

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Basic Bootcamp #1

Self Introductions/Basic Greetings

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INTRODUCTION

Erik: Hello and welcome to Basic Bootcamp. This five-part series will help you ease your way into the Russian language. Now, the idea of bootcamp calls to mind sweating and toil. But our bootcamp is different!

Oksana: Yes, you won't have to sweat, we promise.

Erik: We'll go over the basics that will really help you understand Russian much quicker and easier.

Oksana: And we'll have fun doing it!

Erik: That's right Oksana, we won't blow any whistles at you or scream at you to do two hundred pushups...though that might work too. We'll see how it goes.

Oksana: Okay, so in this lesson, you will learn how to introduce yourself.

Erik: Now, what could be more basic than this? I promise you, you will have this conversation probably around two hundred times in your first month in Russia.

Oksana: Yep...maybe more.

Erik: Ok, but before we got to a conversation, just wanna set up the situation. Oksana and I will be meeting for the first time and will be introducing ourselves in Russian and we will follow all Russian sentences and phrases with the translation in English. Ok, here we go!

DIALOGUE

Оксана: Здравствуйте. Меня зовут Оксана.

Эрик: Здравствуйте, а меня - Эрик.

Оксана: Очень приятно.

Эрик: Взаимно.

Erik: One more time, slowly.

Оксана: Здравствуйте. Меня зовут Оксана.

Эрик: Здравствуйте, а меня - Эрик.

Оксана: Очень приятно.

Эрик: Взаимно.

Erik: Natural native speed with the translation.

Оксана: Здравствуйте. Меня зовут Оксана.

Oksana: Hello. My name is Oksana.

Эрик: Здравствуйте, а меня - Эрик.

Erik: Hello, and I'm Erik.

Оксана: Очень приятно.

Oksana: Nice to meet you.

Эрик: Взаимно.

Erik: Likewise.

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Erik: What do people generally do when they meet for the first time, Oksana?

Oksana: Well, for the first time, it's enough for men to shake hands and for women to smile while introducing themselves.

Erik: Yes, I would say that shaking hands for men is a must in Russia, but don't pull your hand out to greet a woman. So, Oksana, we actually met for the first time today, and I didn't know whether to shake your hand or not so I waited for your clue. So, Oksana, since you didn't offer to shake my hand I just said "Привет, очень приятно", right?

Oksana: Right...But...

Erik: And that was ok? You weren't offended?

Oksana: No, I wasn't, you are American and I don't know if I should pull a hand out.

Erik: That's all right. I think it was Ok. So, if you are in Russian and you do offer to shake a lady's hand she will most likely shake your hand but she might not feel so comfortable. Is that right?

Oksana: Well, actually yes. Like women in Russia like to be feminine, so...Shaking hands with women in Russia considered to be rather masculine.

Erik: How about in a business situation? Would it be appropriate to shake hands with a woman...

Oksana: Of course, it would be appropriate. But in business situation, any Russian businesswoman will offer you to shake her hand.

Erik: Ok, good. So, it depends on a situation?

Oksana: Yes.

Erik: Great. So, of course, we are just generalizing here. And there're maybe instances where a woman offers to shake your hand. So, we are just talking about culture, generalizations often common. But if you have any other experiences you can leave a comment. So, Oksana, what are some other typical ways that Russian people greet each other.

Oksana: Well, as soon as you become good friends with Russians, you can afford any kind of greeting—hugging, tapping each other on the shoulders, kissing on the cheeks for women...just use your imagination.

Erik: So, for the first meeting better to stick with a handshake and a smile than a kiss. Is that right, Oksana?

Oksana: Yes, that would be more appropriate.

Erik: Ok.

Oksana: Okay Erik, so let's take a closer look into these self-introductions.

Erik: Great idea, Oksana! This is bootcamp after all; we have to get intense and start ordering people around, right?

Oksana: That's right!

Erik: We just kidding! Okay, Oksana in our dialog how do we say "hello"?

Oksana: We say the "Здравствуйте".

VOCAB AND PHRASE USAGE

Erik: Now, the Russian "hello" is quite particular. Literally translated, it means "be healthy" or "wish you health". Grammatically, it's used as an imperative but no one really thinks about the literal meaning when they say it in Russian. Isn't it right, Oksana?

Oksana: Yes, it lost its original meaning a long time ago, so you can just translate it as "hello."

