Table of Contents

Introduction ........................................... ii
How to Use This Book ............................. 1
Algebraic Notation ................................ 2
Russian Alphabet .................................... 3
Russian Chess Symbols ............................ 4
Nouns .................................................. 6
Verbs .................................................. 9
Word Order .......................................... 13
Sample Translations .............................. 14
Vocabulary List ..................................... 25
Names Guide to Pronunciation .................. 43
Colophon ............................................. 49
Thinkers’ Press Literature ....................... 51
Introduction

In my years of translating chess literature, many of my chess friends have remarked how nice it would be if they could read Russian so that they too could have access to the mighty outpouring of theoretical articles and annotated games which is regularly published in the Soviet Union. Certainly they had no problem coping with the algebraic notation. But there was always that certain something lacking when only the moves of the game or the moves of the opening article were available.

I hope this book will help change that. It is designed to aid and assist the chessplayer in getting more out of a Russian chess text than simply the moves. And that is the only person for whom it is designed—the chessplayer, not a Russian literature critic, not a grammarian. As a matter of fact, the Russian scholar and purist will probably be repulsed by some of the methods and shortcuts advocated in this book. However, when the conscientious chessplayer finishes applying himself or herself to learning the principles and techniques presented here, he or she should be much closer in the attempt to unravel that mysterious language of Botvinnik, Tal and Spassky.

This is the second edition, revised and expanded. This is possible due to the steady public interest in both the subject matter in general and this work in particular. I would like to express my thanks to Emanuel Sztein for his assistance and valuable insight in the preparation of this second edition.

Now, sit down, sharpen your pencil, and prepare to broaden your horizons, for after you have put in about as much work as you would normally need to master a few opening variations, you will find that you will have an entire new source of chess literature and ideas at your disposal.

Hanon W. Russell
Milford, CT
August 1991
How To Use This Book

It is assumed that as the chessplayer begins his reading of this book, nothing is known of the Russian language. The following method of study is of course purely a subjective approach, but I think that if followed, will yield the desired results. Naturally, if any one way of study works best for you, use it. Otherwise I would suggest the following pattern:

First, the subject matter from cover to cover should be lightly perused. Then, intense, serious attention should be given to the subject matter as the student goes through the three sections on Nouns, Verbs and Word Order. Some time should then be spent glancing through the vocabulary section, trying to "get the feel" of the written word in Russian. At that point, the three chapters mentioned above should be reviewed again. The student may then be ready for the Sample Translations.

The sample translation section will give the student some idea of how to go about putting their newfound knowledge to use. By guiding students through several typical Russian chess texts, it is hoped that they will be able to discern some method in the author's madness and then strike out on their own, grappling with those Russian texts with which they truly want to become familiar.

One final note: the use of gender pronouns (e.g., "he" instead of "she") is of no importance, except when specifically required by Russian grammatical construction.
Algebraic Notation

Lest there be some among the chessplaying throng who are still unfamiliar with Algebraic Notation, a short explanation of it is in order.

Algebraic Notation is a much simpler, easier and more direct method of recording chess moves than English Descriptive Notation. It is characterized by the following:

1. Moves are always recorded from White's side of the board.
2. Each square has but one designation. Thus White's QB3, which, in English Descriptive is known as both QB3 (from White's side) and QB6 (from Black's side) is known as c3 in Algebraic Notation, regardless from which side you are recording.
3. Each file, starting from White's far left (Queen Rook) file is given a letter, starting "a", ending "h".
4. Each rank, beginning with White's first rank, is given a number, starting with "1" and ending with "8".
5. The square bears the designation of the intersecting file and rank and retains that designation whether recorded from the White side or the Black side.
6. The symbol for a pawn, "P" in English Descriptive, is omitted in Algebraic Notation. The designation of the square alone, with no symbol at all for any piece, is given.
7. Captures are indicated by either "x" or "":. It should be noted that in many modern chess texts the use of a captures symbol has been omitted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Descriptive</th>
<th>English Algebraic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. P-K4</td>
<td>1. e4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. N-KB3</td>
<td>2. Nf3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. B-R4</td>
<td>4. Ba4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 0-0</td>
<td>5. 0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. P-Q4</td>
<td>6. d4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


# Russian Alphabet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transliteration</th>
<th>Transliteration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>А а .............. ah</td>
<td>Р р .................. r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Б б ................ b</td>
<td>С с .................. s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>В в ................ v</td>
<td>Т т .................. t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Г г ................ g</td>
<td>У у ................. u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Д д ................ d</td>
<td>Ф ф .................. f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Е е ............... (y)e</td>
<td>Х х .................. kh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ж ж ................ zh</td>
<td>Ц ц .................. ts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>З з ................ z</td>
<td>Ч ч .................. ch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>И и .............. i(ee)</td>
<td>Ш ш .................. sh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Й й ............ (-y-)</td>
<td>Щ ш .................. shch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>К к ................ k</td>
<td>Ъ ъ .................. (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Л л ................ l</td>
<td>Бы .................. y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>М м ................ m</td>
<td>В в .................. (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Н н ................ n</td>
<td>Э э .................. eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>О о ................ o</td>
<td>Ю ю .................. yu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>П п ................ p</td>
<td>Я я .................. yah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) These letters, while an integral part of the spelling of any word in which they appear, exist for pronunciation purposes only, and have no English equivalent. They are of little importance to the chessplayer learning to read Russian here.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Russian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rook= R</td>
<td>Ладья - Л</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knight= N</td>
<td>Конь - К</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop= B</td>
<td>Слон - С</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen= Q</td>
<td>Ферзь - Ф</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King= K</td>
<td>Король - Кр</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawn= P</td>
<td>Пешка - (п)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nouns
Verbs
Word Order
Sample Translations
Nouns

