

## LESSON NOTES

# Upper Intermediate S1 #1

## Don't be Too Predictable in Russia!

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#1

# DIALOGUE - RUSSIAN

## MAIN

1. Marina : Миша, ты где? Я заняла нам места. Давай быстрее! Фильм начинается через пять минут!
2. Misha : Я в пути. В городе ужасные пробки и, похоже, мы застряли. Впереди авария, и из-за нее мы не можем сдвинуться с места уже 20 минут.
3. Marina : Почему ты мне раньше не позвонил? Мы бы перенесли нашу встречу. Теперь мне придется смотреть фильм одной и съесть две порции попкорна. Я так и знала!!!
4. Misha : Прости! Так неудобно получилось. Я знаю, я всегда опаздываю, но в этот раз я честно не нарочно... Я до последней секунды надеялся, что мы вот-вот сдвинемся с мертвой точки...
5. Marina : Мдаааа, как предсказуемо... Но, как говорится, надежда умирает последней. Надеюсь, что ты хотя бы к концу фильма доберешься до кинотеатра.
6. Misha : Я очень постараюсь. С меня напиток, чтобы загладить свою вину.
7. Marina : Ловлю на слове. Все, пока! Фильм уже начинается.

## ENGLISH

1. Marina : Misha, where are you? I've saved seats for us. Hurry up! The movie starts in 5 minutes.
2. Misha : I'm on my way. There are terrible traffic jams in the city and it seems like we've gotten stuck here. Because of the car accident ahead, we haven't been able to move for 20 minutes now.
3. Marina : Why didn't you call me before? We could've postponed our appointment. Now I will have to watch the movie alone and eat two boxes of popcorn. Oh, I knew it!
4. Misha : I'm sorry. I feel very guilty. I know I'm always late, but this time I haven't done it on purpose. I really believed that we were just about to move.
5. Marina : Yeah, that's so predictable. But as they say, hope dies last. I hope that you will get to the cinema by the end of the movie at least.
6. Misha : I will really do my best. I owe you a drink to make up for my mistake.
7. Marina : I am taking you at your word. Okay, bye! The movie is about to start.

## VOCABULARY

Russian	Romanization	English	Class	Gender
нарочно	narochno	on purpose	adverb	
вот-вот	vot-vot	soon, just about to	adverb	
надежда умирает последней	nadezhda umirayet posledney	Hope dies last	phrase	
загладить вину	zagladit' vinu	to make up for one's fault	Phrase	
ловить на слове	lovit' na slove	to make somebody stick to their word	idiomatic expression	
сдвинуться	sdvinut'sya	to move on	verb	
перенести	perenesti	to postpone, to change the date	verb	
пробка	probka	traffic jam	noun	feminine
застрять	zastryat'	to get stuck	verb	
приходиться	prikhodit'sya	to have to	verb	

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>Я уверена, что она нарочно рассказала моим родителям про мою плохую оценку в школе.</p> <p><i>Ya uverena, chto ona narochno rasskazala moim roditelyam pro moyu plokhuyu otsenku v shkole.</i></p> <p>"I am sure she told my parents about my bad mark at school on purpose."</p>	<p>Небо затянулось тучами и вот-вот пойдет дождь.</p> <p><i>Nebo zatyanyulos' tuchami i vot-vot poydet dozhd'.</i></p> <p>"The sky has become dark and it seems like it is just about to rain."</p>
<p>Говорят, что надежда - очень сильная эмоция, даже сильнее страха, поэтому часто говорится, что "надежда умирает последней".</p> <p><i>Govoryat, chto nadezhda - ochen' sil'naya emotsiya, dazhe sil'neye strakha, poetomu chasto govoryatsya, chto "nadezhda umirayet posledney".</i></p> <p>"They say that a hope is a very strong emotion, much stronger than a fear. That's why it is often said that 'Hope dies the last'."</p>	<p>Олег всячески пытался загладить вину перед своей женой, но она не смогла его простить и ушла.</p> <p><i>Oleg vsyacheski pytalsya zagladit' vinu pered svoey zhenoy, no ona ne smogla yego prostit' i ushla.</i></p> <p>"Oleg had been trying to do his best to make up for his fault before his wife, but she couldn't forgive him and left."</p>
<p>Меня поймали на слове, когда я пообещал угостить всех дорогим шампанским, в случае моей победы на выборах.</p> <p><i>Menya poymali na slove, kogda ya poobeshchal ugostit' vsekh dorogim shampanskim, v sluchaye moyey pobedy na vyborakh.</i></p> <p>"I was taken at my word when I promised to treat everybody with a very expensive champagne in case of my victory on the elections."</p>	<p>Я до последней секунды надеялся, что мы вот-вот сдвинемся с мертвой точки.</p> <p><i>Ya do posledney sekundy nadeyalsya, chto my vot-vot sdvinemsa s mertvoy tochki.</i></p> <p>I really believed that we were just about to move.</p>

