.**)
- 28. Деньги под ногами не валяются** (money doesn't lie around on the ground): **Money doesn't grow on trees.**
- 29. Дрожать (трястись) над каждой копеейкой** (to tremble over every kopeck): **To fret over every penny spent.**
- 30. Дружба дружбой, а деньги врозь** (friendship is one thing, money is another; matters of friendship and matters of money should be kept separate): **Money and friendship don't mix. Lend money, lose a friend.**
- 31. За длинным рублем погнаться** (to chase after the long ruble): **To be on the lookout for a fast buck. To chase after big bucks.**
- 32. За копейку удавиться** (to hang oneself for a kopeck): **To sell his/her grandmother for a penny.** (English emphasizes cold-heartedness at least as much as miserliness and greed.)

- 33. Зашибать деньги (копейку)** (to earn money [a kopeck]): **To earn good money. To make a pretty penny.**

- 34. Копеечный** (a kopeck's worth): **Penny ante.**
- 35. Копейка в копейку** (kopeck for kopeck): **Down to the last penny.** (Emphasis on accuracy of an accounting or payment.)
- 36. Копейка рубль бережет** (the kopeck will take care of [save] the ruble): **Take care of the pennies and the dollars will take care of themselves.** (More common, even in U.S., with reference to British currency of pence and pounds.)
- 37. Купаться в деньгах** (to swim in money): **To be rolling in it (i.e., money).**
- 38. Купить за гроши** (to buy for small change/a pittance): **To buy for a song.**
- 39. Не имей сто рублей, а имей сто друзей** (It is better to have one hundred friends than one hundred rubles): **They are truly rich, who have friends.** (Compare: It is a good thing to be rich, it is a good thing to be strong, but it is a better thing to be beloved of many friends—Euripides.)
- 40. Плакали (чьи-то) денежки** (someone's money wept): **He can kiss his money goodbye. That money went down the tubes.**
- 41. (Полезь/совести/смелости/ума...) ни на грош** (something or someone doesn't have a penny's worth of use, courage, conscience, etc.): **Someone or something is not worth a plugged nickel.**

### RUSSIAN MONEY IDIOMS WITHOUT ENGLISH CASH EQUIVALENTS

- 42. Двадцать копеек** (20 kopecks). Reaction to someone telling a good joke or making a witty remark. *Это была прекрасная шутка. Получи двадцать копеек.* *That was a good one; at least 20 kopecks' worth.*
- 43. Денежка счет любит** (money loves to be counted). Money should be treated prudently and scrupulously. *Будьте добры пересчитать. В этой пачке ровно тысяча. Деньги счет любят.* *Please make sure that there is exactly one thousand here. Money loves to be counted.*
- 44. Деньги вперед, утром—деньги, вечером—стулья или вечером—деньги, а на другой день утром—стулья.** (The money first: either the money in the morning and the chairs in the evening, or the money in the evening and the chairs the next morning.) Quotation from Ilf and Petrov's *Twelve Chairs*. Roughly translatable as: **You can pay me any time you like as long as it is in advance.**
- 45. Деньги к деньгам** (money attracts money). **Money begets money. The rich get richer. Them that has, gets.**

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46. **Не было ни гроша, да вдруг алтын.** (Someone didn't have a penny, and suddenly he got a three penny coin.) **To go from rags to riches.** More generally: **either feast or famine.** *В начале сезона я не мог попасть ни на один хороший концерт. И вдруг приходит подруга и предлагает абонемент сразу на пять концертов. Вот уж действительно—не было ни гроша, да вдруг—алтын. At the start of the season I couldn't get tickets to a single concert and then my friend offered me a subscription to five of them. It's true that it is either feast or famine.*
47. **(Ни) в грош не ставить кого-либо** (set somebody's price at a penny). **To consider someone of no worth or importance. Not give a darn, hoot, damn, etc., for).** (Compare: **that doesn't make a penny's worth of difference.**) *Он человек независимый и нашего начальника ни в грош не ставит. He is an independent fellow and doesn't give a darn for our boss.*
48. **Пропасть ни за грош (копейку)** (to perish [suffer] for no purpose.) **To die for nothing.** *А сколько было случаев, когда солдат посылали в безнадежные атаки! Сколько людей полегло—пропало ни за грош! There have been so many cases where soldiers were sent out on hopeless attacks. How many have perished for no purpose whatsoever!*