A noun is a person, place or thing. As in English, Russian nouns occur in the singular and the plural. While the singular Russian noun can end in almost any letter of the alphabet, a plural noun usually will end in either -ы or -и. This does not mean that every noun that ends in this manner is necessarily a plural noun. However, if the noun in question does end in this manner, and a plural would make the most sense, chances are that is what it is. Thus, the vocabulary list shows us that пешка means “pawn”. If you saw the word пешки, what do you think it might mean? You would not be incorrect if you said “pawns”. Let us examine a few more examples from the vocabulary list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Russian</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Russian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bishop</td>
<td>слон</td>
<td>bishops</td>
<td>слоны</td>
<td>gambit</td>
<td>гамбиты</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gambit</td>
<td>ответ</td>
<td>answers</td>
<td>ответы</td>
<td>answer</td>
<td>ответы</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>answer</td>
<td>ошибка</td>
<td>blunders</td>
<td>ошибки</td>
<td>blunder</td>
<td>ошибки</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blunder</td>
<td>партия</td>
<td>games</td>
<td>партии</td>
<td>game</td>
<td>партии</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>game</td>
<td>ладья</td>
<td>rooks</td>
<td>ладьи</td>
<td>rook</td>
<td>ладьи</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In each example, the Russian singular ends in a variety of letters. However every Russian plural ends in either -ы or -и. Before leaving plurals, it should be noted that there are few Russian nouns which end in -о in the singular but -а in the plural. Thus:
Singular | Russian | Plural | Russian  
---|---|---|---
advantage | преимущество | advantages | преимущества 
(the) exchange | качество | (two) exchanges | качества

Unlike most nouns in English, Russian nouns are given a gender. That is to say, a Russian noun is either masculine, feminine or neuter. Believe it or not, for the purposes of this book, it will make no difference whether the student knows which noun is masculine, feminine or neuter. Russian nouns will appear in a text with a variety of endings, depending on their use in the sentence. If there is an adjective modifying this noun, the ending of the adjective will be very close to, if not exactly the same as, the noun it is modifying. All this means is that the reader will be making a quick check for similarity in endings and then match or connect those words to make some sense out of it. Admittedly, this is close to a complete butchering of the complex noun/gender/ending structure in the Russian language, but frankly the reader will be able to know just as well what is meant most of the time, even if the reader does not have the slightest inkling of genders, declensions, etc.

In Russian, as in English, a word which describes, or somehow characterizes a noun, is called an adjective. In Russian, an adjective must agree with a noun in “case, number and gender.” This means, for example, if the noun is the subject of the sentence and is plural, the adjective will have to be in the “subject” form and the “plural” form. Now that you know this, forget it. As stated above, you will be able to get through the annotations without any of this refined knowledge, just by comparing endings and word order and structure. More on that later, though. Suffice it to say that if the adjective fits the noun, that is, if their meaning together makes good sense, chances are they belong together. It is as simple as that. Sure there will be occasional problems, but most of the time, you will do just fine with this method.
There exist in English words which are known as “articles.” The word “the” is an article, a “definite article.” The word “a” (or “an”) is an “indefinite article.” Their function is to help define more clearly what kind of a noun we have. So, in English we have “a bishop” and “the bishop.” In Russian, articles, definite and indefinite, do not exist. As you will soon discover, the insertion of “a” or “the” into an English translation will come fairly easily, since in most cases it makes reasonable sense to say it only in one way fluently in English. So while “a bishop” and “the bishop” are both rendered by the Russian word слон, its usage will dictate how it finally comes out in English.

By the way, in English, “White” and “Black” are both singular expressions. Thus, we say “White has a won game” and not “Whites have a won game.” In Russian, the words for “White” and “Black” are in a plural form. You will see that verbs will take a plural form when they refer to “White” and “Black”. So, in Russian, one would read literally “Whites are lost”, but of course rendered into English, “White is lost.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English (singular)</th>
<th>Russian (plural)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>белые</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>черные</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verbs

A verb is a word which expresses action performed by or to a noun, or describes the state of a noun. For example, the verb “to play” is in its basic (infinitive) form. It clearly expresses an action performed in the sentence “Black is playing (plays) well.” (Черные играют хорошо). This kind of “action verb” is easily understood.

The other kind of verb expresses a state-of-being. The most notable state-of-being verb is the verb “to be”. The use of this verb in Russian shall be treated later in this section.

For the purposes of this book, we shall cover the recognition of the infinitive form, present tense, and past tense forms of Russian verbs. Familiarity with these three forms should allow the chessplayer to proceed in a fairly smooth manner understanding a basic Russian chess text.

The infinitive form of a verb in English is most easily recognized by the word “to” directly preceding the basic verb. So, “to win”, “to lose”, “to play” and “to continue” are all infinitives. The Russian infinitive has only one word. Thus, “to play” (actually two separate words in English) is only one word, играть, in Russian. The distinctive feature of the Russian infinitive is its ending, which is, most of the time, -ть.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Russian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to play</td>
<td>играть</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to continue</td>
<td>продолжать</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to defend</td>
<td>защищать</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Verb "to be"

There are a few comments which are in order regarding the use of the Russian verb "to be," быть. This verb does not appear, for all practical purposes, at all in the present tense. Thus, a sentence such as "The position is bad" is rendered into Russian simply as Положение плохо. Occasionally a dash is inserted, but this has no real bearing on the outcome. Thus, the previous sentence could also appear Положение - плохо.

The verb "to be" follows the aforementioned patterns for the formation of the past tense.