<p>Почему ты мне раньше не позвонил? Мы бы перенесли нашу встречу.</p> <p><i>Pochemu ty mne ran'she ne pozvonil? My by perenesli nashu vstrechu.</i></p> <p>"Why didn't you call me before? We could've postponed our appointment"</p>	<p>После обильного снегопада, пробки на дорогах стали еще одной проблемой для городских жителей.</p> <p><i>Posle obil'nogo snegopada, probki na dorogakh stali yeshche odnoy problemoy dlya gorodskikh zhiteley.</i></p> <p>"After a heavy snowstorm, traffic jams became another big problem for citizens."</p>
<p>В мегаполисах невозможно быстро добраться из одной части города в другую из-за пробок.</p> <p><i>V megapolisakh nevozmozhno bystro dobrat'sya iz odnoy chasti goroda v druguyu iz-za probok.</i></p> <p>"In big cities it is impossible to get from one part of the city to another because of traffic jams."</p>	<p>Машина застряла в грязи, и мы вот уже который час пытаемся ее вытащить с помощью тросов.</p> <p><i>Mashina zastryala v gryazi, i my vot uzhe kotoryy chas pytayemsva yeye vytashchit' s pomoshch'yu trosov.</i></p> <p>"A car has got stuck in the mud and we have been trying to pull it out for several hours already."</p>
<p>Наш секретарь ушла в декретный отпуск, поэтому мне приходится работать за двоих, пока ей не найдут замену.</p> <p><i>Nash sekretar' ushla v dekretnyy otpusk, poetomu mne prikhoditsya rabotat' za dvoikh, poka yey ne naydut zamenu.</i></p> <p>"Our secretary is on maternity leave, so I have to work for two until someone can be found to replace her."</p>	<p>Моя машина сломалась, придётся идти пешком.</p> <p><i>Moya mashina slomalas', pridyotsya idti peshkom.</i></p> <p>"My car is broken so I have to walk."</p>

## VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

The first key word for this lesson is an adverb **ВОТ-ВОТ** which means "any minute/second now," "soon."

In the dialogue, we saw:

1. *Я до последней секунды надеялся, что мы вот-вот сдвинемся с мертвой точки.*  
"I really believed that we were just about to move."

This adverb emphasizes that the action can happen any minute from now. The phrase consists of the demonstrative pronoun **ВОТ**, which is repeated twice. I am sure you already know its meaning, "**here.**" So literally this adverb means "**here here.**" And it makes it easier to remember because "something is just about to happen because it is so close right here in terms of physical distance and timing" in both the literal and figurative sense.

### For example:

1. *Машина подъехала так близко, что, казалось, она вот-вот снесёт забор.*  
"A car came so close that it was just about to hit a fence."

Our adverb is used in literal meaning when describing a physical distance.

1. *Её лицо покраснело от стыда, и, казалось, она вот-вот заревёт.* (figuratively)

"Her face turned red from shame and it seemed she would burst into tears any second now."

The adverb is used in a figurative meaning to emphasize an approaching time.

This adverb has another usage which cannot be directly translated into English. It is used when somebody expresses his/her affirmation about something or share very assertive opinion. It can roughly be translated as "yes, exactly like this."

**For example:**

1. - *Премии не будет.*

- *Вот-вот, я так и знал!*

A: "You won't get a bonus."

B: "I knew it!"

It can also be used when somebody expresses a strong agreement on something. And can be roughly translated as "it's what I mean/say."

For example:

1. - *Мне кажется нужно всем проголосовать, чтобы узнать, кто из них двоих наиболее достойный кандидат.*

- *Вот-вот, и я о том же. "*

A: "I think we all have to vote in order to know who is the most well-deserved candidate among those two."

B: "Yes, that's what I meant."

In written form, the adverb **ВОТ-ВОТ** should be separated from the main sentence with a comma when used in the meaning of assertiveness or agreement.

