

The Slovist Rides Again

Raphy Alden

Last year I had an unexpected opportunity to edit translations (not my favorite pastime, I must admit) and to watch others interpret. (I was present as a “standby” interpreter). Following are the results of the above mentioned activities as well as my personal observations:

-**Недоделанный!** (people are called this for various reasons in Russia), and the poor interpreter struggled with this word trying to come up with the English equivalent. Eventually, she said, “He’s a little cuckoo!” Well, maybe....

-Через неделю они **благополучно** забыли про скандал. The word **благополучно** was interpreted as *easily*. I do think that we can come up with a better word. What would you think of “fortunately”?

-**Видит око да зуб неймет.** The interpreter could not remember *The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*. I always translate this idiom this way and it works, but I am sure there are other translations. (I did not look it up in the Dictionary of Idioms by Sophia Lyubensky.) *Editors note:* Lyubensky translates it as “so near, and yet so far.”

-Don’t mess with him. He is a real **brainiac**.” I had a problem interpreting **brainiac**. The first thing that came to mind was the association with **maniac**. So I just interpreted it as У него голова хорошо варит. Not the best interpretation, I must admit, so I am hoping that someone may come with a better translation.

-Банк **сыграл на опережение** и выпустил новые акции - The interpreter came up with “The bank decided to play a preeminent game and...” Do you agree with this interpretation?

-**Не обошлось без тостов** за здоровье и упокой was translated as: “As always there were toasts...” Suggestion from the editors: How about inserting the words “the obligatory?”

-На совет директоров собирается; а как же, **святое дело**. This was a tough one. The interpreter hesitated, not knowing how to interpret **святое дело**, looked at me for help, and all I could come up with was *This is a thing not to miss*. I do not like this inter-

pretation and hope to hear a better one from you. *Editors’ suggestion:* I wouldn’t think of missing it; board meetings are sacred.

-Не хочешь, не пей - **мне больше останется**. I interpreted this as *all the more for me*. Any suggestions?

-**В одну реку два раза не войдешь**. If there is an English equivalent of this saying, I am not familiar with it. *From the Editors:* Although this quote from Heraclitus is not used as frequently in English as in Russian. It is known and is translated as “You cannot step into the same river twice.”

Finally, some very interesting suggestions that came from Irene Reisner. I liked them and hope you will too. Here they are:

quality time — I believe that there is no equivalent phrase in Russian. The sentence may be translated as: «Родители должны проводить больше времени со своими детьми/уделять больше внимания своим детям/». *Note from Editors:* To the contrary, it is a justification for not spending more time with children—that the little time one does spend is “quality,” whatever that means.

I’m impressed! — may be translated as «Потрясающе!», «Впечатляет!»;

поиздержавшиеся олигархи — impoverished might be a little strong, but close to the original meaning of the phrase;

доигрался — I never obeyed the traffic rules, passed other cars left and right, until it finally caught up with me.”;

зажимают — “The state (country, government) has plenty of bread, they just won’t let it out of their grasp.”

team player — I realize that the word «коллектив» is loaded with negative Soviet era overtones, but it best describes the concept behind the word “team”. Thus, team player is «настоящий член коллектива».

Talk to you again soon.

Raphy Alden (RaffiAlden@aol.com)

At Stalin's Side: His Interpreter's Memoirs from the October Revolution to the Fall of the Dictator's Empire.

by Laura Esther Wolfson

*Translated by Sergei V. Micheyev.
Carol Publishing Group, 1994, 400 pp., \$24.95.*

In a most revealing anecdote, memoirist Valentin Berezhkov tells how he became Stalin's interpreter. While negotiating with U.S. ambassador Averell Harriman, Stalin grew annoyed when his own interpreter appeared to be having difficulties and the interpreter for the American side jumped in to assist and correct. Berezhkov had previously interpreted at talks between Hitler and Soviet foreign minister Molotov, and now Stalin ordered him sent in as a replacement.

"But he was interpreting into German at the talks with Hitler," said Molotov.

"Never mind," said Stalin. "I will tell him and he will interpret into English."

Ambassador Harriman later told this story laughingly as an indication of Stalin's sense of his own power. The leader of world communism apparently thought he could make an interpreter speak in any tongue at all merely by giving an order. In this case, since Berezhkov's working languages included English as well as German, Stalin's belief in his own powers appeared to be justified.

Stalin did not concern himself with what Berezhkov's working languages were. However, Berezhkov's linguistic abilities were what thrust him into historic circumstances and led him to tell the tale of his life, a life which, as the book's subtitle implies, spanned the entire Soviet period from the Civil War to perestroika.

The title and subtitle are misleading, however, for according to this reader's calculations, Berezhkov worked with Stalin for no more than five years during World War II, although he did interpret at a number of the crucial meetings between Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt. The remainder of Berezhkov's long career, after he fell from grace and left his post within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was spent in journalism and diplomatic service abroad, a form of pseudo-exile. An inattentive reader might not notice the brevity of his service with Stalin, for Berezhkov employs the curious device of alternating chapters about his work as Stalin's interpreter with a chronological account of the first twenty-odd years of his life, including his childhood and adolescence, military service and work as an Intourist guide. He thus creates the impression that his few years working for Stalin lasted as long as his first quarter-century. In fact, much of the light that Berezhkov sheds on Soviet history results less from his brief proximity to power than from the fact that his life, like those of millions of ordinary Soviet people, was touched by the upheavals of war, famine, and other outsized historical events.

The reader who seizes this book eagerly, as did the reviewer, because of the word "interpreter" in the subtitle, will be disappointed. The book contains little or no shop talk of the sort that interpreters thrive on regarding the relative merits of various linguistic equivalents and the complexities arising therefrom, the speech habits and idiosyncrasies of those whose words they interpret and how to reproduce them in the target language, and so on. But this is probably too much to hope for in a book aimed at a general audience.

However, the book does contain edifying speculations about why Stalin conducted foreign policy as he did. Specifically, it tells about the Soviet leader's complex and ambivalent attitude toward Hitler and why he refused to believe numerous convincing reports that German troops were massing for attack on the Soviet border. Berezhkov also provides some interesting and vivid descriptions of behind-the-scenes events he witnessed while in Stalin's employ.

He recounts how, just after Germany invaded the USSR, German foreign minister Ribbentrop whispered to members of a Soviet delegation that he personally was opposed to the action and had tried to dissuade Hitler from taking this step. Berezhkov describes his shock at his first sight of Stalin, whom he had imagined to be tall and godlike, and who was in fact short, deformed, and pock-marked. He mentions Stalin's bodyguard, who grabbed catnaps whenever he could, as he had to be at the leader's side twenty-four hours a day. He reveals that when Stalin received the Japanese foreign minister in the Kremlin, he played the hospitable host to such a degree that the visiting dignitary got thoroughly drunk and had to be carried out and placed bodily in his train car.