Erik: Great. So the point is you can just say "Здравствуйте" to say "hello" and this is a very polite hello, and it will work in any situation, formal and informal. Alright, so there we have it. Hope everyone isn't getting too overheated in the bootcamp here. Maybe it's time for some pushups?

Oksana: I think I could use some; I'm getting a little out of shape.

Erik: Yep, I'mshape too, Oksana.

Oksana: Well, mental exercise is good too, so next we heard...

Меня зовут Оксана.

Erik: In Russian, one simple way of stating your name is saying

Oksana: "меня зовут"

Erik: which literally means "I'm called" or "they call me," and then you can say your name. Once again.

Oksana: Меня зовут Оксана.

Erik: Меня зовут Эрик.

Oksana: In response, you can say the same, "меня зовут", but it will sound more

natural if you don't just mirror your companion's words, but say "а меня..." and then your name.

Erik: So, instead of repeating, "My name is" you just say "And I'm..." and then your name. So basically, you can just add "а", which means "and", and omit "зовут". So let's try it one more time. Oksana.

Oksana: Меня зовут Оксана.

Erik: А меня – Эрик.

Oksana: Yes. And after knowing your name, I will tell you how glad I am about it! Очень приятно.

Erik: And this means, literally, "very nice" and we don't have to say the full phrase "to meet you". It's already implied in the phrase "очень приятно". Oksana, could break that phrase down for us?

Oksana: The adverb очень means "very" and doesn't need much explanation simply because it has the absolute same meaning and usage as in English, and "приятно" literally means "nice" or "pleasurable." So I think the translation of "очень приятно" would sound even more accurate as "my pleasure."

Erik: That's right, Oksana, but the way it's used in this context is: "nice to meet you". So, Oksana, maybe you could say just one more time for us?

Oksana: Очень приятно.

Erik: Excellent! And now that you said "nice to meet you", I can respond by saying: "взаимно".

Oksana: Yes, and "взаимно" means "likewise", which is a natural response in Russian.

Erik: So, let's go over there one more time.

Oksana: Очень приятно.

Erik: Взаимно. Ок, Oksana, now let's look at the grammar for this lesson.

LESSON FOCUS

Question. Oksana, what if your companion is for some reason hesitant to introduce him or herself?

Oksana: Well, it's totally okay to become a little aggressive in your desire to get to know him. Ask his name yourself!

Erik: And how would you ask for someone's name Oksana?

Oksana: Как вас зовут? This is how your question should sound.

Erik: So, Oksana, could you break that down for us?

Oksana: So, literally, it means, "How are you called?" and it said in a polite form. "Как" means "how," and "вас" means "you".

Erik: And “зовут”?

Oksana: “Зовут”? We've mentioned that before. It means “called”.

Erik: Ok, so the same “зовут” as “меня зовут”.

Oksana: That's right.

Erik: So you can use the word you've already learned in this lesson and just add “how” and “you” to make a question.

Oksana: That's correct.

Erik: So, Oksana, do “меня” and “вас” translate literally to “I” and “you”?

Oksana: No, actually you can't translate it literally into “I” and “you”. They are the modifications of the pronouns “Я” and “Вы” which literally mean “I” and “you”. And they are used in an accusative case.

Erik: But we don't have to worry about that now, right Oksana?

Oksana: That's right! Trust the bootcamp people! We don't want to confuse you at our first lesson!

Erik: Ok, so, for now

Oksana: let's make a short dialog.

Erik: Great!

Oksana: Как Вас зовут?

Erik: Меня зовут Эрик.

Oksana: А меня – Оксана.

Erik: Очень приятно.

Oksana: Взаимно.

Erik: Excellent! We made our first step! So, Oksana, let's translate that quickly.

Oksana: Ok, the first phrase: Как Вас зовут?

Erik: What's your name?

Oksana: Меня зовут Эрик.

Erik: My name is Erik.

Oksana: А меня – Оксана.

Erik: And my name is Oksana.

Oksana: Очень приятно.

Erik: Nice to meet you.

Oksana: Взаимно.

Erik: Likewise. Ok, now we are going speed it up just a little bit for you to more natural speed. See if you can keep up.

Oksana: Ok. So...Как вас зовут?

Erik: Меня зовут Эрик.

Oksana: А меня – Оксана.

Erik: Очень приятно.

Оксана: Взаимно.

OUTRO

Erik: Ok, thank you, everyone, for listening to our first bootcamp lesson.

Оксана: Спасибо всем и до новых встреч. Thank you, everyone, and see you next time.

Erik: See you next time.