

Russian Made *EASY!*



Podcast



Episode #22

***You are listening to the updated in 2021 version of the podcast**

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RussianMadeEasy.com



Welcome to episode 22 of Russian Made Easy. We'll start today by following up on the formal forms we learned last time. And then today's main topic will deal with adjectives. And in today's tip of the day I talk about what I consider perhaps the most important thing to bear in mind when learning a new language. It has to do with meaning. Alright, so...

So let's start by repeating these two words:

Ваш / Ваша

Pretend you're at work. A co-worker emerges from the meeting room, holding someone's cell phone. He approaches his boss and asks:
Это Ваш телефон?

Later, you're standing in the company parking lot. Your co-worker points to a Ferrari and asks your boss:
Это Ваша машина?

So the words Ваш / Ваша are two ways to say "your" in Russian.

Imagine someone is showing you an apartment they think you might want to rent. Ask them, formally...
Is this your apartment?
Это Ваша квартира?

Speaking formally, ask your co-worker: Is this your computer?
Это Ваш компьютер?

Imagine your mother-in-law cooked pizza. Speaking formally, tell her: I love your pizza!
Я люблю Вашу пиццу.

Of course, since pizza changes to "pizzu", vasha has to change to vashu, to rhyme with it. And speaking of formal speech, let's review those formal verb forms we learned in the last episode.

As you step into the company break-room to make coffee, ask your boss: Will you have coffee?
Вы будете кофе?

Follow that up by asking: Or do you want tea?
...или Вы хотите чай?

Ask a new acquaintance politely: Do you live here, in the center?
Вы живёте здесь, в центре?

Ask them: Where do you work?
Где вы работаете?

Tell the person: You speak English well.
Вы хорошо говорите по-английски.

The sport of baseball is a cognate in Russian. So, speaking politely, ask your Russian father-in-law:
Do you like baseball?
Вам нравится бейсбол?

Offering him your computer, ask: Do you need the internet?
Вам нужен интернет?

Ask your friend's grandmother: Do you have a CAT?
У Вас есть кошка?

Alright. Let's learn two new words. Here's the first one...
красивый

This word can be used to describe a variety of things, people, animals. So, based on these examples, how would you translate it?

I remember my friend's amazement the first time he saw St. Basil's cathedral on Red Square. The incredible woodwork, the intense colors on onion-shaped domes....all he could say was..
Красивый!

I was showing a friend some photos of my trip to Maui—the crystal clear waters, the white sand beaches lined with palm trees, and he said:
Мауи -- красивый.

My sister just bought a Siberian Husky. Black and white fur, piercing blue eyes...As she showed us the photos she said,
Она очень красивая.

Every time my mom watches a George Clooney movie she sighs a bit...
Джордж Клуни очень красивый.

What's your interpretation of the word красивый? It usually translates as *beautiful* or *attractive*. You can use it to describe just about anything or anyone. And notice the speaker's addition of the word *очень*

My husky is *очень* beautiful. Or: George Clooney is an *очень* handsome man. So *очень* translates as *very*.

Try to say: Your mother is very beautiful.

Твоя мама очень красивая.

This is a beautiful apartment.
Это красивая квартира.

Твой папа очень красивый.

And here's the other adjective we want to learn:
вкусный

Sometimes grapefruit can be a bit sour, but once in a while you bite into one of those red grapefruits, it's so sweet, juicy...you look up with a smile...
Этот грейпфрут очень вкусный.

I remember one hot summer afternoon, my mom took out her blender, put in a scoop of vanilla ice cream, added a cup of blueberries and some milk... It was so good, I had to tell her in Russian...
Мама, это очень вкусный милкшейк.

So вкусный is the adjective meaning delicious or tasty. Try saying: This is delicious pizza.
Это вкусная пицца.

And if you *really* like the pizza, you'd say:
Это очень вкусная пицца.

Say: This is delicious tea.
Это вкусный чай.

If you really like the tea, you'd say:
Это очень вкусный чай.

And notice, by the way, that the word очень does NOT change, no matter how it's being used.
For example: I want VERY tasty pizza.
Я хочу очень вкусную пиццу.

The adjective had to change, to rhyme with pizzu, right? We heard "fkusnuyu", but the word "very" is an adverb, and they don't change.

And now, here's your Tip of the Day from Russian Made Easy...
Grasping the meaning of a word is NOT an all or nothing thing. Our

understanding of a word is a **continuum**, from having absolutely no clue what a word means at one end, to fully understanding it at the other end.

The best way to demonstrate this is with two new words. Listen and repeat this first one:

Молоко

Imagine a farmer sitting on that little wooden stool beside his cow. He's pulling on her udders, and the liquid that comes out of them is of course called moloko.

Each morning I fill my cereal bowl with cornflakes and pour 1% moloko over them.

You probably feel very confident about what moloko is.

But now here's our next word: галстук

Pretend someone asked me what I did yesterday. I tell them, "Nothing really. I went to the mall to buy a new galstuk. Thrilling, eh?"