No less interesting are Berezhkov's accounts of his childhood, his family's move to the Ukraine in search of more plentiful food, his language studies at a gymnasium in Kiev where German was the medium of instruction, and his father's detention for nearly a year on trumped-up charges.

Berezhkov states that his father's release and the special investigator's acknowledgment that his father was, in fact, innocent, gave him faith in the ultimate fairness of the system. Perhaps this incident even explains why Berezhkov felt no fear when he worked for Stalin years later, oblivious to the danger that the paranoiac dictator presented to nearly all who came in contact with him.

Though published in 1994, three years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, *At Stalin's Side* contains lacunae characteristic of an earlier, more cautious period. For example, the author writes elliptically about his

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parents, who disappeared at the end of the war and whom he located in the West many years later. Berezhkov suspected that his parents were still alive, but had no idea where they were, or even what country they might be living in. They did not contact him so as not to put him or his career in jeopardy. An episode in the eighties, when the author served at the Soviet embassy in Washington and his son may or may not have requested asylum in the U.S., also leaves unanswered questions and the strong impression that even as he wrote this book, Berezhkov was still trying to protect his relationship with the authorities by not saying too much.

His attitude toward the masters he served is ambivalent, a mixture of the loyalty and historical excitement he felt at the time, genuine realization of the evil his bosses did, and some fashionable perestroika-era repudiation of the past. Berezhkov rationalizes his decision to join the Party, and speaks nostalgically of life in the former Soviet Union. But he also comments on the cold-bloodedness and brutality of high-ranking government officials and states that he was too gullible about the system. He writes at length about how the leaders and well-connected feasted while many starved in the early Soviet period. He attributes his swift rise through the foreign ministry to Stalinist purges which created job openings above him that had to be filled, but his feelings about this remain opaque. If he has any thoughts about the morality of interpreting for Stalin and others of his ilk, Berezhkov does not share them with us. Is the interpreter's role neutral, or does it advance the goals of good or evil? The author passes over this question in silence.

Sergei Mikheyev's translation is generally transparent and felicitous. However, there are a few conspicuous lapses. He uses some contemporary Americanisms that leap out as inappropriate and anachronistic: "Dad," "kids," and "smarts" (the latter used as a noun to mean intelligence or common sense). He translates the Russian forms of address *дядя* and *тетя* as "uncle" and "aunt," when they clearly refer not to kinship ties but are rather an informal, respectful way for Russian children to address their elders. The publisher would have done well to have an extra pair of editorial eyes go over the book to spot such errors before the manuscript went to press. In the final analysis, inadequate editing is a disservice not only to readers but to author and translator as well.

The following article describing the lighter side of interpreting for Nainna Yeltsina at the gathering of wives of participants in the "Denver Summit" this year has a story behind it. SLD member Maria Zarlingo attended last year's ATA conference and was inspired by the talk of *SlavFile* assistant editor Laura Wolfson to take the State Department exam. After reaching this decision, she discovered that the State Department's head of language services was also at the conference. Thus, right then and there she was able to find out exactly how to apply. Within months this led to the experiences described below. Members wishing to elevate their professional lives take note: attendance at ATA conferences can have uplifting consequences.

Перевод на высшем «дамском» уровне

Автоинтервью с Марией Зарлинго, переводчицей г-жи Ельциной на Денверском саммите

Вот, едва успела сочинить слово, «спеллчек» его сразу же выловил. А почему, собственно, не может быть автоинтервью? Бывают же автобиографии и автопортреты! К тому же, поскольку уже известны ответы, то и вопросы будет задавать легче. Итак, начнем.

Мария Евгеньевна, были ли Вы удивлены, когда Вам, совсем недавно приехавшей в США переводчице, предложили переводить на встрече «первых дам»?

Честно говоря, нет. Поскольку в свое время я 15 лет проработала в Комитете советских женщин, работа с женщинами любых профессий и должностей, из любых стран мира представлялась мне вполне привычным и естественным делом. К тому же, за несколько месяцев до саммита я сдала экзамен по устному переводу в Госдепе и надеялась, что это поможет мне получить работу на саммите, — и оказалась права.

Что дало Вам лично общение с супругами наиболее влиятельных мужчин планеты?

Очень много. Необыкновенно поднялся мой престиж среди всех денверских родственников мужа, а также среди соседей.

Удивило ли Вас что-нибудь в ходе выполнения этого задания?

Меня приятно удивила г-жа Ельцина. Я получила большое удовольствие от общения с ней в течение трех дней встречи в верхах. Она образованная, интеллигентная женщина, которая искренне всем интересуется. Она задавала массу вопросов во время посещения Музея естественной истории, Музея Молли Браун, рассказывающего об одной трогательной странице истории Денвера, а также во время поездки на поезде в горы.

Это, насколько я понимаю, была индивидуальная программа г-жи Ельциной. А что Вы можете рассказать об общей программе, подготовленной для всех супругов?

Ядром этой программы были, несомненно, трапезы. Обед от имени г-жи Клинтон в частной резиденции, легкий завтрак в поезде по пути в «Уинтер Парк», ланч на вершине горы, кофе, фрукты и испеченное прямо в поезде шоколадное печенье на обратном пути, обед с главами государств в ресторане «Форт», не говоря уже об обеде и завтраке с колорадской общественностью в

рамках индивидуальной программы г-жи Ельциной. Насколько я поняла за эти несколько дней, наиболее подходящим продуктом питания дам на высоком уровне считается лосось. Я также получила большое эстетическое удовольствие от созерцания изящно оформленных блюд часто с символическими названиями, например, мороженое «Скалистые горы». Не будь я сама большой поклонницей изысканной кухни, мне было бы трудно перевести меню — настолько много в нем фигурировало редких соусов, трав, фруктов и овощей. Поскольку, как известно, переводчики не могут ставить под угрозу свой профессионализм и осквернять уста чем-либо помимо чистой воды, поведать что-либо о вкусовых качествах подававшихся яств не могу.

Почему было решено отправиться в горы на поезде?

Как объяснила г-жа Клинтон, она хотела организовать для супругов такую поездку, во время которой они могли бы как следует отдохнуть. Вы, конечно, понимаете, что поезд, на котором они ехали, отличался от обычных рейсовых поездов. Мне он больше всего напоминал поезд из старых кинофильмов: усталая коврами уютная гостиная с мягкими диванами и внимательными официантами, салон обозрения на втором этаже с куполом, дающим возможность любоваться горной панорамой, отдельное спальное купе для каждой гостьи...