The second key phrase for this lesson is **ЛОВИТЬ НА СЛОВЕ** which can be translated as "to take somebody at their word." It is used when somebody is asking or demanding another person to do or to pledge to implement what the person says.

**For example:**

1. *Я поймала его на слове, когда он поклялся бросить курить.*

"I took him at his word when he swore to stop smoking."

Example from the dialogue:

1. *С меня напиток, чтобы загладить свою вину.*

*Ловлю на слове.*

A: "I owe you a drink to make up for my mistake. "

B: "I am taking you at your word."

The phrase consists of three words, the verb **ЛОВИТЬ**, preposition **на** and noun **СЛОВО**.

The verb **ЛОВИТЬ** literally means "to catch."

For example:

1. *Андрей пошел ловить такси.*

"Andrew went to catch a taxi."

2. *Мы купили мышеловку, чтобы ловить мышей в подвале.*  
"We bought a mousetrap to catch mice in the basement."

The preposition **на** means "on" and the noun **слово** means "a word," but in the prepositional case, **слове**. So literally this phrase can be translated as "to catch on one's word." Pretty straightforward!

When you specify who is taken at their word, you should put either the person's name or personal pronoun in the genitive case after the verb. Also in past tense, the verb **ловить** should be put in the perfective form, **поймать**.

For example:

1. *Она поймала Сергея на слове, когда тот пообещал купить ей машину на день рождения.*  
"She took Sergey at his word when he promised to buy a car for her birthday."
2. *Ты только что сказала, что придёшь! Я ловлю тебя на слове.*  
"You have just said you will come. I take you at your word."

The last key phrase for this lesson is a very famous Russian proverb, **Надежда умирает последней** which can be translated as "Hope dies last" or "Hope is the last thing to die." Since it is a literal translation of this proverb, it is quite straightforward. But let's break it down to know the meaning of every word.

**Надежда** means "hope." There is a frequently used verb **надеяться** ("to hope") which is derived from this noun.

For example:

1. *Мы верим и надеемся, что он скоро вернется.*  
"We believe and hope that he will come back soon."

**Надежда** is also a very popular female name in Russian. A short version for it is **Надя**.

The verb **умирает** means "to die" and the adjective **последней** means "the last." Both verb and adjective are conjugated to the noun **надежда**. The dictionary form of these is "умирать" and "последний" respectively.

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of this Lesson is Changing the Vowels И and Е in the Stems -бир- and -бер- and Others**  
**Надеюсь, что ты хотя бы к концу фильма доберешься до кинотеатра.**  
**"I hope that you will get to the cinema by the end of the movie at least."**

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Congratulations! You've reached the the Advanced Level! This means that you are already at a quite high level of Russian grammar. I don't think we need to go over the same basic grammar that was covered in the previous series. In these lessons, we will get down to more complicated cases, so you can write in a grammatically correct way.

In this lesson we will be looking at grammar rules that are quite difficult even for native speakers. Believe me, Russians make a lot of mistakes in written Russian simply because they don't know grammar rules. They particularly make many mistakes in the stems with alternating vowels. In this lesson, I will introduce you to the stems **-бир-** and **-бер-** as well as other stems with the alternative vowels **И** and **Е**, and in what cases we should use **И** in the stem and in what cases **Е**.

In our dialog we have a verb with a stem **-бер-**. Here is the sentence:

1. *Надеюсь, что ты хотя бы к концу фильма **доберешься** до кинотеатра.*

"I hope that you will get to the cinema by the end of the movie at least."

The verb **доберешься**, which means "to reach" or "to arrive" has the stem **-бер-** with a vowel **Е** in the middle. But have you ever thought, why do we sometimes write the same verb with the vowel **И** instead?

**добираться** means "to reach," "to arrive."

Here is an example with the verb **добираться**:

1. *Нам было тяжело до вас добираться, потому что вы нам дали неполный адрес.*

"It was difficult to arrive in your place because you gave us an incomplete address."

So here we have sentences with **доберешься** and **добираться**.

#### **GRAMMAR RULE:**

**The vowel И is ALWAYS used when after a stem there is the suffix **А**!**

So, as you can see after the stem **-бир-** in the verb **добираться** there is a suffix **А**; that's why we should write **добираться** instead of **добераться**. In the verb **доберешься**, there is no **А** after the stem, which why we write **Е**.