(he) was: был
(they) were: были

This concludes the section on verbs. At this point it is suggested that the chessplayer briefly review both sections on nouns and verbs before proceeding to word order and the sample translations. The chessplayer has at his disposal now the basic grammar principles for translating Russian chess texts. Though these principles fall far short of the normal way Russian grammar is presented and studied, they should be more than adequate for the chessplayer's purpose, not to mention the much greater ease of learning and assimilation.
Word Order

Before proceeding to guide the chessplayer through several trial translations, a brief section on word order should be included. In general terms, Russian word order is not that different from English word order. Normally, the subject or that word or phrase which is being primarily stressed appears at the beginning of the sentence.

For example, let us say that we come across the Russian equivalent of the phrase “Also good is 13 а3.” This might be rendered as, И хорошо 13 а3. However, as the English-speaking chessplayer recognizes the ever-so-slight change in emphasis when the English sentence is rewritten “13 а3 is also good” so the same slight shift is imparted to the meaning when the Russian sentence is changed: И 13 а3 хорошо.

In the given example, word order presented virtually no problem. The purpose of presenting it to the chessplayer was so that the transpositional possibilities a Russian sentence might have are known. Actually, nothing less than first-hand experience in coping with an actual text will provide the chessplayer with the insight necessary to distinguish shades of meaning and stress.
Sample Translations

It is time for the chessplayer to try to apply what has been learned. Two games shall be presented in their entirety in the Russian. They are taken from the June, 1969 issue of «Шахматы в СССР». The paragraphs that are translated have been numbered for easy reference. Pains have been taken at every instance to present the translation technique in what might be best described as a “stream-of-consciousness” method. In this way it is hoped that the reader will be able to take full advantage of being in effect, a co-translator.

ТЕКСТ № 1

Английское начало

В. ГОРТ             В. УНЦИКЕР

1 Примечания А. Лейна

1. Kf3 Kf6 2. g3 g6 3. Cg2 Cg7 4. c4
8. 0-0 K:d4.

Paragraph 1

The translation of the heading is relatively simple. The first line is translated verbatim in the vocabulary “English Opening.” The second line contains the names of the players. Note that instead of an “h,” the Russians use a “g.” So the transliterated name “Gort” is actually “Hort.” His opponent is V. Unzicker. (Actually, it is W. Unzicker, but the German “W” is pronounced as an English “V,” and so it appears in the transliterated Russian). The first word of the third line is also obtainable directly from the vocabulary. Annotations. The next word, “A. Leina,” is the name of the annotator. So we would properly have “Annotations by A. Lein.”
Помимо этого хода встречалась жертва пешки 8... d6. Мне кажется, после 9. К:c6 bc 10. С:c6 Лb8 более активная позиция черных фигур не является достаточной компенсацией за отданную пешку.


Paragraph 2
The first word of the first line is not in the vocabulary, so we move on. The next three words seem to have words very similar to them located in the vocabulary. The first one is close to a word given to mean "this" or "that." The second is very close to the word meaning "move," while the third is close to that word meaning "to be encountered." Let us move right on to the next two words to see if we can construct a complete phrase. The first word in the second line means "sacrifice" and we find the next word to mean "pawns" or "of pawn." So, literally we have "this-move-encounter-sacrifice-pawn(s)." In what order would these words make the most sense? "This move encounters a sacrifice of a pawn" makes no sense here. But "(The) sacrifice (of a) pawn (has also) been encountered (on) this move" does. Note that you have to sprinkle your translation throughout with definite and indefinite articles, "the" and "a." Another sentence begins in this second line, and continues until the end of the paragraph. Except for the first word of this sentence and the second to last word in the last line, almost every other word appears in some form in the vocabulary. (The reader is advised
to verify this by looking up each word in the vocabulary. In this way he shall gradually build his vocabulary and have to rely less on flipping back to find the words.) In literal form we have “(-)it
seems-after...more-active-position-black-piece-not-(.-)sufficient-
compensation-(.-)pawn.” The reader can easily transform this into “It seems after 9. Nxc6 bc
10. Bxc6 Rb8, the more active position of the Black pieces is not
sufficient compensation (for)
the pawn.”

Paragraph 3

It seems as if the first two words in this paragraph are not in the vocabulary, but the next one,
“position” is. Proceeding from there, we can find every other word. The sentence ends in the
middle of the third line. From the words we have found, we have
“...position-white-Queen-Black-
with-tempo-transfer-Knight-on-
c5” With these words it is not difficult to conceive of the sentence of being something like “(Due to)
the position of the White Queen, Black (can) transfer his Knight to
c5 with tempo.” Please note that the words in parentheses do not
necessarily represent an accurate
4 Не только ослабляет позицию короля, но в будущем позволяет белым выиграть темп путем Фс2—d2 с нападением на пешку h6.

Paragraph 4

A check through the vocabulary shows that only the third and fourth words in the second line here are not in the vocabulary. In order, the words read out "not-only-weaken-position-king-but-in-(–)–(–)-white-win-tempo-via-…-with-attack-on-pawn-…" or "This not only weakens the position of the King, but (–) White to win a tempo via Qc2-d2 with an attack on the h6 pawn." Hopefully this is getting easier for you. Yes, looking each and every word up in the vocabulary is quite time consuming, especially when you are not familiar with the alphabet, but the more you do it, the easier it will become.
5 Более логичным представляется 12... Cd7, и если 13. Lad1, то 13... Keb 14. Ce3 Lc8 с хорошей позицией.


6 Безусловно сильнее, чем стандартное 18. e4. Во-первых, сделанным ходом не ослабляется поле d4, во-вторых, не запирается слон g2, и, наконец, черным приходится считаться с угрозой f4-f5. На 18. e4 могло последовать 18... e5 19. Fd2 C:d5 20. F:d5 (или 20. ed a5) 20... a5 21. Lad1 Lаб с неплохой игрой у черных.