А как реагировала местная общественность Колорадо на встречи с дамами?

Местная общественность была в восторге. За несколько дней до выезда дам в горы в местной денверской газете была помещена статья о том, что женщины из малюсенького городка Толлэнд (не больше пяти домов), расположенного рядом с 6-мильным туннелем Маффита, собираются приветствовать поезд с супругами и размахивать флагами всех стан-участниц. И на самом деле, не только жители Толлэнда, но и масса других людей — рыбаков, туристов, велосипедистов — тепло приветствовали поезд по всему пути. Конечно, как говорится, «в семье не без черной овцы» (по-моему, такое слияние пословиц вполне закономерно для настоящего издания) — какие-то два оригинала вместо флагов и лозунгов решили порадовать пассажиров поезда нежным лунным светом своих весьма крепких на вид задов. Дамы восприняли это с должным чувством юмора, а шутники прославились — во всяком случае, инцидент упоминался в местной газете.

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Удалось ли Вам побывать в святая святых, президентском номере на 19-м этаже отеля «Эмбасси Сьюитс»?

Да, эта редкая возможность предоставилась в последний день саммита. Президент Ельцин уже покинул отель, и поэтому охрана была снята. Г-жа Ельцина, которая все время переживала, что я ничего не ем, пригласила меня наверх выпить кофе. Из номера, действительно, открывается великолепный вид на горы, и гостиная, как это и было описано в газетах, оформлена в виде кабинета похожего на Овальный зал в Белом доме. Но самое глубокое впечатление на меня произвело то, что прямо посреди спальни на высоком постаменте с колоннами и ступенями гордо красовалась «джакуzzi» из материала, напоминающего зеленый мрамор!

Что осталось у вас в памяти об этих днях?

Приятные воспоминания об общении с хорошим человеком Наиной Ельциной.

A TANGLED TALE OF THREE LANGUAGES

Laura Wolfson

The events described here took place in the spring of 1997 in a major East coast city. A large non-profit organization was preparing to receive a delegation from Ukraine to attend professional meetings scheduled to last about three weeks. The organization had engaged an emigre from Kiev, who was fluent in Russian, Ukrainian, and English, to serve as an administrative assistant during these meetings. In the course of her duties, she phoned the members of the delegation before they embarked for the United States to ask them whether they would prefer interpretation into Russian or Ukrainian. Now, as Russian was her mother tongue and Ukrainian was a second language, she had become somewhat unaccustomed to speaking the latter during her time in the U.S. Thus, when she spoke with the delegation before their arrival, she sheepishly crept into an unoccupied office at the back of the suite and made sure that the door was closed, so that her employers would not hear her speaking in Russian rather than Ukrainian.

In response to the question about preferred target language for interpretation, all the delegates responded firmly in favor of Ukrainian. A team of Ukrainian simultaneous interpreters was duly hired (This team included one young man from Eastern Ukraine, who later confessed that his Ukrainian was actually, really a dialect known as *суржук*, a mongrel breed of mixed Sovietized Ukrainian and Russian. He was counting — correctly as it turned out — on his American employers not knowing the difference. Note: *суржук* was originally an agricultural term referring to a mixture of grains fed to livestock, which gradually grew to mean a mixture of languages used colloquially.)

The delegates arrived as scheduled and the meetings got underway. By the afternoon of the first day, it had become apparent that most of the visitors were far more comfortable in Russian than in Ukrainian. Although they more or less comprehended their Ukrainian interpreters, all but two of the ten of them made all their comments and replies in Russian, and some of them even requested that the Ukrainian interpreters (most of whom had been drawn from the city's proud and very traditional Ukrainian community, dating back to World War II) interpret into Russian, which most of the interpreters could not or would not do.

This situation eventually came to the attention of the American hosts and the delegation members were once again asked to state their preference. The visitors repeated that they preferred interpretation into Ukrainian. However, when one of the Americans cannily suggested that a vote be taken by secret ballot, only two of the ten requested Ukrainian, while the remainder asked for Russian. (All of these eight pretended that they were one of the two requesting Ukrainian, although everyone had a pretty clear idea who was who.) The Ukrainian interpreters were duly relieved of their responsibilities, with the exception of the fellow fluent in *суржук* and Russian, and Russian interpreters were hired to replace them.

What is the moral of this story? We leave that question up to you, our readers.

The Return Of The Slavist

Raffi Alden, Bakersfield, CA

Once again let me say that all the examples that I am sharing with you in this column are either based either on my personal experience as an interpreter or were sent to me by colleagues. Since some of you have suggested in your comments that it would be better if I present each example in a specific situation, I will try to do so whenever I can.

The following examples seem to involve simple words and/or phrases, but they can present problem for interpreters. They are accompanied by translations suggested by various colleagues. I invite readers to submit their own proposed translations of the examples given below.

An interpreter was fired from the translation department of an international company. She became bitter and her colleagues were worried that she would badmouth the company wherever and whenever possible. The department supervisor said: 'Don't worry. She wouldn't do that. **She is a team player.**' One reader suggested the following solution «Она — коллективист».

The following comment was made about a newly appointed mayor of a medium-sized city in Russia: «Квартиры стал раздавать **с барского плеча**». One erudite interpreter suggested the translation 'by master's grace'; another equally learned interpreter suggested 'from on high.' *SlavFile Editors suggest: "as an act of noblesse oblige" or "like Lady Bountiful."*

Once, while interpreting in Moscow, I had a small problem with the following sentence: «**Сильные мира сего** не допустят этого». Two possible translations of this phrase come to mind: 'movers and shakers', and 'powerful people'. Comments or any other suggestions? *Note: SlavFile Editors suggest "powers that be."*

«**Голову даю на отсечение**, что именно так и случится». In translating this sentence into English, all I could think of was 'I'll bet my bottom dollar that this is exactly what is going to happen'. *SlavFile Editors suggest "I would bet my life that..."*

«**Коротко и ясно!**» Short and sweet!

«Все знают, что он **сачок**.» Everybody knows that he is a goof-off.

«Сердце **барахлит**.» My heart is acting up.

Here are some more examples that may sound easy but have proved challenging. Please submit your own ideas.

Interpreting somewhere in Komi I heard the editor-in chief of the local newspaper say: «Спустя почти год авария **напомнила о себе** крушением еще одного поезда».

While interpreting a debate in Western Siberia, I encountered this «Ведь любого человека можно **засудить**».

Interpreting a telephone conversation, I heard "Stay tuned, I will call you again soon."

Finally, I would like to solicit some succinct and idiomatic translations of the following:

'Talk show', The BARS [New English-Russian Dictionary, volume 3] «беседа или интервью с знаменитостью».