## TWO SPECIAL CASES

49. **(Love of) money is the root of all evil.** Self-explanatory phrase attributed to Jesus (1 Timothy). **Корень всех зол есть сребролюбие** (1-е Послание Тимофею, 6-10); **корень всех зол—любовь к деньгам.** From Vladimir: Of course, this phrase was always known to the educated and/or religious, but it did not attain popular status during Soviet times as it was not considered politically correct to quote the Bible freely. Furthermore, since almost no one had money, people did not bother to refer to it as a force in ordinary conversation.
50. **Put in one's two cents worth.** Current Russian equivalent: **Вставить свои пять копеек.** From Vladimir: This idiom never existed in Russian through Soviet times. Today, if you search the Internet, you'll find many examples of Russians using it without any idea of what it means. Indeed, often the way it is used has no resemblance to the English equivalent. I found three websites where bloggers asked the same question: what is the source of this expression, and what does it mean? No one supplied any reasonable answers because of their lack of knowledge of English. So if I can put in my two cents worth—this is a typical новояз—калька с английского языка (i.e., a calque formed from English).

## Idiom Savants sources and methods:

**From Vladimir:** My first source of idioms is my memory. Then I compare the list I have come up with to entries in Ozhegov's *Dictionary of the Russian Language* (С. И. Ожегов, «Словарь русского языка»). Although the list given is quite short, it is very helpful with regard to everyday (common) usage. I next turn to M. I. Stepanova's *Phraseological Dictionary of the Russian Language* (М. И. Степанова, «Фразеологический словарь русского языка», 2005). This dictionary is very simple in structure, consisting of a long list of idioms, quite contemporary, with reasonable definitions. Idioms considered outdated or archaic are identified as such. Although there are times I disagree (e.g., Stepanova considers the quite popular idiom «идти по проторенной дорожке» outdated), I generally find this work a good source. I also look through a slang dictionary, Yelistratov's *Explanatory Dictionary of Russian Slang* (В. С. Елистратов, «Толковый словарь русского сленга», 2005). Despite the annoying inclusion of what I feel to be an unnecessary number of obscenities, this book is helpful for its listing of some brand new “Russian” words (новояз). For translations of idioms into English (if I need them), I have a number of (Russian-English) dictionaries, but they are all far from perfect. *Russian-English Dictionary of Idioms* by Sofia Lubensky is a huge book, useful but very uncritical, in my view, with some very antiquated idioms on almost every page that are never labeled as such. Furthermore, some popular idioms, such as «душа в душу», are missing.

For translations into Russian, my favorite dictionary was written by A. Kunin, *English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary* (А. Кунин, «Англо-русский фразеологический словарь», 1967, but there are some newer editions. And if I have any doubts regarding a Russian idiom on my list I ALWAYS check it against the four-volume *Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian Language* by Vladimir Dal' (or Dahl, as it is often rendered) (В. И. Даль, «Толковый словарь живого великорусского языка»). This dictionary can be searched on the Internet at <http://vidahl.agava.ru/>.

I also use the Internet to find additional Russian idioms ([idioms.chat.ru](http://idioms.chat.ru), the content of which is actually *A Book of Russian Idioms Illustrated* by M. I. Dubrovin; Google for some examples of idiom usage if I am not sure of the meaning; and to look for possible equivalents of English language idioms in Russian [[www.multitran.ru](http://www.multitran.ru), [homeenglish.ru/proverbs](http://homeenglish.ru/proverbs)], and so on).