18... f5.
Paragraph 7

Another longish paragraph, but this time only three strange words, the word at the end of the first line, at the end of the third line and at the end of the fifth line. In literal form we have “Black-not-without-basis-(−)...in view of...with-clear-advantage-White-nothing-not-(−)...(−) even-advantage-Black. This is easily pieced together to read “Black, not without basis (“reason” might be a better synonym to use) (−) 18... Bxd5 in view of 19. cd with a clear advantage for White. Nothing (−) 19. Bxd5 Qb6 and 19. Qxd5 Qb6 20. Qd4 e5 (−) is even to Black’s advantage.”

Paragraph 8

The second word in the first line and the fourth word in the third line are the culprits this time. Otherwise this also easily converts into English: “Not (−) 21... e6 22. Nc3 Rd7 23. e5 Qb6 24. Bxc6 bc 25. ed, and Black does not (cannot) play 25... Rad8 due to an attack of (by) the Rook on e6.”
9 Черные упускают последний шанс организовать сопротивление: 28... C:d5 29. cd (если 29. Ф:d5, то 29... Лd7) 29... Лf6 30. Л:a4 e4, и, несмотря на лишнюю пешку, выигрыш далеко не прост.

29. c5!

10 Разрушающая оборону черных в центре, после чего белые без труда выигрывают.


**Paragraph 9**

In this paragraph, except for the second word in the first line and the second word in the second line, along with the second word in the last line, we can find all the words in the vocabulary and this presents us with more than enough words to get a complete thought. In translation, the sentence as we put it together, is: “Black’s last chance is 28... Bxd5 29. cd (if 29. Qxd5 then 29... Rd7) 29... Rfe7 30. Rxa4 e4, and in spite of an extra pawn, the win is not simple.” This translation is not accurate insofar as an actual translation of all the existing words in Russian are present in this sentence, but using this “selective vocabulary” method, we again have obtained a fully reasonable translation, suitable for our purposes.

**Paragraph 10**

The last paragraph in this first game is the only one not to contain any moves. Just straight Russian text. How do we fare? It turns out that except for the first two words, we have the rest of the words: “(−)−(−)-Black-in-center-after-which-White-without-difficulty-win” or “(−) Black’s center, after which White wins. A chessplayer relating this sentence to the game sees that White’s last move has destroyed Black’s center, and this is the idea that is missing from our translation as pieced together from our vocabulary.
TEXT № 2

11 Сицилианская защита

К. ХУЛАК О. РОМАНИШИН

Примечания Ю. Балахова


12 Другое продолжение — 11...

12. Фf3.


12... Фh5 13. Фf2 b5 14. a3.
(-) Team Championship, 1968, the plan (connected) with the move 11... Rac8, ...” after which things get a little hazy. Before the next series of moves, we have the words “white” and “doubt”. However, if we quickly skip to the end, we find that “Black (—) (has) a difficult position” so White must have “put this plan in doubt” or something equivalent. Yes, this time we had to do more than the normal amount of extrapolating from those words which were found in the vocabulary, but it was not an insurmountable task. And the final meaning we came up with was close enough to the Russian to be sufficient for our purposes.


14... a5 15. Lаd1.

**Paragraph 14**

This paragraph is easy to translate: “On 14. Ndxb5 Nxe4 15. Nxe4 Qxb5, Black (has) a good game (Byrne-Stein, Sarajevo, 1967)”

15... b4 16. Kd5.

16 Лучше 16. ab, хотя и тогда у черных хорошая игра (16... K:b4 или 16... Kd5 Ke4 18. Fe1 Le8).

16... Ke4 17. Fe1 ba!

17 Черные смело идут навстречу осложнениям.


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**Paragraph 15**

Everything in this paragraph goes smoothly until the last two lines, where, quite frankly, we simply do not have enough words to make heads or tails of the meaning. For the first time in these translations, it seems that the chessplayer would be really stumped. We would have, “A doubtful move. In the game Tseshkovsky-Kapengut (Odessa, 1968) (White) played stronger, 15. Nde2. Now, White (—) (has) nothing in 15... b4 due to the zwischenzug 16. Ng3. After 15... a4 16. Ng3 Qh5 17. Ba2 b4 18. ab Nxb4 19. Bbl, Black’s counterattack...” after which the Russian text lapses into confusion for the untrained chessplayer. Let’s accept this small setback and move on. This will be covered in the conclusion to this section.

**Paragraph 16**

Very straightforward. “Better is 16. ab, although then Black (has) a good game (16... Nxb4 or 16... ab 17. Nd5 Nxe4 18. Qe1 Rce8).”

**Paragraph 17**

Though we do not have the middle three words in this sentence, the first and last are enough for us to guess that the text is saying something like “Black (is going in for) complications.”


21 Не спасало и 31. Л:d4 из-за 31... Фg1+ и 32... b1=Ф.

31... Фg1+ 32. Kpg3 Фf1+ 33. Kpg3 Ф:f4+ 34. Kpg2 Фg5+ 35. Kpg3 Ф:d8. Белые сдались.

Paragraph 18

This is a longish paragraph, but one which releases its mysteries to the astute chessplayer and the vocabulary: “Here (→) White (had) the move 20. Nxc8, which (gave) good chances for a draw. Black is forced to reply 20... Rxc8, since bad is 20... ab due to 21. Ne7 Bc3 22. Bd4ch.”

Paragraph 19


Paragraph 20

Outside of the first word, “Romani- shin”, who is playing Black, the rest is fairly unintelligible, until the fourth and fifth lines, “(→) the struggle would not be so clear.”

Again, there is not much to go on for untangling the first part of this paragraph.

Paragraph 21

“Not (→) 31. Rxd4 due to 31... Qglch and 32... b1=Q.”