'I wish they had a **wading waiter** here,' said one of the guests while swimming in the hotel pool. A wading waiter is «официант, обслуживающий в бассейне, который для этой цели заходит в воду». Any ideas?

I hope that we can instruct (as well as entertain) each other in this column by proposing translations of tricky terms. Perhaps some of the examples above will end up in an interpreter's glossary.

The Slavist invites readers to send in translations or alternate translations for the phrases cited above, or to provide their own favorite translation problems or solutions. He can be reached at: (805) 321 6157; Fax (805) 321 6603; e-mail raphael.alden@oxy.com.

The Slovist Writes Again

Raphael Alden
Bakersfield California

I would like to start with suggestions I have received from colleagues regarding phrases published in my column in the last issue of *SlavFile*. Here they are:

Marina Aranovich suggested that *talk show* be translated as **разговорное шоу**, and the Russian verb **засудить** as *to kangaroo* or *to railroad*, and *a team player* as **человек команды**.

Boris Silverstein had another suggestion for *He is a team player* — **он — не кустарь-одиночка**.

Eugenie Osmun suggested translating **Ведь любого человека можно засудить** as *After all, you can pin something on any man*, and **Спустя почти год авария напомнила о себе крушением еще одного поезда** as *The accident was brought to mind less than a year later by the crash of still another train*.

Now I've got something interesting for you. Let's start with words and phrases (they are in bold type) that have presented a challenge during translation/interpretation from English into Russian. Here they are:

Parents should spend more **quality time** with their children.

You did it all yourself? (addressed to a person who built his own house). **I'm impressed!**

'For what it's worth, I am sorry. I was wrong.' — said a man who, as a Chairman of the Board, had made a wrong decision several months before despite the opposition of every Board member. My suggested translation is **Даже если это уже не играет роли...**

The word **judgmental** turned out to be not as simple as it seems. Two or three of my colleagues suggested **предвзятый**, which, in my opinion, does not quite convey the meaning that the English word carries.

Now the same for Russian into English:

Победить это социальное зло можно только **всем миром** (from a speech). Hearing that I thought of **it takes a village to....**

See if you can translate this one. I couldn't. Речь идет о зарубежных счетах якобы **поиздержавшихся** олигархов.

Правила уличного движения не соблюдал, всех все время обгонял и **доигрался**.

Хлеб у государства есть, они его просто **зажимают**.

Я — человек **бывалый**, жизнь знаю. How about **I have been around?**

I am looking forward to your suggestions.

With regards,

Raffi Alden

Note: As of December 31, 1998, Raffi Alden will no longer be with Occidental Oil and Gas Corporation; he and his wife are forming a translation/interpretation company called Language Training and Translation (LIT). From the New Year onward, he can be contacted at (805) 665-7703 and raffialden@aol.com.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT INTERPRETER

*Conference Presentation by Leonid Fridman, Executive Director, RIC,
Cambridge, Massachusetts,
Reviewed by Kathy Stackhouse*

Leonid opened the presentation with a brief discussion of traditional models of interpreting (conference, seminar, escort, negotiations). He went on to give a detailed description of typical DOE nuclear projects, which employ a good number of SLD members. On the basis of his experience with interpreting for these projects, he then proposed a new interpreting model.

The thrust of his presentation was that "different intercultural exchanges demand different sets of skills and contributions." In certain settings, such as DOE projects, interpreters are called upon to be more than transparent media through which information flows — they can best serve their client and overall project goals as full-fledged members of — and full-brain participants in — the project team. In this model interpreters apply a variety of knowledge and skills, in addition to language — they consult with and advise the team on the business practices, economic structures, and protocol of the other country, cultural differences, effective negotiating and communications strategies and tactics, etc.

In this role interpreters must apply qualities often untapped in the traditional interpreting model — judgment and team loyalty — in the service of the client. For example, a 100% percent faithful rendition of what the other party is saying may not further the discussion if there are subtexts or nuances that need to be brought out. It's the interpreter's responsibility to point this out and let the client know that the interpretation is "functional" rather than literal.

Leonid cited instances where interpreters may be required to fill a number of untraditional functions: play tour guide, run errands, deliver off-the-record messages to the other side, or even become scapegoats to cover a client's misjudgments.

They may even be asked to handle translations — in both directions — if circumstances dictate, for example at remote locations where alternative translators are not available. In this case or under similar circumstances where services above and beyond the conventional call of duty are required, interpreters should demonstrate to the team leader their willingness to do whatever is needed — with the proviso that extra hours on the job one day may degrade performance the next — and abide by the team leader's decision.

This model applies the notion of customer service to interpretation. In a competitive marketplace service providers who display the greatest flexibility and a genuine can-do attitude will be rewarded not only with respect as professionals, but with higher incomes and job security in the form of steady repeat business.

The presentation ended with a lively discussion that spilled into the corridors, as Interpreters working in a variety of languages and environments shared their own war stories. The postpresentation debates were joined by ATA members fresh from the simultaneous session at which the new Interpreters Division was established and they encouraged Leonid's audience to join this Division and use it as a forum for discussing these and similar issues.

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SOME THOUGHTS ON THE FINE ART OF MAKING REFERRALS (and Other Topics, Related Both Directly and Tangentially)

Laura E. Wolfson

The following article was adapted from a talk of approximately the same name given by the author (as part of the SLD panel discussion) at the ATA Conference in Hilton Head, South Carolina, last November.

Recently, out of sheer curiosity, I started compiling a list of clients and potential clients specializing in Russian. Before other matters arose to distract me, the list had reached an impressive fifteen - fifteen language service companies and direct clients with an exclusive or near-exclusive need for translation and/or interpretation into and out of Russian - with perhaps a smattering of Azeri or Kazakh, which does not negate but in fact only emphasizes their specialization in Russian. Glancing over the uncompleted list, I noted that the East Coast, from Boston down to Florida, is studded with these clients' offices, a few are located in the middle of the country - Texas, Colorado, Chicago - and several are on the West Coast, mostly in California, with Russian Resources International, owned by the SLD's most famous member (the president-elect of the ATA, Ann Macfarlane) based in Seattle.

Something else struck me as I looked at the list: unlike the large slick corporate translation firms (whose names seem almost invariably to involve some twist on the words 'logic' or 'technology,' as if to convince the wary potential client that translation is not just for humanities majors any more, but is now up-to-date, streamlined, efficient and scientifically proven) and the fly-by-night, we-do-all-languages agencies, over two-thirds of these companies were headed by interpreters and translators. Ah! I thought, my kind of client! Not only are they specialists, as I am, in what I think of as the alchemical processes of translation and interpretation (alchemical because the transformation of apparent gibberish into something understandable - or vice versa - seems at times as magical as the transformation of lead into gold - or vice versa - that the medieval alchemists strove for, but failed to achieve) but they are also specialists in my language pair as well, with all of the cultural knowledge that that entails. Not only are they my kind of clients, they are my kind of people! (After all, some of my best friends, etc., etc.)