**From Lydia:** During an abortive attempt to write a comprehensive thematically organized dictionary of English idiomatic usage, I assembled a large collection of dictionaries of idioms, slang, clichés, catchwords, etc., all bought at a dime a dozen in used book stores, at library book sales, and on eBay. In addition, I compiled on my computer lists

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of such usages grouped by theme (though undefined). When I stopped, I think I had some 40,000 entries (with many duplications when an idiom such as “raking it in” was classified under both money and farming/gardening tools and procedures). In creating my part of the Idiom Savants column, I always go to my own lists first and simply search for the relevant word or words. When I am unsure about the exact definition, my favorite of all my English idiom books is *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*, by Christine Ammer, Houghton Mifflin, 1992. When this fails me I turn to my other books or use the *Define*: function on Google. A Google search frequently brings up the Urban Dictionary site, but I never use it since I have found some, if not most, entries to be virtually illiterate, and nearly every apparently “innocent” idiom there seems to be defined in terms of sex acts or drugs. Looking for usage examples of idiomatic phrases in English frequently turns out to be quite difficult, since it seems that every one of them is the title of a song, book, TV program or episode, or article, and these are almost always listed first by Google.

Like Vladimir, I use Lubensky’s *Russian-English Dictionary of Idioms*. The fact that it has an index makes it supremely useful despite its defects. Not having my colleague’s depth of knowledge of Russian, I have not independently noticed the flaws he points out, but I do find it frustrating that the literal meaning of the idiom is not given in English, since some of the idioms contain rather obscure words or usages. I do not have to generate Russian idioms for this column, but when I want to look for one, I also use Kveselevich’s *Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary* (Д. И. Квеселевич, «Русско-английский фразеологический словарь», Русский язык, 2000) and his *Explanatory Dictionary of Unconventional Russian* (Д. И. Квеселевич, «Толковый словарь ненормативной лексики русского языка», АСТ, 2003), both of which I recommend.

### The Ballad of Lorena Bobbitt

A hot-blooded young wife named Lorena  
Had a husband who couldn’t be meaner.  
With a stroke of her knife  
She altered his life,  
To say nothing about his demeanor.

It lay there bereft in the gutter  
In a state that would make strong men shudder,  
Till a cop on the beat  
Scooped it up from the street,  
In a move to reduce urban clutter.

They rushed it right off to a surgeon,  
Who attached it at its owner’s urging.  
Though he sewed it on tight,  
It failed to delight,  
Remaining as meek as a virgin.

Now the jury must make its decision:  
Does a wife have the right of excision?  
Was it self-defense?  
Or a heinous offense?  
Or merely a botched circumcision?

#### Post Script

They decided to exonerate her—  
This wife from below the equator—  
Claiming mental distress  
Brought about by duress  
Had turned her into a castrator.

#### Moral

If this story is starting to scare you  
And you dread that your wife might impair you,  
You had best treat her nice,  
Cause you can’t grow one twice  
And the medics may fail to repair you.

This poem is referenced on page 30.

## ДЕНЕГ КУРЫ НЕ КЛЮЮТ



[d'en'eg kury n'e kl'uyut]

*The hens don't peck at the money.*

One has plenty of money.

**Cf. Rolling in money.**

Book of Russian Idioms illustrated by M. I. Dubrovin,  
as accessed on idioms.chat.ru

# CONFERENCE PRESENTATION REVIEW

## A Hot-Blooded Young Miss From Kamchatka: Issues in Translating Limericks from Russian<>English

Presented by Vladimir Kovner and Lydia Razran Stone  
and

### The Translator, the Bear, and the Roadblocks:

Presented by Lydia Razran Stone  
Reviewed by Boris Silverstejn



*Scheduling conflicts during the 2010 ATA Conference prevented me from attending several presentations, including those by my friends Nora, Jim, and Alex. So I was happy to be able to listen to*

*Vladimir's discussion of his translation of Edward Lear, his and Lydia's hilarious translations of English and Russian limericks, and Lydia's description of how she overcame all of the "roadblocks" to translating and then publishing a book of fables by Ivan Krylov, the bear in the title of her presentation.*

## REVIEW 1: THE LIMERICKS

For those who could not attend this hilariously serious (or was it seriously hilarious?) event, I'll try to recreate the atmosphere.