Conclusion

The chessplayer has just been helped through twenty-one paragraphs of translation of a typical Russian chess text. The chessplayer should note that except for the difficulties encountered in paragraphs thirteen, fifteen, and twenty, the gist, if not the actual meaning of each paragraph was arrived at. Hopefully, by the time that the chessplayer got to the paragraphs of the second game, fewer words had to be looked up in the vocabulary. You will find that regular systematic application of what you have learned thus far will become easier and easier the more you use it.
The vocabulary list compiled here is specifically for the chessplayer. It contains many specialized chess terms which have other meanings in regular Russian usage, but we are not concerned with these other meanings. Just the meaning as it relates to chess is given. Some words which, for obvious reasons, are not strictly related to their use in chess texts and have fairly general usage have been given, but the chessplayer should be aware that at times an English synonym may have to be substituted to put the phrase into fluent English.

The chessplayer who truly wants to attempt to unravel all the Russian chess texts should obtain a regular Russian dictionary. Using this book as a base, with a little practice, the chessplayer should become quite proficient in handling basic Russian chess texts. For the purpose of convenience, starting on the first page of the vocabulary, and then every other page, we have placed the complete Russian alphabet to make it easier and faster to look up words in an unfamiliar alphabet.

Please note that many adjectives and adverbs are given purely in their adverbial form, with the adverb translation. They are noted by the abbreviation “ad.” To find out what they would be as adjectives, simply drop the adverbial ending, and make it an adjective in English. For example, you find the word that means “weakly.” The adjective form in English would be “weak.” The word “weak” is not given in the vocabulary list, though if the Russian word is obviously being used as an adjective, this is the form you would use. Also note that adverbs, when they stand alone, many times at the beginning of the sentence, can be translated with the words “it is” in front of them. Thus the word for “weak,” if appearing at the beginning of a sentence, could, in some cases, be translated as “It (or this) is weak”. Again, this particular form is omitted due to space considerations, but the chessplayer must be aware of this possibility.

The following abbreviations are used:

ad. — adjective/adverb (see above for explanation)
adj. — adjective
adv. — adverb
n. — noun (note that no genders are ever given)
v. — verb
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aа</th>
<th>Бб</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>а</strong> and, but</td>
<td><strong>б</strong> без without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>a</strong> active</td>
<td><strong>без</strong> defenseless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>анализ</strong> analysis</td>
<td><strong>afen</strong> defenseless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>анализировать</strong> to analyze</td>
<td><strong>белопольный</strong> white-squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>аналитик</strong> analyst</td>
<td><strong>белые</strong> white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Английское начало</strong> English Opening</td>
<td><strong>белых</strong> white's, of white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>атака</strong> attack</td>
<td><strong>бесполезный</strong> useless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **атаковать** to attack | **Бу**&nbsp; uy &nbsp;&nbsp; v. to be

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>блокада</strong> blockade</td>
<td><strong>была</strong> v. (she, it) was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>блокированная пешка</strong> blockaded pawn</td>
<td><strong>было</strong> v. (it) was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>более</strong> more</td>
<td><strong>были</strong> v. (they) were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>борьба</strong> fight, struggle</td>
<td><strong>быстро</strong> adv. quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>брать</strong> to take, to capture</td>
<td><strong>быть</strong> v. to be</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
В в
в случае
in case of, on
важный adj.
important
вариант n.
variation
ввиду
in view of
Венгерская партия
Hungarian Defense
Венская партия
Vienna Game
вертикаль n.
file
вероятно adv.
probably
весьма adv.
extremely
вечный шах
perpetual check
взять v.
to capture
видно ad.
obviously
вилка n.
fork
вместо
instead of
внимание n.
attention
возможность n.
possibility
возможно ad.
possibly
восемь
eight
восьмой adj.
eighth
время n.
time
вряд ли adv.
hardly
все
all
всего
of all
вскрытый шах
discovered check
встреча n.
meeting, game
встречаться v.
to meet, play
второй adj.
second
выбор n.
choice
вывод n.
conclusion
выгодно ad.
advantageously
выжидательный ход
waiting move
выиграть v. to win
dаже adv. even, quite
выигрыш n. win
dалее adv. further
вынуждать v. to force
dва, две two
вынужденно ad. forcibly
dвижение n. movement
dвойной удар double attack
dвойной шах double check
dебют n. opening
dебют Берда Bird’s Opening
dебют Понциани Ponziani Opening
dебют Рети Réti’s Opening
dебют слона Bishop’s Opening
dебют трех коней Three Knight’s Game
dебют четырех коней Four Knights’ Game
dебют ферзевых пешек Queen’s Pawn Game
действие n. activity
диагональ n. diagonal
диаграмма n. diagram
dля for
dобиться v. achieve, get
dолжен adj. should, must
dоска n. board
dостаточно ad. sufficiently, enough
dругой adj. another

З з
задача n. problem
закончить v. to finish, end
зал n. hall
замысел n. intention
записанный ход sealed move
захватывать v. to seize
захватывать инициативу to seize the initiative
защита n. defense
защита Алехина Alekhin Defense
защита Грюнфельда Gruenfeld Defense
защита двух коней Two Knights Defense
защита Каро-Канн Caro-Kann Defense
защита Нимцовича Nimzo-Indian Defense
защита Уфимцева Pirc Defense
защита Филидора Philidor's Defense
защитывать v. to defend

Е е
единственный ход the only move
если if
если...то... if...then...
есть v. (there) is

Ж ж
ждать v. to wait
жертва n. sacrifice
защититься v.
to defend oneself

здесь
here

зональный adj.
zonal

И и

и
and

и т.д.
etc.