But then I recalled a conversation I had last year with another interpreter during our lunch break at a conference where we were working.

"I haven't seen So-and-So in quite a while. How is he doing?" I inquired idly, mentioning the name of a mutual acquaintance in the field, and thereby launching a fresh round of a favorite leisure-time activity among interpreters - catching up on news of other colleagues.

"Oh, he's gotten very rich and busy and important," said my booth-partner with a hint of irony. "You know, he's got his own company now; he's not just a freelancer any more, he's farming out a lot of work to other interpreters and translators. He's got so much to do that when he goes on an interpreting job himself, he uses his half hour break when he's not in the booth to do translations on his laptop, instead of smoking a cigarette or dashing to the nearest pay phone and checking his voice mail a dozen times like a normal interpreter on break - and at the same time, he's sending faxes by stepping on a foot pedal and talking on the phone to someone about an assignment that's just come in. And he has a beeper, a cell phone and three different e-mail addresses, one for correspondence regarding Ukrainian language services, one for Russian, and one for miscellaneous. And that's not counting his personal e-mail account." As he told me this, my partner grinned and mimed his impression of our colleague multi-tasking, hands, feet, telephone ear and shoulder all simultaneously engaged.

A slight exaggeration, no doubt, but I am sure you know people like this, people who, like most of us, chose the life of the freelancer for its freedom, but who then became so successful that their cottage industries got out of hand and grew into larger enterprises. These people become - not all, but some - harried, overworked, stooped over with care, and aged before their time. And of course, there is that brutal period during the transition from freelancer to something larger, when they are still accepting all the work but haven't yet got a reliable stable

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of people to complete it for them! (In this regard, we interpreters are luckier than translators because we cannot be in two places at once and are therefore forced to turn down overlapping jobs, whereas translators can theoretically accept an unlimited amount of work for any given period.)

Hearing about my newly overworked colleague made me realize that although ten of the fifteen clients I had listed were themselves translators and/or interpreters of Russian, I did not have as much in common with them as I had initially supposed. (This does not, incidentally, make them any less appropriate as clients - if anything, more so.) Translation company owners, even those formerly solitary practitioners of T + I whose companies were formed because their workload outgrew their capacity to do it all themselves, are not, like you and me, the independent freelancers. (For independent read: those who are dependent on the ebb and flow of consumer demand, and must tack and change course according to the shifting winds of the marketplace.) The difference is not one of workload, the difference is what we decide to do with the work we cannot, for various reasons, take ourselves. The independent freelancer has a different attitude toward the work she cannot physically do herself: Zenlike, she is able to let it go, give it away without regrets, watch it rush away downstream like a flower petal that has fallen into a river swollen after a heavy rain.

In the business world, this is called making referrals.

What exactly is a referral? A referral is what you do - or make, rather - after you turn down a job. Instead of simply declining with regret and letting the job and the client disappear over the horizon, you reach quickly for your Rolodex and start flipping through it while still on the phone. Before the client hangs up at wits' end with no idea whom else to call, you suggest a colleague who specializes in the subject area and language combination. The client goes weak with gratitude at being told where to look, and the colleague is pleased to get the referral as well.

Making referrals bears an interesting relationship to networking. (If such a word in fact exists; can every word really be verbed?) Whereas networking involves gladhanding people for the ultimate - and immediate - purpose of getting more work, making referrals involves making people glad while getting rid of work and serving more noble ultimate purposes as well. To wit: making referrals builds bridges with colleagues and serves as an informal and indirect, but effective, method of quality control. Making referrals is far more exalted than networking, more altruistic, more communal, and, in the end, more beneficial for all, including the refer-er. It is a kind of anti-networking, the platonic ideal version of networking.

Why do you make referrals? The reasons are few and simple:

- ◆ You have too much other work.
- ◆ The job is in a subject area with which you do not feel comfortable.
- ◆ The job is not in your language pair or direction.
- ◆ You are not in the mood/have decided to take the day off, and your bank balance/the state of the stock market is such that you can indulge your whim.

The first and last reasons given are related to another, more metaphysical reason for making referrals. And that is, that small is beautiful. Sometimes it is a good thing when the phone doesn't ring. We (well, at least some of us) choose the freelance way of life in part because it offers a freedom hard to find on the cusp of the third millennium. But then many of us become unable to say no, and gradually, like Ionesco characters turning into rhinoceri, we turn into harried businesspeople endlessly subcontracting until we cannot schedule a vacation even six months in advance.

Making referrals also provides the incomparable pleasure of raising your hands over the heads of a well-matched pair with the potential for a happy and productive relationship and saying, "I hereby pronounce you client and service provider."

The benefits of making referrals are, I admit, not directly financial (I emphasize the words **not directly**) but then, as with any honorable and demanding profession, there are many aspects of T+I that are not. By making referrals on a regular basis, we build a community of people bound together by mutual assistance and knowledge of each other's abilities and interests who can later be turned to for advice and support when needed.

Referral-making allows us to engage in informal quality control by recommending only those whose abilities and credentials inspire confidence. Higher quality work leads to higher status for the profession which leads to ... what? That's right! Higher earning potential.

Referrals are also a way of not losing the client. If you simply decline a job, the client disappears. If you make a referral and the client has a good experience, you will be remembered and you will continue to have a general idea of the client's whereabouts and language needs. When the person you have referred is unavailable, there is a good chance that the client will come back home to you.

OK, we're convinced! How does one go about making referrals?

Painfully obvious, perhaps, but important, since your reputation rides on this: refer work only to those translators and interpreters whose abilities you know and respect. The same goes for clients: refer only those whose qualities - especially credit history - are known to you or who inspire trust.

If your knowledge of a translator or interpreter's credentials or a client's credit history contains some gaps, inform the parties. Then they can make whatever decision seems appropriate and you will not be held responsible. Say, "She is a good translator, but I don't know what her experience is in subject X. I do know that she learns new terminology quickly, however."

Make sure you ask the client to mention your name when calling the translator you have recommended. And if you can, call the refer-ee as soon as you get off the phone with the client so that the former knows to expect a call and whom to thank for it. If the client is someone you work for but cannot accommodate this time, discuss rates with the refer-ee to make sure that your beneficiary does not undercut you.

Now you may be wondering, what is the particular relevance of all of this to the Slavic Languages Division?