So, do you know what a galstuk is? You're probably thinking, *I have no idea. You can buy anything at the mall.*

But as I said, meaning isn't an all or nothing thing. I mean, tell me, is galstuk the Russian word for 'winter'? Is it the Russian word for "cautious"?

No? How can you be so sure? Didn't you just tell me that you have absolutely no idea what the word galstuk means?

See? Understanding meaning is a continuum. With the word galstuk, you're somewhere in the middle. But maybe you know **even more** about it.

Is it the word for octopus? Well, no....an octopus isn't something you buy at the mall.

Ok, then...Do you think it's the word for "plasma TV"? Probably not, because of the guy's sarcasm about it. Remember he added, "Pretty thrilling, eh?" So a galstuk is some unexciting thing men buy at the mall. We're not 100% sure what it is, but we know a whole lot more than "absolutely nothing" about the word.

What's funny is, people think....*Man, learning a foreign language is gonna be scary. It seems like you're always in this haze, never 100% sure what some new word means.*

I'll admit, it's kinda like that at first, but as you get more experience, things become clearer and clearer. But the other thing is: It's like that for you in **English**, too. Tell me, do you know what the word *erudite* means? You probably know it's kinda related to *smart*, but it might be hard for you to rattle off the actual dictionary definition. And yet it doesn't bother you much when you encounter the word in some newspaper article, does it? So the tip here is to know that meaning is not an all or nothing thing. It's ok...it's normal...to only *kinda* know what some words mean.

Alright, so...How would you say: Marvin has a very beautiful girlfriend.
У Марвина есть очень красивая девушка.

Polina has a very handsome boyfriend.
У Полины есть очень красивый парень.

Try saying: This is very tasty caviar.
Это очень вкусная икра.

This is a very tasty cheeseburger.
Это очень вкусный чизбургер.

Your mom has put on her favorite dress. Tell her: Mom, you are very beautiful.
Мама, ты очень красивая.

Dad, you are very handsome.
Папа, ты очень красивый.

Now, in today's tip, we just learned the new word *moloko*. And that brings up today's other main topic. So far in the course we've talked only about masculine nouns and feminine nouns. But there's one other type we need to learn, and that's neuter nouns. Those are ones, like *pivo* and *moloko* which end in an "o." I know it doesn't sound like it, but *pivo* does end in an "o." There are other neuter nouns, but for now I just want to talk about these "o" ending ones.

Now listen to how the speaker will say: This is tasty milk.
Это вкусное молоко.

He was using the neuter form of the adjective. So try saying: This is delicious beer.
Это вкусное пиво.

The difference between the feminine version and the neuter version is very subtle. Listen to them side by side:
вкусная.....вкусное

But the real difference comes when we do something to the words, because only the feminine ones change. Compare:

I want a tasty pizza.

Я хочу вкусную пиццу.

I want a tasty beer.

Я хочу вкусное пиво.

See? Pizza had to change to pizzu, and so the adjective fkusnaya had to change, to rhyme with it: fkusnuyu. But pivo being neuter, with that O at the end, doesn't have to change, so neither did fkusnoe.

You can see why I **waited** to discuss this stuff. It can start to feel overwhelming. But, no big deal. We'll get lots of practice with it, and soon enough you won't even pause to think about it. So hang in there. Ok, let's learn one final new word today. This one's a classic. And as I mentioned at the end of the last podcast, it's a must-know word if you ever travel here, to the former Soviet Union. So listen and repeat:

сало

It's a neuter word. That last letter is an O. One more time...
сало

So, what is salo? Well, imagine a slice of raw bacon....and then cut away all the meat. What's left is salo. So, salo -- a delicacy in Russia and Ukraine -- is raw pig fat. Remember, since it ends in an "o", it won't change when we do something to it. So, imagine you're sitting at the table with some Russian co-workers. You haven't touched your raw pig fat that you were served, so your co-worker asks politely:

You don't want the pig fat?

Вы не хотите сало?

Say: No, I don't want pig fat.

Нет, я не хочу сало.

Add: I don't like raw pig fat.

Мне не нравится сало.

Then again, maybe you tried the salo and really liked it. Say...

This is delicious pig fat!

Это вкусное сало.

Alright. That was a lot of new stuff we learned. Try to make a point this week of working with those two new adjectives we learned, and be sure to get the downloads for today's exercises. We'll work more with neuter words next time, plus we'll beef up our greetings as we ask people how they're doing. Until then, I hope you're doing well. I'll see you next time!

P.S. By the way, remember that word we heard in today's tip? Where I said, I went to the mall to buy a galstuk? I'll include the meaning of it in today's transcript, so be sure to go to RussianMadeEasy.com to find the answer.

What's a ГАЛСТУК?

Well, I hate having to wear a suit and galstuk to work each morning.

А галстук (galstuk) is a (man's) tie.