Vladimir set the tone of this presentation by stating right off the bat: "We forgot to add in the program that our talk is XXX rated, which would probably have attracted most of the participants of the conference into this room."

Lydia picked up the baton and read the limerick based on the presentation's title, which turns out to be her invention written "in the spirit of the typical Russian one." (The actual limerick was composed long after the presentation title was submitted to ATA, in response to a challenge.)

A fun-loving young miss from Kamchatka  
Much enjoyed a good man with her vodka.  
Those who asked if she'd pet  
Never got a cold "Nyet."  
But instead an emphatically hot "Da!"

What followed was, to my mind, a comic highlight of the presentation. I have insisted that this be included in my review, even though it represents a related set of original limericks rather than a translation. Lydia, its author, included it as an example of how English speakers use limericks to comment humorously on current affairs and how limericks may be strung together to create a longer narrative poem. This work, "The Ballad of Lorena Bobbitt," appears on page 29 of this issue. For those of you who were too young or not in the country when the referenced incident occurred, plugging "Lorena Bobbitt" into your favorite search engine will bring instant enlightenment. Lydia claims she has forgotten "the whole sordid episode."

Vladimir bolstered the XXX rating contention by citing a British limerick:

There was a young plumber of Leigh  
Who was plumbing a maid by the sea.  
Said the maid, "Cease your plumbing;  
I think someone's coming."  
Said the plumber, still plumbing, "It's me."

This was followed by Lydia's translations of the following two Russian limericks, illustrating the type of things being written in Russia today. Note that in the first one she was able to keep most, but not all, of the details of the original: "Трудись" is missing.

Был упрямым арап Ганнибал  
И жениться никак не желал.  
Петр сказал ему в лоб:  
«Не дури, эфиоп!  
Нужен Пушкин. Трудись, Ганнибал!»  
—Мила Уланова

Though Tsar Peter could tell that his Moor  
Was immune to lovemaking's allure,  
He knew: Russian great art  
Needed Pushkin to start;  
So commanded his Moor: "Think amour!"

Парижанин рассказывал в Лилле,  
Как лечить половое бессилие:  
- Лично я, как залезу,  
Так пою «Марсельезу»,  
Вспоминая о штурме Бастилии!

Male dysfunction, a man said in Lille,  
Is easy enough to conceal,  
When I have that malaise  
I just sing "Marseillaise"  
And pretend that the girl's the Bastille.

It got all serious, kind of, after that.

Having defined a limerick (a five-line poem, or one can say, a story in five lines of verse that intends to be witty or humorous, nonsensical, or bawdy but virtually always with humorous intent), Vladimir told us how he "got involved in this limerick business." Having started about four years ago by translating two limericks of unknown origin:

A diner while dining at Crew  
Found a rather large mouse in his stew.  
Said the waiter, "Don't shout  
And wave it about,  
Or the rest will be wanting one too.

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## THE LIMERICKS

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Человек в ресторане в Лиможе  
В супе мышь увидал. О, Боже!  
Официант сказал: «Тишшшь,  
Не крутите так мышь,  
А то все захотят её тоже».

There was an old man of Peru,  
Who dreamt he was eating his shoe.  
He awoke in the night  
In a horrible fright,  
And found it was perfectly true!

Старику в городке Таганрог  
Приснилось—он ест свой сапог.  
Он проснулся в поту  
С сапогами во рту,  
И вздохнул: «Да поможет мне Бог!»

He became addicted, began translating limericks by Edward Lear—over 250 limericks total—and is hoping to publish them as a book in the coming year. Several of his Lear translations have already been included in his 2010 book «Приласкайте льва» (*Pet the Lion*) of Russian translations of English-language poetry. To order this book, contact Vladimir at [19volodyak05@comcast.net](mailto:19volodyak05@comcast.net).