идея n.
idea

избегать v.
to avoid

избежать v.
to avoid

известный adj.
well-known

игра n.
play, game

играть v.
to play

из-за
due to, because of

изолированная пешка
isolated pawn

изучать v.
to study

или
or

индиийская защита
(Old) Indian Defense

инициатива n.
(the) initiative

интересный adj.
interesting

испанская партия
Ruy Lopez

использовать v.
to take advantage of

итальянская партия
Giouco Piano, Italian Game

их
their

К к

каждый adj.
each

кажется v.
it seems

как
as, like

каталонское начало
Catalan Opening

качество n.
the exchange
классический adj. classical
команда n. team
когда adv. when
комbinations n. combination
компенсация n. compensation
коневой эндшпиль knight ending
контратаха n. counterattack
контригра n. counterplay
контроль n. control
контроль времени time control
контроль над ... control over ...
кончаь v. to finish, to end
конь n. knight
коня
knight's, of the Knight
королевский adj. King, King's
королевский фланг Kingside
король n. King
который adj. which, what
красивый adj. pretty
критический adj. critical
кроме (того) adv. except, beside
круг n. circle

Л л
ладьи n. rooks
ладья n. rook
латышский гамбит Latvian Gambit
легкие фигуры minor pieces
легко ad. easily
линия n. line
лишний adj. extra
ловушка n. trap
логично ad. logically
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Russian</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>лучше adv.</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>лучшеий adj.</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>место n.</td>
<td>place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>мир n.</td>
<td>world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>мнение n.</td>
<td>opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>много adv.</td>
<td>much, many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>мог v.</td>
<td>was able, could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>могло v.</td>
<td>was able, could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>может v.</td>
<td>is able, can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>может быть</td>
<td>perhaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>можно ad.</td>
<td>possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>мой adj.</td>
<td>my</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>менее</td>
<td>less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>меньше</td>
<td>less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>мат n.</td>
<td>mate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>матовыя сеть</td>
<td>mating net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>матч n.</td>
<td>match, game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>между</td>
<td>between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>международный adj.</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>межзональный adj.</td>
<td>interzonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>на</td>
<td>in, on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>на...следует</td>
<td>on...there follows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
надежно ad.
safely

надо
necessary

наиболее
most

нападение n.
attack, offensive

например
for example

находить v.
to find

не
not, no

небольшой adj.
small, little

не выгодно ad.
not good, disadvantageous

недооценивать v.
to underestimate

незащищенный adj.
undefended

незнакомый adj.
unfamiliar

некоторый adj.
several

 нельзя
(it is) impossible

немедленно ad.
immediately

неправильный adj.
incorrect

необходимо
(it is) necessary

неплохо ad.
good, not bad

несмотря на
in spite of

несомненно adv.
undoubtedly

неудачный adj.
unsuccessful

неясно ad.
unclear

ничего
nothing

ничейная позиция
drawn position

ничья n.
draw

новинка n.
innovation

новоиндийская защита
Queen's Indian Defense

новый adj.
new

нужно
(it is) necessary

О o

обоюдоострый adj.
double edged

обычно ad.
usually

один adj.
one

однако adv.
however
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>окончание n.</td>
<td>endgame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>он</td>
<td>he, it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>она</td>
<td>she, it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>оно</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>они</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>опасно ad.</td>
<td>dangerously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>оппозиция n.</td>
<td>the opposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>оригинальный adj.</td>
<td>original</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ослаблять v.</td>
<td>to weaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>осложнение n.</td>
<td>complication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>основной adj.</td>
<td>basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>острый adj.</td>
<td>sharp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ответ n.</td>
<td>reply, answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>отвечать v.</td>
<td>to answer, reply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>открытый adj.</td>
<td>open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>отложен adj.</td>
<td>adjourned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>отступить v.</td>
<td>to withdraw, retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>отступление n.</td>
<td>withdrawal, retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>оценка n.</td>
<td>evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>очевидно ad.</td>
<td>obviously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>очень adv.</td>
<td>very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>очко n.</td>
<td>point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ошибка n.</td>
<td>error, blunder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ошибочный adj.</td>
<td>erroneous, mistaken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**П п**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>партия n.</td>
<td>game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>пассивный adj.</td>
<td>passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>пат n.</td>
<td>stalemate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
премьера n.
championship
первый adj.
first
представление n.
advantage
перевод n.
transfer, shift
перспектива n.
prospect
пешечный adj.
pawn
пешечная цепь
pawn chain
пешечный штурм
pawn storm
пешка n.
pawn
пески n.
pawns, pawn’s
план n.
plan
плохо ad.
badly
по переписке
postal
победа n.
win, victory
победитель n.
winner
попытка n.
attempt
повороть v.
to repeat
под боем
under attack
подобный adj.
similar
позиционный adj.
position
позиция n.
position
поле n.
square
полезный adj.
useful
положение n.
position
пол-очка n.
half-point
полуфинал n.
semi-finals
получить v.
to receive, obtain
получать v.
to receive, obtain
попытка n.
attempt
поражение n.
loss, defeat
поскольку
inasmuch as
после
after
последний adj.
next, following, last