There are also a lot of other stems with alternating vowels **И** and **Е** in them. The grammar rule of this lesson will apply to ALL of them.

И	Е
-блист- блистать "to shine" блистающий "shining"	-блест- блестеть "to shine" блеснувший "(something) has just shined"
-дир- выдирать "to pull out" выдираю "I pull something out"	-дер- выдеру "I will pull something out" выдерем "we pull something out"
-жиг- выжигать "to burn out" зажигаю "I am firing something up"	-жег- выжечь "to burn out" зажечь "to fire up"
-мир- умирать "to die" вымирающий "(animal) is dying out"	-мер- умереть "to die" вымерший "died out/ disappeared (animal)"
-пир- запирать "to lock" отпирающий "unlocking"	-пер- запереть "to lock" отпертый "to be unlocked"
-стил- устилать "to cover," "to spread" подстилаю "I am underlying"	-стел- устелить "to cover," "to spread" подстелить "to underlie"
-тир- вытирать "to whipe" вытираю "whipping"	-тер- вытереть "to whipe" вытер "somebody/something whiped"
-чит- вычитать "subtract"	-чет- вычесть "to subtract"

For example:

1. Она *пря́м блиста́ла* на сцене в своем новом платье.  
"She was shining like a star on the stage in her new dress."
2. Бриллианты на этом колье так *блестели*, что я не могла оторвать глаз.  
"Diamonds on that necklace were shining so bright that it dazzled my eyes."
3. Много людей *умирают* каждый день от различных болезней.  
"Many people die everyday because of different diseases."
4. Они так любили друг друга, что даже хотели умереть в один день.  
"They loved each other so much they even wanted to die the same day."
5. *Запирать* эту дверь нужно на верхний замок.  
"This door should be locked with the upper lock."
6. Не забудь *запереть* дверь.  
"Don't forget to lock the door."



1. Please note that alternative vowels are met only in verbs, adjectives and nouns. Verbs with an И vowel in the stem are perfective in most cases.
2. There are some grammar rules exceptions in the stem -чит- and -чет-:  
сочетать "to combine," сочетание "combination." Although there is the suffix А after the stem, we put the vowel Е instead of И.

## CULTURAL INSIGHT

*В наши дни, наверное, не найдется ни одного мегаполиса, который бы не столкнулся с проблемой пробок на дорогах, и Москва, к сожалению, не является исключением. Ситуация с пробками на дорогах столицы России, несмотря на все усилия местных властей, пока только усугубляется с каждым годом.*

*Каковы же причины километровых дорожных заторов? Эксперты, как правило, выделяют одну, самую главную причину - превышение максимальной пропускной способности самих дорог из-за огромного количества транспортных средств. Однако также бытует мнение, что изначально сама транспортная схема Москвы была разработана неверно и пробки на дорогах - это последствия ошибок проектирования.*

*Постоянные пробки - это извечный источник стресса для жителей столицы. Они не только являются причиной частого нарушения правил дорожного движения, постоянной загазованности, но и также приводят к конфликтам между участниками дорожного движения, особенно если кто-то куда-то спешит.*

*Сегодня правительство Москвы принимает все возможные меры для улучшения ситуации: строятся новые дороги, развязки, парковки, запрещается въезд грузового транспорта на территорию столицы с 6.00 до 22.00 и так далее. Однако до полного разрешения возникшей проблемы еще далеко.*

Did You Know?

"Nowadays, you probably cannot find even a single megalopolis that hasn't faced the problem of traffic jams, and Moscow, unfortunately, is not an exception. The situation with traffic jams on the roads of the capital of Russia, despite the efforts of local authorities, is only worsening year by year.

What are the reasons for these mile-long traffic jams? Experts, as a rule, emphasize one important reason: the exceeding of the maximum capacity of the roads in Moscow because of a large number of vehicles. However, there is also an opinion that from the beginning, the Moscow transport scheme was designed incorrectly, and the traffic jams are the consequences of design errors.

Constant traffic jams are an eternal source of stress for residents of the capital. They not only cause frequent traffic violations, and constant pollution, but also lead to conflicts between road users, especially if someone is in a hurry.

Nowadays, the Moscow city government is taking all the possible measures to improve the situation: new roads, interchanges, and parking areas are being built, the entrance to the territory of the capital by cargo vehicles is prohibited between 6 a.m and 10 p.m, and so on. However, there's still a long way to go until the full settlement of the problem."