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## False Friends Revisited

### Povzetek

V članku se avtor sprašuje o pomenu »enakovrednosti« pri prevajanju, definira »lažne prijatelje« z jezikoslovnega vidika in pojasni kategorije absolutnih, kontekstnih in izmišljenih lažnih prijateljev. Večino članka zavzema glosar slovensko-angleških lažnih prijateljev in ta dopolnjuje tovrstni glosar, izdan pri DZTPS leta 1988.

### Summary

The article questions the relevance of the notion of 'equivalence' to translating and offers a definition of the linguistic phenomenon of 'false friends'. The categories of absolute, contextual and pseudo false friends are explained. A new glossary of Slovene-English false friends is then presented; this represents a major supplement to the glossary published by DZTPS in 1988.

It is 13 years since *Mostovi* published Marjan Golobič's extremely useful glossary of Slovene-English false friends (Golobič 1988) and

even longer since my first article on this subject appeared (Limon 1986). In the intervening years, Slovenia has changed



profoundly and the language, as a dynamic entity, has changed with it. The influence of English has clearly increased over the past decade and many expressions from that language have started to appear in Slovene as loan words. This is true not only in the field of popular culture (film, fashion and music in particular), but also in other areas such as politics (particularly as a result of Slovenia's new political order and EU negotiations), business and the environment. And a seemingly inevitable by-product of this transfer of words between the two languages has been the appearance of new false friends. My aim in revisiting this topic is not to repeat what has already been said, but to add to our awareness of this interesting phenomenon and the potential pitfalls for translators and language learners. The list that makes up the main part of this article comprises 230 headwords, 198 of which were not featured in Golobič's glossary (including 10 which previously appeared in my article mentioned above). I have included 32 items from the 1988 glossary either because the lexical item has a meaning which was not covered, because I wish to provide a useful translation alternative not offered by the glossary, or because, in a few instances I wish to draw attention to minor inaccuracies in the glossary with regard to English usage.

Before presenting the new glossary, let us consider once more the question of what a false friend is in linguistic terms. Golobič's preferred definition runs as follows: "False friends are words which may sound, look, and are spelled alike, but whose semantic fields do not completely, or not at all, coincide" (ibid.). I prefer not to use this definition for a number of reasons. Firstly, I am not sure what is gained by elaborating on "look" with the words "spelled alike"; very few Slovene-English false friends are in fact spelled in the same way, even those that sound very similar.

Secondly, in most instances we are dealing with similarity rather than likeness. Thirdly, and more importantly, the semantic fields of pairs of words in two languages rarely coincide completely, if at all. The latter applies also to the definition quoted from Ivir that refers to "pairs of linguistic (not only lexical) units in two different languages, which have something in common, but are not exactly equal" (ibid.). Over the last decade in particular, the centrality of the notion of equivalence to translation studies has been strongly challenged by linguists. Snell-Hornby (1995, 17) refers to the "treacherous *illusion* of equivalence that typifies interlingual relationships" (her italics) and goes on to reject the term as a basic concept in translation theory because it is "imprecise and ill-defined [and] presents an illusion of symmetry between languages which hardly exists beyond the level of vague approximations and which distorts the basic problems of translation" (op.cit. 22). Similarly, Chesterman (1998, 27) points out that traditional notions of equivalence as an "identity assumption" misrepresent the translation process: "The relation of relevant similarity between source and target text is not given in advance, but takes shape within the mind of the translator under a number of constraints, the most important of which is the purpose of the translated text and the translating act". He sees the proper subject of contrastive studies of two languages as being similarity rather than identity, as the former term takes into account what is often now referred to as the 'fuzziness' of language. Thus I prefer to return to the definition of the problem I used in my original article: "the mis-translation of lexical items ... which sound and/or look as if they *should be* equivalent in this particular context (or even, in some cases, in all contexts), but which in fact are not" (italics added). The key element here from the



translator's point of view is deception – the items may *seem* to be similar on the surface (a 'friend' to the translator), but can not be used in the same context (hence 'false friend').

Golobič's categorisation of false friends is a helpful one. Some false friends are **absolute**: they are false in every context (examples include *dres*, *fen*, *reklamacija* and *šef*); but most are **contextual**: they are false in some contexts, not in others. The other main category is **pseudo** false friends, in which the English expression does not exist as a single term, only as two or more separate English morphemes (examples include *avtomat*, *avtostop*, *grafoskop*, *hazarder*, *internacija*, *klientelizem*, *rekonvalescent* and *referat*). Of course, where contextual false friends are involved, the translator has to make a pragmatic choice, based on the text type and immediate context; the notes provided in the glossary should make this selection easier.

Finally, a note on EU English (sometimes referred to critically as 'Eurospeak'). Texts and glossaries generated by the EU bureaucracy often create new English expressions and terminology (frequently under the influence of French) and may even prefer new coinages to long-established terms. Examples from the EUROVOC project quoted below are 'cinematographic industry/production' (instead of 'film industry/production') and 'concentrated milk' (instead of 'condensed milk'). In such cases, it is clearly up to the translator to decide whether a particular text calls for the usual expression or the EU term.

### Notes on the new glossary

The Slovene word is given first (in **bold**), followed immediately, if applicable, by any specific collocation or phrase (in *italics*), then an English translation is provided, with comments or examples where required. The meaning of the English false friend (under-

lined) is explained where necessary. Where two-word collocations or longer phrases are involved, the 'false friend' element is the one listed as the head word.

All the terms featured in the glossary are based on the author's direct observations, except for those taken from the EUROVOC document.

Abbreviations used:

(G) indicates that the term appeared in the 1988 glossary.

(EU) indicates that the term is taken from the *Tezaver EUROVOC*.