The SLD is in an unusual position in the ATA in that it represents - potentially, at least - over a dozen languages. There is no other division like ours in this regard; all the other language divisions (Japanese, Spanish, etc., as distinct from the Literary Division, the Science and Technology Division, etc.) represent one language only, with the exception of the Nordic Languages Division, which represents no more than half a dozen languages. Furthermore, the SLD is unique in that numerically, there is one language which is hegemonous - we all know which one. In my experience, all of the Slavic languages, all or the languages of the former USSR and even languages such as Hungarian, which are none of the above, are closely associated with Russian in the minds of potential clients. When someone needs an interpreter or translator of any smallish Eastern European language, and even a medium-sized or fairly large one, whether Polish, Ukrainian, Circassian (yes, the author did once receive such a request !) or Armenian, and they do not know where to look, the first thing they do is to call someone who does Russian.

In shtetls in Eastern Europe all Jews fell into one of two categories, i.e., if they were not the recipients of charity, they were expected to make a contribution to charity. In the same way members of our division fall into one of two categories (and often both): either we make referrals or we are the beneficiaries of them - possibly to a much greater extent than our colleagues in other ATA divisions.

Furthermore, even within Russian alone, there is now such a quantity of work from such diverse sources that we can all afford to specialize in particular subjects and refer work in other areas to our colleagues.

Referrals are the best way to bind our division together, the ultimate in good karma, and they have a way of coming home to roost during slack periods.

All of this has ultimately to do with success. Freud said that success equals happiness in work and love. There is neither time nor space to go into that here, but there is another definition of success that is more to the point: someone once said that contrary to popular belief, success is not when you are promoted to supervise people who do what you used to do. Success is continuing to do what you are doing and doing it very well. And if it is your choice not to expand, subcontract, hire staff and incorporate, the way to become and remain a successful translator/interpreter is to master the fine art of making referrals.

The Slovist

Raphael Alden

Idioms, idioms, idioms. Communicating without the use of idioms may not be easy, but, on the other hand, translating them is no piece of cake.

Here are some for you:

"Share the pain, share the gain" — with these words the VP of a joint venture began a toast.

Most American movies shown on TV in Moscow these days do not have subtitles, but are dubbed. I happened to be at a friend's house when an old Clint Eastwood movie was on TV. Although I had seen the movie before, I started paying attention to it in order to listen to the interpreter. I was waiting for the well-known episode in which Eastwood says: "Go ahead, **make my day**." I wanted to hear how the interpreter would render this phrase. And when I heard him say, **"Ну давай, сделай мне приятное,"** I felt I had wasted my time. Please give me your suggestions. I will make sure to pass them on to the interpreter in Moscow.

He was expected to be **a man for all seasons**.

American and Russian partners assembled for a JV meeting. Both parties approached the conference room. It was locked. Someone was sent to fetch the key. The person returned in 30 minutes with the key. **"Тебя только за смертью посылать,"** — commented one of the Russian bosses.

Father: "Is he taking good care of you?"

Daughter: "Yes, father."

Father: **"He'd better"**.

Доедете до города Печора, а дальше **на перекладных**.

"Why was he [a recently hired corporate attorney] laid off?"
"He had very **poor judgment**".

And while you are at it, try this:

"I will agree to this although **it is against my better judgment**."

At the time it was translated **"хотя это против моих принципов"**.

I interpreted a speech by the newly appointed director general of the joint venture. Here are some sentences from his speech that gave me a hard time:

Один поручил другому, другой перепоручил третьему, тот еще кому-то и получился **испорченный телефон**. *Editor suggests: "It was like a game of telephone."*

В изощренности при решении арбитражных споров **им не откажешь**.

Все эти разговоры ведутся **на пустом месте**.

Я не сторонник **кадровой чехарды**, но в данном случае именно так и придется поступить.

I translated this as **"personnel reshuffling,"** but I would be happy to hear something from you.

Я **все-таки** 25 лет проработал в нефтяной индустрии.

Editor suggests: After all, I have worked in the oil industry for 25 years.

Будете плохо себя вести — **не взыщите** — уволью.

В работе я требую полной **самоотдачи** от всех подчиненных. Сложилась ситуация, при которой **третий — совсем даже не лишний**.

Editor suggests: A situation arose in which the third person was in no way the odd man out (or perhaps a fifth wheel).

That was some speech, wasn't it?

"We'll be right back," - the phrase used before a commercial on TV, turned out to be a problem for Russian TV interpreters. Often in Russia it is translated as: **"А сейчас - реклама."** What do you think?

With regard to the idioms published in the last issue, a number of readers sent suggestions.

These came from Masha Entchevitch:

... to face the music — ты натворил, тебе и ответ держать, тебе и отвечать

quaking in my boots — у меня поджилки затряслись от страха

Let's go kick some butt — пойдем покажем им/ему, пойдем зададим им жару, разнесем в прах

злые языки — nasty gossips. *Editor suggests: evil tongues.*

не доросла до этого — our country is not there yet, hasn't gotten there yet

getting such a sector on its feet — поставить такую отрасль на ноги

bake sales — благотворительная продажа булочек, благотворительные чаепития

Vanda Voytkevych provides a definition for **"... группа наворотила такого ..."**

Согласно электронному словарю LINGVO 5.0 перевод на русский глагола "наворотить (наворачивать)" (что-л.; чего-л.) в прямом и переносном смысле - hear up; pile up. Однако, по контексту я бы перевела как "to make mess of..."

Send suggestions to the Slovist, Raffi Alden, at raffialden@aol.com, phone and fax: (661)665-7703.

ATTENTION ALL SLOVIST FANS: Share Your (Linguistic) Wealth! Idiom Savants Session at St. Louis ATA Conference!

Is the Slovist column the first thing you read in *SlavFile*? Is there some Russian (English) idiom you are dying to find the English (Russian) equivalent of? Are you the only person in the world who knows the true ideal translation of some English or Russian idiom? Do you love to stump the experts? Well, do we have a session for you! Slovist, Raffi Alden, and SlavFile Editor, Lydia R. Stone, are planning an interactive session on R<>E idiom translation. We conceive of this session as half workshop and half game show. If you are planning to be in St. Louis and would like to join us, we invite you to pack your idioms along with your toothbrush. If you do not know or are not planning to attend the conference, we invite you to send candidate idioms on their own to Lydia or Raffi. We promise to give you full credit and to let you know what the session at large had to say about your contribution. Lydia's coordinates can be found on the masthead. Raffi can be reached at: 661-665-7703 (phone and fax) or: raffialden@aol.com.

HANDS-ON BOOT CAMP FOR ASPIRING INTERPRETERS

Mila Haeckel Bonnicksen and Karin Isbell

Last September's issue of the ATA Chronicle contained an ad which caught our attention. It announced a course in consecutive interpretation and both of us signed up. After taking the course, we realized that consecutive interpretation presents an even greater challenge than simultaneous interpretation. In this article we would like to share some of our experiences gained in the training course in consecutive interpretation taught at Inlingua School of Interpretation, located in Arlington, Virginia.