Vladimir briefly covered the origin of the name (generally taken to be a reference to the city or County of Limerick in Ireland), the form (a stanza of five lines; the first, second and fifth usually rhyme with one another and most often have three feet of three syllables each; the third and fourth lines also rhyme with each other, but are shorter with only two feet of three syllables each), and the history of limericks, from Edward Lear, thought by many to be the “inventor of the form,” to Russian limericks, which basically began appearing only 40-50 years ago. He noted that many Russian limericks are very funny; there is some sex and drunkenness, of course, and the subjects of many of the limericks are quite unexpected: prominent intellectuals, writers, artists, composers; famous people from all areas of life, even politicians.

Here is an example of Lear’s work and Vladimir’s translation:

There was an Old Man with a beard,  
Who said, “It is just as I feared! –  
Two Owls and a Hen, four Larks and a Wren,  
Have all built their nests in my beard!”

Жил старик с сединой в бороде,  
Он сказал: «Так и знал, быть беде! –  
Две совы, два стрижа  
И четыре чижа  
Свили гнёзда в моей бороде!»

It will be noted that Lear’s work, written for children as well as adults, is fully exempt from the X or even R rating.

Vladimir then described the problems encountered when translating limericks into Russian.

The first problem is whether to translate this or that racy (or even more than racy) limerick at all.

The second problem is that in limericks one cannot play with the meter or structure, since any change means the translation is not a limerick. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that English words, and particularly the words used in limericks, are generally shorter than the equivalent Russian words. And though meter is defined the same way in the English and Russian languages, words split into syllables in quite different ways.

Another problem is that if a translator substantially changes the images or actions in the poem he or she may be accused of writing a new limerick instead of translating the original one.

All these points were illustrated with numerous limericks translated from English by Vladimir and from Russian by Lydia. There is not enough room here for all of them, but here are a few more:

There once was an old man of Lyme  
Who married three wives at a time.  
When asked, “Why the third?”  
He said, “One’s absurd,  
And bigamy, sir, is a crime.”

Один курд мне сказал весь в волнении:  
«Три жены всем нужны, без сомнения».  
Пояснил это курд:  
«Ну, одна ведь - абсурд,  
Двоеженство же, сэр, преступление»

Утверждают, что Пушкин А.С.  
Говорил: «Не люблю поэтесс!»  
С детства чую нутром:  
Эти бабы с пером  
Пострашней, чем мальчишка Дантес!»

It’s been rumored that Pushkin, A.S.,  
Was repelled by the breed—“**poetess.**”  
That he said, “I confess  
I do fear them no less  
Than that skirt-chaser, Baron Dantes.”

Last, I would like to comment on the following limerick:

Летят перелетные птицы,  
Чтоб с Севера вовремя смыться.  
Но я же не гусь,  
Я здесь остаюсь.  
На кой мне нужна заграница?

—Борис Акунин

Those who want to migrate like the goose  
Flee the north at the slightest excuse.  
Though not all’s bread and jam  
I will stay where I am.  
I’m no bird, for abroad I’ve no use.

For people of my generation and country of origin this immediately brings up «Летят перелетные птицы»—the song we heard all too often more than 60 years ago. It glorified so-called Soviet patriotism and denigrated everything “foreign.” It is amazing that even now a Russian writer is still singing the same tune, still dismissive of заграница. Evidently, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

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## REVIEW 2: THE FABLES

Everybody knows that in this country it is hard to find a publisher for poetry, especially for translated poetry. Lydia was fortunate to find such a publisher. Two things were working in her favor. First, because Krylov died in 1844, there were no copyright problems (year of author's death + 70) like those she had encountered trying to publish translations of poetry by more contemporary authors. Second, she found out that the company that publishes *Russian Life* magazine and *Чтения (Readings)*, a literary journal she has been translating poems for, was also publishing books. Assured that no copyright was involved, they agreed to publish a bilingual edition including the Russian fables and her verse translations. And another stroke of luck: the publisher helped Lydia find a terrific and extremely efficient (Lydia's words) illustrator in the person of Katya Korobkina.