последовать v.
to follow

посредством
via

потеря n.
loss

потому
because

почему
why

поэтому
therefore

правильно ad.
correctly

практика n.
practice, play

практический adj.
practical

предпочтительнее adj.
preferable

предшественно ad.
preamaturely

преимущество n.
advantage

пример n.
example

примерно ad.
approximately

примечание n.
ote, annotation

присуждение n.
adjudication

продвижение n.
avance

продолжать v.
to continue

продолжение n.
continuation

проигранный adj.
lost

проиграть v.
to lose

проигрыш n.
loss

промежуточный ход
zwischenzug

прорыв n.
break

просмотреть v.
to overlook

просто ad.
simply

пространство n.
space
против
against

противник n.
opponent

проходная пешка
passed pawn

проще adj.
simpler

пункт n.
point, square

пускать v.
to allow

пустить n.
to allow

путем
via

пятый adj.
fifth

пять adj.
five

Р р

равенство n.
equality

равно ad.
equally

развитие n.
development

развить v.
to develop

размен n.
exchange

разменять v.
to exchange

разноцветные слоны
Bishops of opposite color

рекомендовать v.
to recommend

решать v.
to decide, to solve

решающий adj.
decisive

решение n.
decision, solution

рискованно ad.
riskily

рокировать v.
to castle

рокировка n.
casting

dлинная рокировка
castling long, Q-side castling

короткая рокировка
castling short, K-side castling

русская партия
Petrov’s (Russian) Defense

С с

с
with, from

связанный adj.
pinned

связка n.
pin

сдаться v.
to resign

белье сдались
White resigned
черные сдались
Black resigned
слон n.
Bishop

cдвоенные пешки
doubled pawns
слона n.
Bishop’s

седьмой adj.
seventh
сомнительный adj.
doubtful

сейчас adv.
immediately
соревнование n.
competition

семь adj.
seven
сразу adv.
immediately

сильнейший adj.
strongest, very strong
стANDARDный adj.
standard

сицилианская защита
Sicilian Defense
староиндийская защита
King’s Indian Defense

слабо ad.
weakly
стремиться v.
to try, to strive

слабость n.
weakness
счет n.
score

славянская защита
Slav Defense
сыграть v.
to play

следовало v.
should have
Т
таблица n.
crosstable

следующий adj.
next, following
слишком поздно
too late

сложный adj.
complicated
так
so, thus

tак как
since

tакже и
likewise, also

tаким
in this way

tактика n.
tactic(s)

tактический adj.
tactical

tам adv.
there

тепл n.
tempo

tеоретический adj.
theoretical

tеория n.
theory

tеперь adv.
now

tехника n.
technique

tипичный adj.
typical

tихий ход
quiet move

tогда adv.
then

tолько adv.
only

tонкий adj.
precise, subtle

tочно adv.
precisely

третий adj.
third

треугольник n.
triangulation

tри adv.
three

труд n.
difficulty

tрудно adv.
difficulty

tрудность n.
difficulty

тур n.
round

tяжелые фигуры
major pieces

У y

угроза n.
threat

угрожать v.
to threaten

удовлетворительный adj.
satisfactory

уже adv.
already

уравнение n.
equality
упрошение n.简化
simplification
усилие n.加强
strengthening
усиливать v.加强
to strengthen
усложнить v.使复杂
to complicate
успех n.成功
success
участник n.参与者
participant
Ф
ферзевый adj.王后，王后的
queen, queen's
ферзевый гамбит Queen's Gambit
ферзевый флант Queenside
ферзь n.王后
Queen
ферзя
queen's, of the queen
фийанкетто n.菲恩切托
fianchetto
фигура n.棋子
piece
фланг n.翼
side, flank
флашок n.旗
flag
форсировать v.强迫
to force
французская защита French Defense
X
ход n.走
move
ходить v.走
to move
ходы n.走
moves
хорошо ad.好，好
good, well
хотя adv.虽然
although
худший adj.更差
worse
хуже adv.更差
worse
Ц
цвет n.色
color
цепь n.
goal, purpose
централизация n.
centralization
цугцванг n.
zugzwang
Ч
час n.
hour
часто adv.
often
часы n.
clock
чем
than
чемпион n.
champion
чемпионат n.
championship
чернопольный adj.
black-squared
черные n., adj.
black
четвертый adj.
fourth
четыре adj.
four
чтобы
so that, in order that
Ш
шанс n.
chance
шах n.
check
шахматист n.
chessplayer
шахматный adj.
chess
шахматы n.
chess
шестой adj.
sixth
шесть
six
шотландская партия
Scotch Game
шотландский гамбит
Scotch Gambit
Э
эндишпиль n.
endgame
эта
this, that
этот
this, that
это
this, that
эти
these, those
эту́д n.
study

Я́я

явно ad.
clearly

ясно ad.
clearly
Names Pronunciation Guide

Below is the first known English pronunciation guide for the names of Russian/Soviet chess players. The stress, or accent of the chess players’ name is given in capital letters.