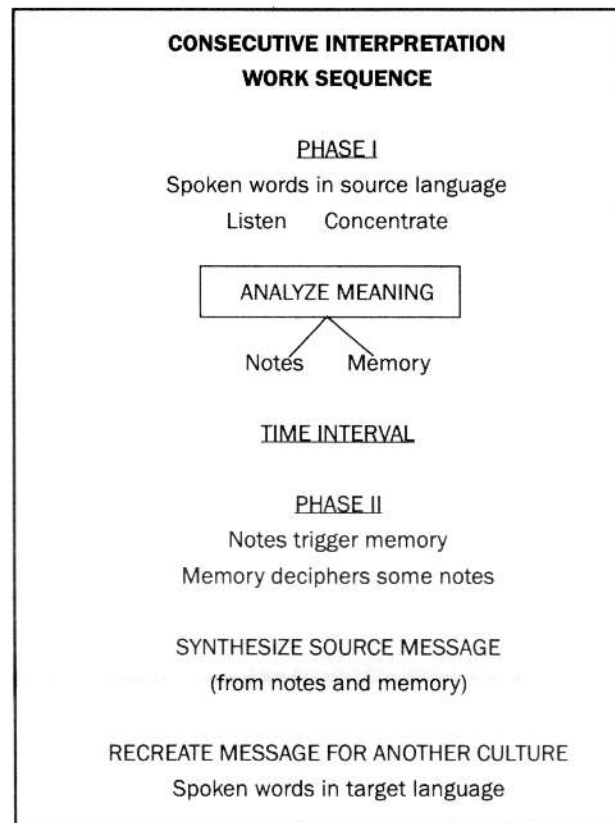
The three-week intensive program afforded those already working as interpreters an excellent opportunity for advanced training, while opening up great career opportunities for beginners. In addition, the course can help an interpreter prepare to take the State Department interpreting test.

Many readers may be surprised to hear that this course is language-neutral, based on the premise that once the interpreter has fully grasped and retained a message in English using the methods taught, (s)he should be able to render that message into any target language which (s)he speaks fluently. The school requires fluency in at least one target language, with the result that the majority of the students tend to be foreign-born. English-to-English interpreting exercises presented during the first two weeks of the course (in which students paraphrase an utterance or represent its meaning in a special form, using English words) allow the instructors to determine whether the students, whose language they do not speak, have grasped the entire meaning and can deliver the message completely, retaining nuances and emphasis. Renditions into foreign languages are usually reserved for the last week of the course when the students are already familiar with meaning analysis and retention methods.

The course, taught by Mr. Harry Obst, had six students with knowledge of four foreign languages (Chinese, German, Japanese, and Russian), from different parts of the United States: Arizona, Oregon, Maryland, and Virginia, and with different cultures and professional backgrounds. (Among us were the owner of a translation agency, a World Bank officer, a court interpreter, and a couple of free-lance interpreters/translators.). Anyone familiar with the field of translation/interpretation knows the name Harry Obst. For many years he was Director of the Office of Language Services at the State Department. He is professionally trained both as a translator and as an interpreter, with many years of practical experience.

Two years ago, he undertook the task of training those who work or intend to work as interpreters, for, according to him, there is a woeful shortage of recognized training programs that can properly prepare candidates for the challenges of interpreting — this being an apt keyword, as going through the course presented a true challenge to all of us. (As this article was going to press, we learned that the professional interpreter training program at Georgetown University is closing down, eliminating a valuable source of training.)

The program was intense and applied, with homework and reading assignments. Our day usually started with memory exercises: visualize, analyze, anticipate, associate etc. We took turns repeating passages read to us — passages that were chock full of dates, names, and events.



Daily memory workouts were followed by extensive note-taking exercises, which, as our instructor warned us, are the trickiest tasks in the complex process of consecutive interpretation. The interpreter records each part of the sentence in a prescribed place on the note-pad to facilitate quick retrieval. We learned to structure our notes appropriately so we would be able to recreate the proper sequence of each passage. We learned to write notes vertically, rather than horizontally, to write using a minimum of words and strokes, to abbreviate words in unusual ways, using end letters as well as the beginning ones, and we learned to put certain endings of abbreviated nouns and verbs in the exponential position (e.g. "c^{ee}" for "committee" with "ee" raised half a line above the "c" as in 14th). We were instructed that past, present, and future should not be expressed grammatically but rather by positioning certain strokes along a time-line.

A good portion of the first three days was devoted to divorcing us from specific words. Paradoxically, we found that words may often be the interpreter's enemy, because a particular word can have a dozen different meanings, and a particular meaning can usually be expressed with any of a number of synonyms or formulations. Writing down the words "in the spring" is not helpful in consecutive interpreting, because those words may re-

fer to a season, a source of water or a mechanical device for suspension or propulsion. A symbol (ideogram) denoting "water" immediately eliminates the other two meanings and reduces confusion.

Structure and method were only the beginning of what we learned, for the passages Mr. Obst read for us to paraphrase covered a large variety of subjects, e.g., American history, aviation, science and technology, history of the arts, music history, law, the court system and economics, among others. He noted frequently that nothing should be left to chance, that interpreters must have extensive knowledge about all kinds of subjects, as they never know where the next interpretation assignment may lead.

The course also taught reliable strategic listening techniques. The interpreter must constantly make choices, based on a variety of factors, about what to jot down and what to consign to memory. Less experienced interpreters tend to write down practically everything, leaving nothing to "visualize-analyze-anticipate." Often these futile efforts are cruelly punished in short order, when the interpreter cannot decipher his/her own frantically recorded scribbles. The course included comprehensive instructions on the use of ideograms and on how to devise a personal system of general and ad hoc ideograms. Some of us had to exorcise or unlearn old methods before assimilating the new.

Emotions ran high during the classes, from despair to euphoria to resignation and acceptance of one's limitations and included some dark nights of the soul and bruised egos. But in the end, everyone, from the beginners to the more seasoned interpreters in the bunch, saw improvement and reason for hope.

In addition to the technical instruction described above, the instructor provided a broad overview of the interpretation market in the United States and abroad, as well as information about professional organizations (including, but not limited to, the ATA).

In large part, it was the force of Mr. Obst's erudition and personality that made the program such a success. He generously shared his past experience and did so with a great deal of enthusiasm and humor, while at the same time remaining a persistent and demanding teacher. It was a comfort to us to hear that he, too, had experienced embarrassing moments on the job.