This is how the book, *The Frogs Who Begged for a Tsar (and 61 other Russian fables)*, came into being. It was published last October. As the subtitle tells us, it comprises 62 fables (out of the 205 Krylov wrote).

Lydia started by providing biographical information about Krylov; I have to admit that some of it was new to (or forgotten by?) me, for instance, the fact that he had no formal schooling. (Vladimir told us the same about Lear. Could formal education actually be an impediment to talent? Just kidding...I think.)

By the time he wrote his first fable in 1805, Krylov was already the author of several tragedies and comedies and opera librettos, and even had started a journal that closed a few months later due to lack of subscribers. But of course nowadays he is best (possibly only) known as a баснописец (fabulist). The last fable was written in 1843. Lydia noted that despite this long time span she could see no difference in the quality or sophistication of the first and last fables except the theme of old age—"as if this talent was born totally formed."

Lydia then proceeded to list the impediments and roadblocks she had anticipated she would encounter in the process, such as specific formal features of Krylov's work, complications associated with the gender of animals in Russian, selecting an appropriate register or registers, rendering 19th century moralizing today, and the three distinct kinds of fables contained in Krylov's opus (Aesopian—through La Fontaine—adaptations, Russian folk, and philosophical). To her surprise, these roadblocks were relatively easily overcome. Or actually, she made it easy for herself by deciding that, rather than reproducing the poem and line length of each fable, she would simply work within the limits Krylov followed in the entire body of his work. For example, since Krylov varies line length within poems, she never wrote a longer line than Krylov's longest, but did not try to make each line in each poem the same length as the original. Though she intended to work in modern literary language, she found that she kept sticking in archaic but understandable 19th century words and phrases, such as "twas, for naught, there to regale, a speck I scarce can see," etc., while also adding modern

colloquialisms for the sake of humor. She did not find rendering the dialog, which in Russian is quite folksy, very difficult, probably because in the translation there was not as much contrast with background language as in the original.

It was interesting to follow Lydia's analysis of ideas contained in Krylov's fables. She identified the themes: universal human foibles à la Aesop; ideas of the Enlightenment such as rationalism, progress, freedom, science; sins against organizational progress such as corruption (power corrupts) and official inefficiency; and the lack of due respect given to the lowly anonymous worker. However, she noted that animal fables and Enlightenment philosophy in general are far from espousing a fluid upwardly mobile society—quite the reverse. In humans, differences—not only of personalities, but of class—map onto different species of animal. There is no way a crow can become a peacock—if she tries she will only become an object of ridicule. Another theme is art as embodied by the nightingale.

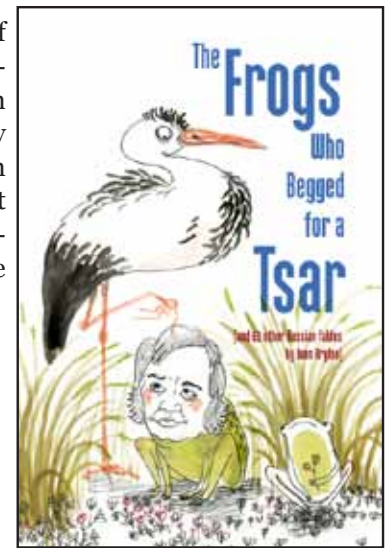
The morals of the fables are all rational (avoid this fault/sin or society or you will suffer, at the very least you will be a laughing stock) of the "what-you-sow-so-shall-your-reap type," with virtually no reference to religious principles or emotional appeals to empathy. She found that even the most moralistic of morals sound good in Krylov's verse because of the witty way they are phrased. Take, for example, the following "punch lines":

Кто про свои дела кричит всем без умолку,  
В том, верно, мало толку,  
Кто делов истинно, - тих часто на словах.  
Великий человек лишь громок на делах,  
И думает свою он крепко думу,  
Без шуму. («Две бочки»)