AmE = American English.

BrE = British English.

**abstinenčen**, *abstinenčna kriza* – withdrawal symptoms (e.g. from drugs).

**advokat** (G) In BrE, in addition to the general word 'lawyer', there are also the more specific 'barrister', who represents clients in the higher courts, and 'solicitor', who prepares legal documents (such as wills and contracts) and cases, and represents clients in the lower courts.

**agresivno**, *agresivno ribištvo* – over-fishing.

**akcija** (G) – sale, special offer. The former is used when goods are being sold cheaper for a specific period, the latter where either goods or a service are being offered at a reduced price. The phrase *akcijska cena* is translated by 'special offer'. The terms in the glossary (*drive*, *effort*) are used in collocations such as 'recruitment drive' and 'aid effort'.

**aktiviran** – realised, harnessed (e.g. in political contexts); *aktivirane enote* – mobilised forces (i.e. military).

**aktualen** (G) – relevant (e.g. teachings or ideas). Issues and news items are usually referred to as 'topical'.

**akumulator** (G) In BrE '(car) battery' is the usual expression.



**andragogika** – adult education. The term andragogy appears in Webster's, though not in the Oxford English Dictionary; the suggested term is used far more frequently, even within the education profession. (See also entries on *didaktik* and *pedagoški*.)

**angina** – tonsillitis, sore throat. The English word angina is normally associated with the painful heart condition 'angina pectoris'. Note that the pronunciation of the 'g' and 'i' sounds is different.

**animator** – entertainment/activities organiser (e.g. in hotel). An animator works on animated cartoons.

**arhivsko** (G), *arhivsko vino* – vintage wine. The term 'vintage' is also used to refer to the year a wine was produced (*letnik*). An archive is where historical records or documents are stored; the BBC also has a famous 'sound archive' on tape.

**armaturen** (G), *armaturna plošča* – dashboard (BrE). The standard British expression is not 'fascia' as indicated in the glossary.

**aromat** – flavouring (EU); *aromatizirano vino* – flavoured wine (EU).

**avans** – deposit, down payment (AmE). An advance in the financial sense can be a loan or a payment made earlier than intended: e.g. you may ask for an advance on your salary when you start a new job, or a writer may receive an advance for his/her next novel. Note that 'deposit' or 'down payment' can also be used to translate *ara* (e.g. when buying a flat).

**avto**, *avto šola* – driving school.

**avtohton** – indigenous (e.g. inhabitants, flora and fauna), native, original (e.g. inhabitants). The term autochthonous can be found in the dictionary but is rarely used outside scientific texts (usually on botany, zoology or geology). Slovenia's *avtohtoni narodnostni manjšini* are probably best referred to as 'national minorities' or,

specifically, 'Italian and Hungarian national minorities'; other minority groups can be referred to as 'ethnic minorities' or 'immigrant communities'.

**avtomat** – vending machine (e.g. for snacks, drinks), slot machine; *glasbeni avtomat* – juke-box; *bančni avtomat* – cash machine, cashpoint (BrE), cash dispenser, ATM (AmE, this abbreviation is short for 'automated-teller machine').

**avtor**, *avtor slike* – painter; *avtor filma* – director; *avtor glasbe* – writer (of popular songs), composer; *avtor razstave* – designer, compiler; *avtor fotografije* – photographer. An author is someone who writes books, stories, essays or articles; it may also be used for the creator of a plan or proposal.

**bankomat** – see *avtomat*.

**baterija** – torch (BrE), flashlight (AmE). You put a battery in the torch. In scientific or engineering contexts it may also be a 'fuel cell' (EU).

**biološki**, *biološke vede* – life sciences (EU).

**blok** (G), *beležni blok* – memo pad, note pad; *kolegij blok* – spiral binder.

**boks** (G), *garažni boks* – parking space, parking bay (AmE); *razstavni boks* – exhibition stand, exhibition space.

**centrala** – (telephone) switchboard.

**cenzura** – censorship, the censor's office (usually in historical contexts). Censure is a formal word for disapproval: a committee may censure somebody or a parliament vote on a 'censure motion'; or it may be said that a country's brutal behaviour has attracted 'international censure'.

**civilen**, *civilno služenje vojaškega roka* – alternative service (EU). The Civil Service is made up of government departments and all those who work in them.

**čips** (G) – (potato) crisps in BrE, (potato) chips in AmE.



**degradirati** – deteriorate (e.g. environmental conditions). Degrade is also used in reference to the environment, depending on the context; it has the additional meaning of to decay or break down – in the phrase ‘biologically degradable’ it has positive connotations.

**didaktik** – teacher, educator (AmE), educationalist (i.e. someone concerned with the theory of teaching or education, BrE). The adjective didactic frequently has a pejorative meaning in modern English: telling, rather than letting people find out for themselves, or “inclined to teach or lecture others too much” (although it still retains the meaning of ‘instructional’ or ‘teaching a moral lesson’). The noun didact is not in the OED, but is in Webster’s and is defined as “a didactic person; one over inclined to instruct others”. The noun didactics, a formal word, refers to the art or science of teaching and corresponds to *didaktika*.

**diletant** – amateur (e.g. painter). Dilettante is only used in the negative sense of superficial or ‘dabbling’ in something, which is also present in Slovene.

**diskvalificiran** – discredited (e.g. in politics).

You can be disqualified from a race or competition, but not in the moral sense used in Slovene.

**dispanzer** – clinic (e.g. children’s clinic, women’s clinic, maternity clinic). A dispensary is where medicines are prepared and given out in a hospital, i.e. *lekarna* in Slovene.