We, the students, of course, inadvertently contributed our own comic relief to the course. Two examples: In recreating a passage about Dr. Albert Schweitzer, one student had the renowned doctor, financing his hospital by "organ recycling" rather than through "organ recitals." In another passage, rattled by an inability to read her notes, one of us placed Thomas Jefferson in the Lincoln Memorial. Ah, the stresses of boot camp!

Let us end on three optimistic notes: First, each of us emerged from this mnemonic Seals training very much alive and purged of the burdens of interpreter hubris and paranoia (before this course we had not realized how closely those two resemble each other). In the same process, we gained enough faith in ourselves and our own abilities to not just jump, but leap into the twilight zone of daunting interpreting assignments — GERONIMO! Second, this course was the beginning of a wonderful journey; and we now have the skills to continue along the road that has been shown to us. Third, each of the authors got a remunerative job thanks to the knowledge and contacts gained during this course. What happier ending could a story about an interpreting course have?

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Karin Isbell is a freelance German<>English and Russian<>English court interpreter for the State of Arizona and has worked as a freelance translator of legal, medical, and technical documents for various clients and language service companies throughout the United States. Karin's email address is chuck_isbell@prodigy.com.

Do you spend more time in the company
of a certain largish scarlet tome
than you do with your family?
Don't miss the 1999 Greiss lecture!

KENNETH KATZNER IS COMING!

ALL MEMBERS ARE URGED TO ATTEND.

Please direct all questions regarding this event to Slavfile assistant editor Laura Wolfson.
See masthead for contact information.

What: the Slavic Languages Division's second annual Susana Greiss Lecture
Where: the ATA conference in St. Louis (check the conference program for details)
When: Saturday, November 6th at 1:45 p.m.
Who: Distinguished lexicographer Kenneth Katzner, author of *English-Russian, Russian-English Dictionary*, (the one with the familiar red cover), the most popular dictionary of its kind published in the United States, will be speaking about the challenges of compiling a bilingual dictionary and the similarities between lexicography and translation.

Book Review

FROM RUSSIAN INTO ENGLISH, AN INTRODUCTION TO SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION.

Second Edition. By Lynn Visson. Focus Publishing, 1999. 213 pp.
ISBN 0-941051-88-9. Price: \$29.95.

To order copies, or for additional information, call 1-800-848-7236.

Reviewed by the editors of SlavFile.

Holding this book in her hands, the Russian interpreter feels something very difficult to describe, akin to homecoming after an arduous journey. The very existence of a book bearing the title From Russian Into English, An Introduction to Simultaneous Interpreting is a long-overdue acknowledgement that, yes, we are serious professionals and we do valuable work deserving of substantive study materials and informational support. And finally we have it. We have a book which discusses in detail subjects we have all had to translate and interpret and some we haven't yet, but probably will soon. It provides authoritative glossaries in over a dozen fields (disarmament, women's issues, outer space, medicine, religion, the Russian and American political systems, to name just a few) containing words whose renderings we have puzzled over at length without satisfactory resolution. It guides us through rough spots in our work. This addition to the Russian specialist's shelf serves to nudge Russian-English interpreting further in the direction of a precise and systematic activity, as it removes some of interpreting's improvisatory aspect (although some of that will inevitably remain, since the utterances and thoughts we interpret originate with human beings).

It is very lucky for all of us in the field that author Lynn Visson, a UN interpreter, made the time to write this book. How did she do it? Did she write it in twenty-minute shifts while her booth-partner was at the microphone? During layovers in third-world airports while travelling on UN missions? Certainly it does not read as if she wrote it this way, but it seems a miracle that she was able to produce something so thorough, well-footnoted and sourced about a subject so scantily written about while also working at the United Nations. She has now revised it for a second edition, and even more recently has put out yet another book for Russian interpreters accompanied by practice tapes. (Watch future issues of the *SlavFile* for a review of the latter.)

This book is not just for interpreters. The sections on what the interpreter does and how her work and personality differ from those of the translator will be of interest to all those who read this publication regularly, as will Visson's comments on how Russian style has changed since the advent of glasnost and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Her discussions of the unregulated American language market, the problematic and widespread assumption that anyone who is bilingual can interpret, and the absence of serious interest in or understanding of interpreting and translation in American academic institutions will be familiar notions to any regular reader of the *ATA Chronicle*, but they are explored here with exceptional depth and clarity.

Another issue which this reviewer loves to ponder at length, the pros and cons of interpreting out of your native language versus into it, is examined in this book from every conceivable angle. The fact that Visson comes strongly down on one side of this issue (against interpretation into a non-native language) almost without regard for the realities of the freelance language

services market shrinks to a minor quibble when set next to the refreshing fact that she discusses the issue knowledgeably and at length. Furthermore, we understand that in her more recent work, she has softened her view on this issue considerably, recognizing that there are very few native-English interpreters in Russia and that in the United States the market requires that interpreters go both ways, for a variety of reasons.

One of the most valuable aspects of this book (and we feel that it is worth several times its price at least) is the way it deals with the nitty-gritty of the Russian language. Much of the book is devoted to the rather poor fit between Russian and English and ways of making the twain dovetail a little more smoothly than seems possible at first or even second glance. This is yet another reason why this book will prove indispensable not only to interpreters, but to their colleagues in the allied professions of translation and teaching. For example, Visson provides a variety of graceful options for coping with the word **собеседник**, often awkwardly rendered in English as **interlocutor**. In a chapter entitled "Small and Slippery Words: Conjunctions, Prepositions and Articles," she discusses the numerous meanings assumed by the Russian word **и**, usually translated as **and**, but which, depending on context, can mean **also**, **even**, and a host of other things. This chapter also effectively undoes much of what is taught or implied in undergraduate Russian classes, i.e., that most words have only one or perhaps two renderings; this book provides a wealth of examples to prove that, depending on the context, words such as **от**, **с**, **до**, and **у** have more varied renderings in English than we were taught or thought possible.

In addition to what we generally think of as specialized terminology, the book contains a useful section of phrases relating to the types of informal, auxiliary conversations which always take place along with the more formal talks at events where interpreters work: greetings, requests, hotel registration, toasts, condolences and farewells. There is a separate chapter on verbs, another one on what to do about syntax when you don't know how a sentence will end, a short section on booth etiquette (how interpreters should behave in work situations) and a chapter on intonation and delivery, in which Visson discusses the differing ways that intonation is perceived in Russian and English. In short, From Russian Into English contains everything a working interpreter may have wondered about, struggled over and not known whom to ask, as well as some things which may not even have occurred to her, and all are illustrated with copious examples.

Holding this book in her hands, the Russian interpreter, who spends so much of her time and effort helping people to understand each other, feels that to the extent that she is congruent with her work, she, too, has at last been understood.