A person who declaims about his every deed  
Is liable to be one we need not heed.  
While one deserving of our praise  
Prefers the worthy act to idle phrase.  
And those who truly merit fame  
Do not declaim. («The Two Barrel Carts»)

Сказать ли на ушко яснее мысль мою?  
Худые песни соловью  
В когтях у кошки. («Кошка и соловей»)

The moral here? It's simply that  
You can't expect to hear sweet songs  
From birds trapped where no bird belongs—  
Within the clutches of a Cat.  
(«The Cat and the Nightingale»)



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## THE FABLES

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Мне кажется, что смысл не темен басни сей:  
Щепотки волосков Лиса не пожалей—  
Остался б хвост у ней. («Лиса»)

It seems quite plain the moral found herein.  
If you would keep your tail, well, then you must prepare,  
When things start getting tough, to sacrifice some hair.  
("The Fox")

Так думает иной  
Затейник,  
Что он в подсолнечной гремит,  
А он—дивит  
Свой только муравейник. («Муравей»)

Thus, someone who by friends is glorified  
May think that he is famous far and wide,  
Although his much praised strength or art or skill  
Impresses only ants in one small hill. ("The Ant")

Most of the fables, especially the later ones, have no explicit moral, and that is an improvement in Lydia's view. Some of them have no moral at all, except to hold human foibles up to a satiric mirror and, because animals are the actors, show them in a somewhat belittling or infantilizing light.

But the most interesting—to me at least—part of the presentation was Lydia's reading of her translations, some of her own choosing and some well-known or favorite fables requested by those in the audience. Two things amazed me—how good her translations are, and how relevant (at least some of) the fables are to our personal and political life. You can see this from the examples above. But I would like to add one more—*The Dragonfly and the Ant* («Стрекоза и муравей»). Here, I feel, the translation actually improved on Krylov's original. Compare the dragonfly's plea to the ants in the two versions below (the emphasis is mine):

«Не оставь меня, кум милой!  
Дай ты мне собраться с силой  
И до вешних только дней  
Прокорми и обогрей!»

"Take pity on me, I'm half dead.  
Your hill is warm; you've food to spare.  
You've had good fortune. Why not share?  
Please save my life and let me stay  
Until the spring, at most till May."

We all have met people like this: why work if one can "share" the fruits of other people's labor?

I've tried hard to find something about which I could add a "However" to this review. Of course, the translations are not word-for-word, but Lydia has succeeded in relaying the author's thoughts as closely as possible. The only case I've found where this is not 100% true is at the end of *The Cuckoo and the Rooster* («Кукушка и петух»):

«За что же, не боясь греха,  
Кукушка хвалит петуха?  
За то, что хвалит он кукушку.»

"If praise unearned you want, it's easy to obtain:  
Just offer tit for tat – that's how you play this game.  
Thus, Rooster praises Cuckoo, so she'll do the same."

The translation misses "не боясь греха," which I think is an important point of the fable's moral. But this "however" is probably just the nitpicker in me talking.

Thank you, Lydia, for the great job you've done!

Boris Silversteyn is one of the few translators who is ATA accredited both from English into Russian and from Russian into English. He also works into and out of Ukrainian - his other native language. Boris is finishing his second term on the ATA Board of Directors, was the chair of the ATA Dictionary Review Committee, and currently serves as the chair of the ATA Divisions Committee. Additionally, Boris is the Language Chair for English to Russian grading and an English into Ukrainian grader. He may be reached at [bsilversteyn@comcast.net](mailto:bsilversteyn@comcast.net).



Illustration by Katya Korobkina to the Krylov fable *The Mosquito and the Shepherd* («Комар и Пастух»).

(Information about ordering this book can be found on Amazon.com or the Publisher's website  
[www.russianlife.com/store/index.cfm?fuseaction=product.display&product\\_ID=202&ParentCat=30](http://www.russianlife.com/store/index.cfm?fuseaction=product.display&product_ID=202&ParentCat=30).)