**dispozicija** – (written) proposal (e.g. for a university dissertation), outline. The term disposition has the following main uses: tendency (e.g. ‘he has a disposition to gamble’); outlook on life (e.g. ‘she has a very sweet disposition’); a willingness to do something (from the expression ‘disposed to’); arrangement or placing (e.g. of

troops or buildings); the power to dispose of a thing, particularly funds (used mainly in legal contexts).

**drama** – theatre (i.e. the building), play (e.g. ‘a play in five acts’, ‘a radio play’). The term drama may be used to refer to an individual theatrical work, but is more frequently used in a generic sense: thus we talk about ‘Shakespeare’s plays’ (or one of them), but ‘Shakespearean drama’. The word is not used to refer to a theatre building, whereas the meaning ‘exciting or distressing real life event’ is the same in both languages. A *dramatik* is more likely to be referred to as a ‘playwright’ than as a ‘dramatist’.

**dramatika** – playwriting (e.g. ‘one of the greatest achievements of modern playwriting’), drama. The adjective dramatic is often used to describe real-life events (‘a dramatic rescue’), but may also relate to theatre (‘dramatic monologue’, ‘dramatic irony’). The noun dramatics may refer to activities connected with the theatre – in particular ‘amateur dramatics’.

**dres** (G) – (football) strip, kit. Note that British soccer players do not wear ‘uniforms’.

**ekološki**, *ekološka tržnica* – organic market; *ekološko gibanje* – environmental group (e.g. Greenpeace), environmental movement (i.e. in general); *ekološki davek* – environmental tax (EU); *ekološka linija* – environment-friendly product (e.g. washing up liquid). Ecological is used in collocations such as ‘ecological balance’ (*ekološko ravnotežje*) and ‘ecological disaster’ (*ekološka nesreča*). Note that ‘organic farming’ is *biokmetovanje* (EU).

**ekonom** – pressure cooker (i.e. in the kitchen).

**eksistenca** – living (e.g. ‘He had to struggle / fight hard to make a living’), livelihood (e.g. ‘The economic recession cost him his



- livelihood'), life (e.g. 'She was then able to live a true artist's life'). The term existence has a narrower range of uses, the concept of 'being' the most common one; but it is also used to refer to a life lived under difficult conditions: 'In Victorian times, the poor in a miserable existence' or 'The workers were fighting for a better existence'.
- elektrarna** – power station, power plant (Am/EU); *jedrsko elektrarna* – nuclear power station (BrE) / plant (AmE); *hidroelektrarna* – hydro-electric power station.
- element** – unit (e.g. kitchen, living room).
- emisija** – issuing (i.e. of a currency). An emission is a release of gas or radiation into the atmosphere.
- evidenca** (G) – In addition to 'record', the terms 'documentation' or 'information' are appropriate in many contexts.
- fascikel** – ring binder. A fascicle is defined in Webster's as 'a section of a book or set of books being published in instalments as separate pamphlets or volumes'.
- finomehanika** – precision engineering (EU).
- fitnes (fitness)**, *iti na fitnes* – go to the gym, go for a workout; *fitnes oprema* – exercise equipment. Note that we do talk about fitness (or exercise) classes or say that we are working out in order to improve our fitness (*kondicija*).
- folija** – transparency, OHP slide (an OHP is an overhead projector, which in Slovene is a *grafoskop*); *pridelava pod folijo* – cultivation under plastic (EU).
- folkloren** – folk (e.g. dance, art, song). The noun folklore refers to traditional beliefs, customs and stories of a people.
- fonolaboratorij** – language lab/laboratory.
- fonoteka** – record library (EU).
- forsirati** – push (i.e. give extra support and encouragement to). Most uses of the verb force involve compulsion, overcoming resistance, or the use of force; the use nearest in meaning to the Slovene term is 'to cause (plants, fruits, etc.) to grow or mature at an increased rate by artificial means' e.g. to force rhubarb.
- fotogeničen** (G) Contrary to what is stated, the adjective photogenic is very commonly used in everyday English.
- frekvenca** – attendance (e.g. at university), attendance record, signature (i.e. confirming attendance). The term frequency is not used in any formal way in connection with attendance.
- ful, ful dober** (pogovorno) – real/really good; *ful zanimiv* – dead interesting (This item is included out of interest; it is unlikely to represent a translation problem.)
- gaziran** (G) The most frequent way of describing *gazirana voda* in both written and spoken English is now 'sparkling water'. The word 'fizzy' is a common colloquial use and in EU texts the word 'aerated' is used. Note that *negazirana voda* is 'still (mineral) water'.
- generalka** – dress rehearsal (e.g. in theatre; also used in the metaphorical sense). The Slovene term is also used to refer to a detailed relief map: in BrE this is known as an 'Ordnance Survey map'.
- globalen** – general, broad, overall, total. The term global is used in such collocations as 'global warming' (*segrevanje Zemlje*) where the whole world is involved; it also collocates with 'plan/idea/view' to show that every possible aspect is being considered, but this use seems far less frequent than the Slovene term.
- gravitacija** – gravity. This term is much more frequent in everyday use than is gravitation.
- habilitacija** – 'being granted / gaining an academic title' (there is no short expression for this). Habilitation has the sense of to make fit for a purpose, but is



used very infrequently, unlike 'rehabilitation', which is the process by which someone who has been ill, in prison, or suffering from addiction is prepared for a normal life, or in which someone's good name (e.g. in politics) is restored.

**hazarder** – risk-taker. The noun hazard means 'danger' (a common collocation is 'fire hazard') and the verb means either 'to put someone or something in a dangerous situation' or 'to guess' (a common phrase is 'hazard a guess').

**indeks** – (student) record book, registration book. Note that these documents are not used in the British education system, so these translations are suggestions.