Авербах  ah vyer BAKH
Аверкин  ah VYER kin
Агапов    ah GAHP off
Агейченко ah GUY chenko
Акопян   ah kohp YAN
Азмакпарамшвили ahz my par ahsh VIL ee
Альбут   ahl BOORT
Алексин  ahl YEKH in
Алексина ahl YEKH een a
Алапин   ah LAHP in
Алаторцев ahl AH tort syev
Александрия ah leks AHN dree ya
Аникаев  ah ni KAH yeff
Антошин ahn TOH shin
Арансон  ahr an SON
Арахимуя ah rakh IM ee ya
Ахтарумова ahkh shahr OOM uv a
Архипов  ar KHIP off
Багиров  bah GEER off
Балашов  bahl a SHOFF
Белявский bel YAHV ski
Бронштейн bron SHTAYN
Билунова bil oo NO va
Бутнориц boot NOR its
Бондаренко bahn dah REN kah
Бондаревский bahn dah REV ski
Борисенко-Белова bar ih SEN ko-byel OH vah
Ботвинник baht VIN nik
Бонч-Осмеровский BONCH-ohs mo LOFF ski
Быховский bih KHOFF ski
Быкова BIK uv ah
Болеславский boh lehs LAV ski
Боголюбов bah gahl YU boff
Богатырчук bah gahl tir CHUHK
Ваганян vah gahn YAN
Васюков vass yu KOFF
Ватников vaht NIH koff
Владимиров vla DEE mir off
Воротников vo rot nih KOFF
Гавриков GAHV rik off
Гельфанд GYEHL fahnd
Геллер GYEL ler
Георгадзе gyeh or GAHD zyeh
Гипплис GIP sliss
Григорян grig or YAN
Гурович goor YEV'ich
Гургенидзе GOOR gyen id zye
Гаприндасвили gah prin dahsh VIL ee
Гоглидзе gohk LID zye
Гуфельд GOOF yeld
Гулько gool KAW
Гуриели goor ih YEL ee
Даутов DAH oo toff
Двойриц DVOR its
Дворецкий dvor YETS ki
Деев DYEH yeff
Демина DYE min ah
Длуги DLOO ghee
Дохоян  dakh a YAN
Долматов  dohl MAH toff
Дорфман  DORF mahn
Дуз-Хотимирский  DOOS-ko tim IHR ski
Затуловская  zah too LOHV skah yah
Зайцев  ZIYT syev
Зайцева  ZIYT syev ah
Зноско-Боровский  ZNOSS ko-bor OFF ski
Иванов  ihv ahn OFF
Иванчук  ihv ahn CHUHK
Ильин-Женевский  ihl YIN-zhyeh NYEV ski
Иливицкий  ihl ih VIT ski
Камский  KAHM ski
Кан  KAHN
Карпов  KAR poff
Каспаров  kass PAR off
Каспарян  kas par YAN
Керес  KYER ees
Клован  KLO vahn
Кобленц  KO blentz
Козловская  kahz LOHV skah ya
Коноплева  kahn op LYEV ah
Константинопольский  kan stan tih no PAHL ski
Котов  KO toff
Кочиев  KO chi yeff
Козлов  kohz LOFF
Корчной  karch NOY
Крыленко  krill YEN ko
Крылов  krill OFF
Кудрин  KOOD rihn
Кузмин  kooz MIN
Купрейчик  koop RAY chik
Лернер  LER nar
Лпутян  lpoot YAN
Лутиков  LOOT ih koff
Лейн  LANE
Лемачко  lim ACH kah
Левенфиш  liv in FISH
Левитина  lye VIH teen ah
Лилиенталь  lil ee yen TAHL
Либерзон  lib er ZOHN
Литинская-Шуль  li TIN ska ya-SHUL
Лутиков  LYOOT ih koff
 Макарычев  mah KAR ih cheff
 Маланюк  mahl an YOOK
 Матвеева  maht VYE yev ah
 Миногина  mih NOG een ah
 Михальчишин  mikh ahl CHIH shin
 Мнацаканян  mnats ah kahn YAHN
 Москаленко  moss kah LYEN kah
 Макогонов  mah kahg ON off
 Микенас  mik YEH nass
 Мурей  myoo RYE
 Наумкин  nah OOM kin
 Неверов  nye VYER off
 Новиков  NO vihk off
 Ней  NYAY
 Новотельнов  noh vot YEL noff
 Оснос  OS nahs
 Палатник  pah LAT nik
 Петров  pyet ROFF
 Петросян  pyit roh SYAN
 Платонов  plaht O noff
Полугаевский  pa loo gah YEV ski
Потемкин   po TYEM kin
Псахис     PSAHKH iss
Рагозин    rah GOHZ in
Разуваев   rah zoo VAH yeff
Раннику    RAN nih koo
Рашковский rahsh KOFF ski
Романишин  ro mahn ISH in
Романовский ro mahn OFF ski
Рубцова    roob TSO va
Савон     sah Vohn
Саунина   sah OON in ah
Сахатова  sa HA tuh va
Свешников SVESH nih koff
Семенова  sem YEN uv ah
Симагин    sih MAH ghin
Ситникова SIT nik uv ah
Смагин    SMAH ghin
Скегина   SKYE ghin ah
Смыслов  smiss LOFF
Сокольский sa KOHL ski
Соколов   sa kah LOFF
Софиева   SO fi yev ah
Спасский SPAH ski
Струя    stoor oo YAH
Суэтин   soo YEH tin
Тайманов  ty MAHN off
Таль    TAHL
Тимошенко tim o SHEN kah
Титоренко tit o RYEN kah
Тукмаков took mah KOFF
Убилава oo bih LAHV ah
Фаталибекова
Фомина
Цейтлин
Халифман
Харитонов
Хасин
Холмов
Цешковский
Чибурданидзе
Чехова-Костина
Чернин
Чигорин
Шамкович
Шифферс
Эльвест
Эйнгорн
Эпштейн
Эстрин
Юдасин
Юртаев
Юферов
Юсупов
Яковия

fah tahl ib YEKH uv ah
fa mi NAH
TSIYT lin
khal if MAHN
khar it OH noff
KHAH sin
khohl MOFF
tsessh KOV ski
chih bur da NID ze
CHEK uv a-KOHS teen ah
cher NIN
chih GOR in
sham KO vich
SHIF fers
EL vyest
EYN gorn
ep SHTAYN
ES trin
yu DAH sin
yur TAH yeff
YU fir off
yu SOO poff
yah ko VIH yah
Colophon

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RUSSIAN FOR CHESSPLAYERS

Nearly 20 years have passed since the introduction of Hanon Russell’s *A Chessplayer’s Guide to Russian*. In print again with a revised and expanded format, this edition has twice as much vocabulary in the dictionary, is completely typeset in Cyrillic and English, and for the first time, a pronunciation guide of all the popular Russian chess players is included. Now you can be sure of yourself before getting caught in a tongue twister or putting the accent in the wrong place.

The Soviet Union has consistently produced the strongest chess grandmasters in the world. After working through this guide you will be better able to read the extensive Russian chess literature which exists in books and magazines today.

Mr. Russell has been translating Russian chess literature for four decades, has a master’s rating, collects chess memorabilia, and practices law in Connecticut. He also wrote *Correspondence Chess*, published by Thinkers’ Press.

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