Preface

Russian in Use was developed for use by students of Advanced Russian at Portland State University. A number of considerations have gone into the construction of the book.

In order to move out of the intermediate range of communicative competence and into the advanced, students need the ability to converse intelligently on a wide range of non-academic topics of general interest. The topics selected for Russian in Use are Geography, Education, Politics, Ecology, and America Through the Eyes of Others. In addition, there is an introductory chapter on classroom issues, chiefly computer management and proofreading skills.

Each chapter begins with preparatory exercises, which help students to write and articulate their own ideas on each of the topics, as well as to read and understand written and oral treatments of those topics produced by native speakers. At the beginning of each chapter, there is a list of approximately 200 vocabulary items related to the theme of the chapter. Students moving into the range of advanced mastery need to know new words, but they also need to be able to vary their lexicon. In order to help them develop not only a larger but also a more varied vocabulary, each chapter includes lexical studies, a section that focuses on distinguishing among Russian synonyms—especially those that are difficult for native speakers of English because of English interference.

For most students at this level of study, issues of verbal aspect remain a challenge. Chapters 2–6 include a section on verbs, initially focusing on verbal aspect and later on motion verbs. These chapters also provide sections on syntax, called expanding sentences, that encourage students to begin varying their sentences structure. The preparatory exercises conclude with a section on expressing relationships, most often with prepositions. In order to help students be independent when they leave the classroom, each of the six chapters of Russian in Use also has a section on resources that students can use both for independent research and for writing projects and oral presentations.

More than anything else, students who are moving into the advanced range of communicative competence need to develop the ability to understand native speakers expressing their opinions on a variety of topics, and they need opportunities to debate and present their own opinions on the same topics. Chapters 2–6 contain reading passages related to the chapter theme. Whenever possible, these texts have been selected to present different or sometimes even opposing points of view. Russian in Use also has an accompanying DVD that contains unscripted listening passages for each of the topics. Support materials and exercises for these listening assignments are included in the chapters. Students develop their own writing and speaking skills as they work on compositions. Composition assignments are couched as a real-world projects and present opportunities for group work, independent research, and oral presentations.

At the end of each chapter there is a set of activities that give the students additional opportunities to use their skills in different but related settings and ways. In addition, Chapters 2–6 conclude with a set of review exercises taken directly from the reading
and listening materials that the students have already covered. The purpose of the review exercises is either to review difficult areas, such as numerals, that are not covered in the book or, more often, to focus the students’ attention on the ways in which native speakers use the vocabulary and structures that the students have just been studying.

In addition to its six chapters, *Russian in Use* contains three appendices and Russian-English and English-Russian glossaries. Appendix A contains Aids to Grammar: Grammatical Terminology; Alternate Prepositional Endings; Formation of Past Passive Participles; and Formation of Ordinal Numbers. Appendix B contains the originals of authentic texts used in exercises and activities. Appendix C contains a correction key to be used by students during the rewriting process. In the glossaries, all of the vocabulary of the six chapters is given in alphabetical order with complete grammatical reference information for each entry.

The Instructor’s Manual that accompanies *Russian in Use* can be found at www.yalebooks.com/russianinuse. In addition to an answer key for the exercises in the textbook, the Instructor’s Manual contains suggestions for approaching each of the chapters and a transcript of all of the listening passages.

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