**infarkt** (G), *prometni infarkt* – (traffic) gridlock.

**informatika** – information technology / IT (e.g. IT manager/director, IT course, the IT industry); *informatika v medicini* – medical computing (EU). According to the OED, the term informatics entered English only in 1967 as a translation of the Russian 'informatika'; 'information technology', frequently shortened to 'IT', is the usual term for the theory and practice of using computers to store and process information.

**informativen** – provisional (e.g. dates, arrangements, information), for information only; *informativni dan* – open day (which can also be *dan odprtih vrat*); *informativna cena* – guide price. The adjective informative means 'providing useful information'.

**inskripcija** – registration (e.g. at university), signature (i.e. confirming a student has begun to attend lectures). An inscription is either a piece of text carved on stone or in metal (e.g. on a gravestone or a monument, a coin or a medal), or it is a hand-written message on a photograph or at the front of a book.

**inteligenca** – the intellectual class, the intelligentsia, intellectual circles. Intelligence refers only to the abstract quality.

**intenzivno**, *intenzivno degradirati* – seriously deteriorate; *intenzivno sodelovati* – play an active part in (e.g. at a conference – to give a paper perhaps?).

**internacija** – internment, detention; *poslati v internacijo* – intern, place in detention, detain (without trial). Note that we refer to an 'internment camp', but to a 'detention centre'; those involved are referred to as 'internees' or 'detainees'.

**internatski**, *internatska šola* – boarding school (EU).

**intriganten** – conspiratorial (e.g. the plot of a film or a story), complex. If you say something is intriguing it means it arouses your interest and curiosity. The noun intrigue, however, is used to refer to 'the making of secret plans to harm or deceive others', as in such collocations as 'political intrigue'.

**invalid** (G) The term 'handicapped' is widely rejected now because of its negative connotations (with begging) and *invalidi* in general are now referred to as 'the disabled'. Moreover, an invalid is not necessarily someone who is disabled: the term can also refer to someone who is bed-ridden and in need of care, or simply someone who is not able to work, because of illness.

**investicijski**, *investicijske dobrine* – capital goods (i.e. machines and tools used in the production of other goods, EU).

**juta** – sacking, sackcloth (i.e. the rough material used for making sacks etc; also referred to more technically as 'burlap' or 'gunny'). Jute refers only to the plant from which the fibre for the cloth comes.

**kabina** – booth (e.g. interpreter's), changing room (e.g. in clothes shop), (telephone) kiosk; *kabina dvigala* – lift. A cabin may



be a small wooden dwelling, the part of the plane where passengers sit, a room on a ship, or a passenger space on a cable car.

**kabinet** – office (e.g. at the Faculty of Arts), small room, study (e.g. in a flat); *trim kabinet* – exercise room, gym. The use of **kabinet** to describe a small room is listed as obsolete in Webster's. Among the many uses of the word, the most common are for a piece of furniture with drawers and/or cupboards, and for a political council of senior government ministers.

**kader** (G) The term 'staff' is a frequent translation, in addition to 'personnel'. A *filmski kader* is a 'shot' (i.e. a sequence of pictures; not to be confused with 'shoot', which is the process of filming the whole film in a studio and/or on location).

**kancerogen** – carcinogenic (i.e. likely to cause cancer; the noun is 'carcinogen').

**kapitalski**, *kapitalski dobiček* – investment income (EU).

**karikatura** – cartoon (e.g. in a newspaper). A *caricature* is a drawing or description of a person that exaggerates their appearance; it has no particular connection with the press. The person who draws cartoons for the press is a 'cartoonist'.

**karton** (G), *rdeči karton* – red card (i.e. in football, when a player is sent off); *zdravstveni karton* – health record/s.

**kasetofon** – cassette player.

**katastrofa** – disaster (e.g. natural disaster, man-made disaster, nuclear disaster). The term **catastrophe** is less frequent in such contexts.

**klasičen** – traditional, usual; *klasična sredstva* – traditional channels (e.g. in marketing); *klasično ribištvo* – traditional fishing (EU); *klasičen problem pomanjkanja kadrov* – the usual problem of shortage of staff. The term **classical** is most often used in connection with music, with

ancient Greece or Rome, or with Greek or Latin; it also has the meaning of 'traditional in style, form or content' but this usage is less widely used than the Slovene term.

**klasifikacija**, *klasifikacija zgodovinskih spomenikov* – listing of historical buildings and monuments.

**klientelizem** – patronage (often in the collocation 'political patronage').

**klubski**, *klubska mizica* – coffee table.

**koketirati** – flirt (with); *koketiranje* – flirting, flirtation (with). The verb **coquette** is archaic.

**kolega** (G) The meaning of this term is far wider than indicated in the glossary. Thus it may be 'work mate' (less formal than **colleague**), 'associate' (someone you co-operate with in some way), 'fellow participant' (e.g. at a conference) 'school friend/mate', 'college friend/mate' or 'fellow student'. Note that 'chum' (given in the glossary) would now be considered very old-fashioned.

**kolektor**, *sončni kolektor* – solar panel.

**komanditen**, *komanditna družba* – limited partnership (EU), special partnership.

**komercialen**, *komercialni kredit* – trade credit (EU); *komercialna prireditve* – trade event (EU); *komercialne informacije* – trade information (EU). Note that in other collocations (policy, regulations, relations) 'trade' is *trgovinski*.

**koncentrat**, *paradižnikov koncentrat* – tomato puree, tomato paste; *izdelek iz koncentrata* – reconstituted product (EU).

**koncept** – idea, plan, approach, strategy. **Concept** is usually reserved for more abstract matters; Slovene politicians, for example, frequently use the word **koncept**, where their British counterparts would use one of the suggested terms (e.g. *nova ministrica ima pravi koncept* – the new minister has the right approach).



