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Introduction

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Introduction

On behalf of the editorial team of the *Russian Language Journal*, it is with great pleasure that we present Volume 66. Let me take this opportunity to introduce the new Editor of the *Russian Language Journal*. Upon publication of this number, Professor Jennifer Bown of Brigham Young University becomes the Editor. She is a significant scholar of the acquisition and pedagogy of Russian, and a noted teacher and leader in her institution and in our field. I am certain that her tenure will see great things for *RLJ*, and I commend her to you.

Given this announcement, I would like to reflect on the state of *RLJ*, and the work that has been done by the editorial team in the past five years. Building on the outstanding work done by Dr. Maria Lekić in reviving *RLJ* from 2006 to 2013, *RLJ* and its publisher, the American Council of Teachers of Russian, have increased the journal's accessibility, expanded its content with regular book reviews and article-length reviews, while maintaining the rigor and inclusiveness that are the hallmark of *RLJ*. Most importantly, *RLJ* has been included in the JSTOR, which means that the more than 5,000 institutional subscribers to JSTOR have access to *RLJ*. In addition, *RLJ* is now indexed by the Modern Language Association's Bibliography, and is fully visible to Google Scholar. Each of these actions required painstaking work; for example, enabling Google Scholar to access *RLJ* on the servers at the American Councils for International Education, the umbrella organization wherein ACTR resides, required several weeks of web development and programming work in order to conform to the indexing requirements of Google Scholar. American Councils generously undertook all of this work. Inclusion in JSTOR required that one number of the entire run of *RLJ* be sent to the JSTOR offices in New York, where each volume was unbound, scanned using high definition Optical Character Recognition Software, then re-bound and sent back to the American Councils office in Washington, DC. This process – from the initial approach to JSTOR, the negotiation of the contract with JSTOR, and the mailing of the volumes – required nearly two years' effort, labor, analysis, and

(importantly), postage. While as editor, I had a certain role to play in making this approach and recommending the JSTOR offer to our publisher, in the end, a team of people at *RLJ*, the ACTR Board of Directors, and American Councils participated in the effort.

We highlight these accomplishments to underscore the commitment of *RLJ*, its editorial team, and its publisher to the essential goal of scholarly service to the field. The foundation of that service rests on two elements. First, *RLJ* is a bilingual journal, where submissions, reviews, and correspondence regularly occur in Russian and English, and as a journal publishing on the pedagogy, acquisition, linguistics, teaching, culture, policy, and politics of Russian throughout the «мир русского слова». In my view, we thus fulfill two critical functions: providing a scholarly conversation in these subjects to scholars throughout the Russophone world. Second, we provide a home, as it were, for subjects which might not be as well addressed by our fine sister journals in the Slavic field. The second foundational element of our service to the field is accessibility: by expanding the pathways by which readers might access *RLJ*, whether through JSTOR, Google Scholar, or indexing in the MLJ Bibliography, our collective scholarly work is present in far more institutions, and is now read and cited by far more scholars.

If one stands back and takes in the past fifteen years of this journal's history, the re-establishment of the journal, with the highest scholarly standards and allowing for publication in Russian and English, stands as a monumental accomplishment. My modestly short tenure saw access as the chief goal, and having achieved much of this goal, I am happy to turn over the editor's perch to Professor Bown.

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