- konfesionalen**, *konfesionalna družba* – non-secular state (EU). Note that a ‘secular state’ is *laicistična država*.
- konkreten** (G) – specific (e.g. example). The adjective *concrete* is not as common as is claimed in the glossary. In contexts such as the following ‘specific’ would be used:  
*Seveda ne gre za kakšno konkretno poroko ampak...*
- konstruirati** – design, design and build (e.g. new type of machine or device).
- kontrabas** – double bass. The term *contrabass* exists but is infrequently used.
- kontrola** (G) In a medical context, this can also be a ‘check-up’.
- konzervans** – preservative (e.g. in food).
- konzerviran** – preserved (e.g. food product). Note that a *konzerva* (G) is a ‘tin’ (BrE) or ‘can’ (AmE).
- kostim** – suit (for women). The term *costume* is used when referring to what actors wear, to clothes worn during a particular historical period or in a particular country, to fancy dress and as a short form for ‘swimming costume’. In colloquial English the word ‘outfit’ is used to refer to a set of women’s clothes.
- kriminalist** – detective, police (officer). Note that the now common expression *organiziran kriminal* is translated by ‘organised crime’.
- kronološki**, *kronološko poročilo* – historical account (EU).
- kura**, *shujševalna kura* – diet.
- kurir** (G) The term *courier* is now widely used to refer to all those (i.e. not only those in diplomatic service) who deliver letters and packages by motorbike, bike or van (e.g. *kurirska služba* – courier service) and is therefore not usually a false friend.
- kvantum** – quantity. In physics, the term *quantum* collocates with ‘theory’ and ‘mechanics’ (to do with the behaviour of atomic particles); a ‘quantum leap’ is a sudden increase in something.
- leasing (lizing)** – hire purchase (BrE), buy on credit (e.g. when buying a car – dealers may offer ‘interest free’ or ‘low interest’ credit deals/arrangements). If you *lease* a car (as many companies do) you can use it for a fixed period of time in return for regular payments; the term does not refer to buying on credit terms. Note that *kredit* (G) if obtained from a bank is called a loan (also *posojilo*); you buy something ‘on credit’ at a showroom, shop or elsewhere by signing a credit agreement or by using a credit card.
- lektorat** – course (e.g. Spanish course, taking place within a different language department).
- lifting** – face lift. The Slovene term also seems to be used in the press to refer to other kinds of cosmetic surgery.
- linč** – trial by media (e.g. when someone is judged and ‘found guilty’ in the press). If someone is *lynched* they are actually killed by a group of others, in a violent and unjust way.
- list** – sheet (e.g. of paper), page (e.g. in a book), leaf (i.e. of a tree); *Uradni list* – Official Gazette, Official Journal (EU); *poročni list* – marriage certificate; *vmesni list* – divider (e.g. in ring binder – see *mapa*); *morski list* – sole; *listek* – note, cloakroom ticket. In idioms such as ‘turn over a new leaf’ and ‘take a leaf out of someone’s book’ the word ‘leaf’ means ‘page’; we also talk about ‘leafing’ through a book (turning the pages quickly).
- magnetofon** – tape recorder (see *kasetefon*).
- maneken(ka)** – male model, model. The word *mannequin* used to be used for someone who modelled clothes, but is usually restricted now to artificial models in window displays – and even there the word ‘dummy’ is more common.



**mapa** – folder; *prospekt mapa* – ring binder; *podložna mapa* – clipboard; *viseča mapa* – suspension file, hanging file; *mapa s spiralo* – spring binder; *mapa z žepki* – document folder.

**masa** (G), *denarna masa* – money supply (EU); *masa za čevapčiče* – mince, mincemeat (BrE), hamburger meat (AmE). Note that ‘mincemeat’ is also used to describe the sticky chopped dried fruit mixture which is used to make mince pies at Christmas.

**maska** – make-up (e.g. in a film).

**masker(ka)** – make-up artist.

**mašina** (pogovorno) – (car) engine, car, motor (BrE, colloquial). The diminutive *mašinka* may have the same meaning, but is also used to refer to ‘clippers’ in the hairdresser’s (as well as ‘machine gun’).

**maksimalen** – maximum. The term maximal is rarely used (but see note on *minimalen*).

**medij** – publication (i.e. when referring to one newspaper or review), platform (e.g. for expressing one’s opinions). The media are the press, TV and radio in general; the term is not used to refer to an individual entity within the media.

**melona** – bowler (hat).

**mikrob** – germ (e.g. in ad for throat tablets), bug (AmE, colloquial). The term microbe is used only in scientific contexts.

**minimalen** – minimum; *minimalna zaloga* – minimum stock (EU). The term minimal means very small in quantity, value or degree; it is used in contexts such as ‘he achieved what he could, but at minimal cost to himself’.

**mit** – legend. The terms myth and ‘legend’ are not interchangeable: a connotation of the former in many contexts is ‘something that is not true’. Thus the phrase *France Prešeren je mit* would be translated ‘France Prešeren is a legend’; in the same way, the recent headline *Drnovšek postaja*

*mitološka politična figura* would be translated using the adjective ‘legendary’.

**model** – mould (e.g. for a cake or dessert), shape, style (e.g. of shoe; however, we talk about a new model when referring to cars).

**monitor**, *monitor za opazovanje* – monitoring device.

**morala** – morality, ethic (e.g. a writer’s usual approach to morality). The moral of a story is what it is trying to teach us. The morale of a team or a group of people is whether they are feeling positive (‘morale is high’) or negative (‘morale is low’).

**motiv** – theme, image. The term motif seems to be used much less frequently than its Slovene counterpart; the two alternatives offered often occur with the adjective ‘recurring’.

**nekvalificiran**, *nekvalificiran delavec* – unskilled worker (EU). In English you may be unqualified for a particular position (even one you hold), but the adjective is not used generically.

**nepakiran**, *nepakirano blago* – bulk product (EU).

**neprofitno**, *neprofitno stanovanje* – low-rent housing, subsidised housing.

**nostrifikacija** – recognition (i.e. of a degree or academic qualification). The term nostrification appears in the Oxford English Dictionary and under ‘nostrificate’ (which is marked as “very rare”) there is the following: “Of Austrian universities: to admit (foreign degrees) to the same status as the native ones”.

**novela** – amendment (i.e. to an existing law), amending act. A novella could be defined as a long short story or a short novel.

**obdukcija** – autopsy, post-mortem (pseudo false friend?).

**old timer** – vintage car. An old timer in AmE refers to an elderly man.

**optik** – optician. The adjective optic means ‘pertaining to the eye or sight’; the noun is



- rarely used but can refer to the eye or to a lens of an optical instrument.
- opus** – body of work (e.g. a composer's). Opus refers to an individual musical, or perhaps literary, work.
- ordinacija** – surgery (e.g. dental surgery, doctor's surgery, BrE), treatment room (e.g. in a health centre), office (AmE). Ordination refers to the process of becoming a member of the clergy.
- orientacijski** – approximate (e.g. figures, price). Orientation is the process of establishing your position or situation.
- paket** – package (holiday).
- paketen, paketna dostava** – parcel delivery.
- parceliranje** – dividing up of land (EU). Note that a *parcela* (G) is a 'plot of land' or 'a lot' (mainly AmE, as in 'parking lot').
- park** – garden (e.g. next to a block of flats), fleet (e.g. of vehicles, cars, aeroplanes, ships); *botanični park* – botanical garden; *lunapark* – fairground; *rekreacijski park* – leisure park (EU). English park corresponds to the Slovene term in such contexts as Tivoli Park.
- pedagoški** (G) In addition to 'education(al)', the translation 'teaching' also applies in some contexts (e.g. *pedagoški poklic* – teaching profession; *pedagoška praksa* – teaching practice).
- pendant** – obverse, mirror image (e.g. in art or literature, when two things are in opposition to each other; another meaning, according to the SSKJ, is 'complement to'). A pendant is an ornament on a chain you wear round your neck.
- permanenten, permanentno izobraževanje** – lifelong learning, adult education, continuing education. The first of these is now preferred in BrE.
- perspektiva** (G). In addition to 'prospect', the term 'a/the future' is appropriate in certain contexts (e.g. *perspektive podjetja so velike* – the company has a great future). The expression *brez perspektive* can be translated by 'hopeless'.
- petarda** – banger (BrE), firecracker (AmE). There is a term petard with this meaning, but is rarely used. The idiom 'hoist with/by their own petard' means that someone is harmed by the result of their own plan.
- pirotehnični, pirotehnična delavnica** – firework manufacturer's. Pyrotechnics is used most often in the metaphorical sense of 'a brilliant display' (e.g. a speech).
- plakat** (G) As well as 'poster' this can also be 'notice' (with text only) or 'bill' (AmE). In colloquial Slovene, a *jumbo plakat* refers to '(advertising) hoarding' (BrE) or 'billboard' (AmE). A placard is what demonstrators carry (see *transparent*, below).
- plan, veliki plan** – close up (e.g. in a film); *prvi plan* – foreground; *drugi plan* – middle ground; *tretji plan* – background.
- polihistor** – polymath. The term polyhistor with the same meaning is rarely used; the given term is the usual one.
- politologija** – political science, political theory.
- potencial** – capability (usually plural, as in contexts such as 'the capabilities of the armed forces', i.e. what a person or thing is capable of). Note that potential, which is usually an uncountable noun, either implies possibility, that something may happen, as in 'The potential for error is great', or has a similar meaning to the noun 'promise': for example, 'As an artist, she shows a lot of potential'.
- praksa, sodna praksa** – case law (i.e. law established by judicial decisions in particular cases, EU).
- preservativ** – condom. Preservatives are added to food or wood to prevent decay.
- problem** – challenge (e.g. *problemi sodobne arhitekture* – the challenges of contemporary



- ary architecture; e.g. *enega od največjih problemov sodobnega alpinizma* – one of the greatest challenges of contemporary Alpinism). Is there a problem with the way *problem* is used in contemporary Slovene writing? A problem is either something that causes difficulties for people (the problem of unemployment) or a puzzle that has to be solved (e.g. in maths).
- problematika** – issue (e.g. *problematika invalidov* – the issue of the disabled; note that ‘issue’ is also a frequent translation for *vprašanje*), problem. The noun problematic is used only in academic texts on sociology; the adjective is more widely used.
- proces, sodni proces** – trial. A process in English is also, of course, *postopek* in Slovene. Legal ‘proceedings’ are legal action taken against someone.
- profesor** (G). In BrE someone who teaches at a university or college is called a ‘lecturer’, whilst a professor is a senior member of the teaching staff (often the head of department).
- program** – range (e.g. of goods in a shop), selection; *otroški program* – range of children’s clothes/toys; *kozmetični program* – range of cosmetics; *lesni program* – range of (wooden) furniture; *zamrznjen program* – frozen food range; *darilni program* – gift selection. Note that there is a distinction in BrE between ‘program’ (for computers) and ‘programme’ (all other uses of the word), which is not made in AmE; also that (*računalniški*) *program* may be translated by ‘(computer) software’, as well as ‘program’, depending on the context.
- projekt** (G) This term seems to be used for a wide range of activities in Slovene, including historical contexts, where project would not be used: *projekt Vatikanski sporazum* – attempts at an agreement with the Vatican; *projekt novega slovenskega denarja* – the design/production of new Slovene money (in 1991); *projekt izdajanja slovenskega časopisa in literarnih del* – the publication of a Slovene newspaper and literary works (by Prešeren and Smole).
- propaganda** – publicity material, advertising. Propaganda usually has political connotations in English; it is also used in a pejorative sense to describe bad or harmful publicity (rumours, gossip, etc.) that has been deliberately spread.
- prospekt** – brochure (e.g. from a travel agent). The term prospectus has a similar meaning, but is used in a more limited way – mainly by universities and by companies trying to attract investors. The word prospect has the meaning ‘possibility’.
- protokolaren** – diplomatic (e.g. statement, formalities); *protokolarni objekti* – state/official reception facilities. The term protocol is less frequent than its Slovene counterpart and does not occur as an adjective. It refers to a system of rules for correct behaviour (especially in diplomacy) or to a written record of an agreement (or draft agreement) between countries; in AmE it can also refer to a course of medical treatment.
- psihološki, psihološka priprava** – mental preparations (e.g. preparing yourself for a test or interview).
- radiofuzija** – broadcasting (EU).
- rampa** (pogovorno) – barrier (e.g. at a railway crossing or an entrance to a camp); *izstrelitvena rampa* – launch facility (EU). A ramp is a sloping surface providing access, such as a ‘wheelchair ramp’. Note that the AmE ‘entrance ramp’ or ‘exit ramp’ from an ‘expressway’ are both described by ‘(motorway) slip road’ in BrE.
- realizacija** (G), *končna realizacija* – fruition; the glossary also offers ‘fulfilment, execu-



tion, performance, carrying out, implementation'.

**reanimacija** – resuscitation (i.e. the process, or the room in a health centre).

**referat** – paper (e.g. at a conference), office (e.g. office for student affairs).

**referent** (G) – speaker, presenter (e.g. at a conference), clerk, official (e.g. in tax office).

**refleksiven** – reflective. The term reflexive is used when describing an immediate reaction to something; it is also used in grammar, as in 'reflexive verb'.

**reformatör** – reformer.

**rektorat** – Rectorship (i.e. the post), Rector's office.

**rekvizit** – prop (i.e. in the theatre), equipment (i.e. for a particular activity, such as skiing), device (in the metaphorical sense); *zvočni rekvizit* – sound prop. The term requisite meaning 'something required for an activity' is a rarely used formal expression.

**renomiran** – celebrated, renowned (pseudo false friend?).

**replika** – reply, response. The term replica refers to a copy of something, such as a statue.

**reprezentativen**, *reprezentativna hiša* – political residence.

**repromaterial** – intermediate goods (EU), producer goods (i.e. raw materials, machinery, etc. used in producing consumer goods).

**revizija** – audit (e.g. financial audit); *revizija poslovanja* – management audit (EU). Revision is an appropriate translation when referring to changing a document or agreement, although the process of examining it before changes are made would be referred to as a 'review'. In BrE, 'revision' also refers to preparation for an examination (see *študirati*).

**revizor** – auditor. The word reviser has no

specific use beyond 'someone who revises / is revising' (i.e. amending or altering).

**rezervat** – nature reserve, refuge (e.g. wildlife refuge); *rezervat ptic* – bird sanctuary. A reservation is an area of land set aside for a particular ethnic group; in the USA, these used to be called 'Indian reservations', but the term 'Indian' has now been replaced by 'Native American'.

**rezerva** – substitute (e.g. in a sports team); *jemati z reservo* – treat with caution, take with a pinch of salt; *državne rezerve* – buffer stock (EU).

**ritem**, *ritem pogajanja* – the pace of negotiations; *ritem dela* – rate of work (EU).

**salon** (G), *pohišveni salon* – furniture showroom; *avto salon* – car showroom. Note that 'showroom' is not only AmE as indicated in the glossary.

**sankcija**, *kazenska sankcija* – penalty (EU).

**sekundarij** – ward doctor (i.e. in a hospital).

**semafor** – traffic light. A semaphore is a signalling system, usually employing flags.

**serijski** – mass-produced (e.g. goods), manufactured (e.g. furniture); *serijska izdelava* – mass-production. The term serial is used in 'serial number', 'television serial' and 'serial killer'; it does not mean (as the Slovene term does) the opposite of 'hand made'.

**serviser** – service engineer (e.g. for photocopier, motorbike; note that for cars the term is 'mechanic'). The term servicer can be found in the dictionary, but is rarely used.

**sestra** – nurse. In BrE a sister is in charge of a hospital ward – a head nurse.

**shema** – diagram (e.g. of the human skeleton or blood circulation, sometimes referred to as a 'schematic'), schedule or time table (e.g. of a celebratory event); *programska shema (TV)* – programme schedule; *shema prog Mestnega potniškega prometa v Ljubljani* – map of Ljubljana bus routes.



The formal word schema with the meaning 'diagram, plan, or underlying pattern' is rarely used outside academic texts. The word scheme appears in political contexts such as 'a scheme to combat unemployment' and also collocates with words such as: 'savings', 'pension' and 'money-making'.

**signalizacija**, *prometna signalizacija* – traffic signs (EU). The term signalization is used in Pavlovian psychology when describing how the response to a signal can become the same as the response to the original stimulus.

**sistemski**, *sistemski zakon* – organic law (EU).

**socialna država** – welfare state (i.e. a state in which the government provides free health care and education, as well unemployment benefit, pensions, etc.). Note that the term 'welfare' in America refers to the money received from the state (a person is said to be 'on welfare'); in Britain, this is usually called 'social security'.

**sorta** – variety (e.g. of fruit); *sorta trte* – variety of grape.

**specifika** – (special) characteristics (e.g. *specifika našega kmetijstva* – the special characteristics of our agriculture). Specific with this kind of meaning is an adjective only; the noun usually occurs in the plural form, as in the phrase 'let's get down to specifics', and means '(relevant) details'.

**stimulacija** – bonus (e.g. paid to employees with extra responsibility).

**stimulirati** – reward (e.g. employees), promote (e.g. an action or an idea).

**stripar** – cartoonist. (Note that *strip* may be translated by 'comic strip' in BrE.)

**struktura** – profile (e.g. of the population, residents, students); *struktura stroškov* – cost breakdown.

**subjekt** – protagonist, actor (i.e. as opposed to passive observer), player (e.g. 'political

player'); *poslovni subjekt* – business (entity/enterprise).

**super** – great (also as an exclamation); *super ponudba* – (extra) special offer; *super ugodno* – special low price.

**suveren** – independent, supreme (e.g. work of art or artist); *suveren oblikovalec jezika* – masterful user of the language; *suveren organizator* – supreme organizer. The use of sovereign to mean 'supreme' or 'most notable' is obsolete; the term most frequently collocates with 'state' (country) or 'power'.

**suverenost**, *obrtniška suverenost* – supreme craftsmanship.

**šofer** – driver (e.g. of a bus or lorry (BrE) / truck (AmE)). A chauffer is employed to drive a private car or limousine; those employed to drive public officials are called 'drivers'.

**študijski**, *študijsko leto* – academic year; *študijski dopust* – a sabbatical ('study leave' is also used, though more commonly for students; teachers and academic staff usually 'go on / take a sabbatical'), training leave (for those in employment).

**študirati** – revise (i.e. for an exam, BrE), read (e.g. She's reading Maths at Cambridge; formal BrE), learn (e.g. a particular topic, or a role in a play), think about (e.g. *dolgo sta študirala, preden sta se odločila* – they thought about it for a long time before deciding). Other frequent uses of the verb will be translated by study.

**taksa**, *uvozna taksa* – import levy (EU).

**tarifa** – (list of) charges (e.g. postal charges, telephone charges, bank charges), (list of) rates (e.g. legal rates), price list; *tarifa zračnega prevoza* – air freight rate (EU). A tariff is a list of duties imposed on imports or exports; it may also be used for a table of charges for transport or public services; within the EU there is a 'support tariff' (*podporna tarifa*).



**tehnik** – technician (e.g. laboratory, computer, construction); *administrativni tehnik* – secretary, clerk, administrative assistant; *ekonomski tehnik* – clerk, financial/accounts assistant, sales person/representative; *glasbeni tehnik* – (studio/sound) engineer; *komercialni tehnik* – sales person/representative; *strojni tehnik* – machinist, (machine) operator, engineer (e.g. heating engineer); *tekstilni tehnik* – machinist, textile worker; *upravni tehnik* – legal secretary/clerk; *zdravstveni tehnik* – male nurse. (Note that a wide range of jobs are advertised under these headings and that the job titles vary accordingly.) The term technic, meaning a technique or technicality, is used in AmE but is rare; the plural noun ‘technics’, applying especially to the study of the mechanical or industrial arts, is more common.

**tehnika** – technology (e.g. *zastarela tehnika* – outdated technology, e.g. *najsodobnejša tehnika* – the latest technology); *bela tehnika* – white goods (e.g. kitchen appliances, fridge, washer, cooker, etc.); *elektrotehnika* – electrical engineering (EU). The term technique would be used when referring to *tehnika* in the arts (i.e. a way of doing something or carrying out a process).

**televizija** – television channel. Although we can translate *nacionalna televizija* with ‘national television’, a phrase such as *na drugih televizijah* can only be translated by ‘on other television channels’. Other uses of the term correspond to ‘television’ or ‘TV’ (or ‘telly’ in colloquial BrE).

**tematika** – theme (e.g. of a work of art or literature). Thematic is an adjective used in collocations such as ‘thematic approach’.

**tendenca** – trend (e.g. a statistical trend). A tendency is either something worrying or unpleasant that keeps happening or a part of your character that makes you behave in

a particular way; it is not used when discussing figures or statistics.

**terenski** (G), *terenski studio* – mobile studio (i.e. for television).

**termin** – date, period (i.e. from... to...);

*zadnji termin* – final date (i.e. last opportunity).

**termofor** – hot-water bottle (pseudo false friend?).

**test** – questionnaire (e.g. in a magazine). Test in the sense of a series of questions is used only in the classroom environment.

**trak** – ribbon (e.g. hair ribbon, typewriter ribbon), band (e.g. hatband, headband, armband), strip (e.g. of paper, of material, protective strip), tape (cut the tape/ribbon at an official opening); *lepilni/samolepilni trak* – adhesive strip/tape; *merilni trak* – tape measure; *žalni trak* – black armband; *izolirni trak* – (electrical) insulating tape; *tekoči trak* – conveyor belt, production line. The main, non-idiomatic uses of track are railway track, path (e.g. ‘mountain track’), sports track (e.g. for athletics, cycling, car racing, horse racing, greyhound racing) and a song or piece of music on a CD or cassette.

**transparent** (G) – placard (i.e. carried by someone at a demonstration), banner.

**trenirka** – tracksuit.

**tribuna** – stand. A tribune is a raised platform, pulpit, or seating area, particularly in a church; the term is not associated with sports stadia.

**trim** – exercise; *trim steza* – exercise path, jogging path; *trim kabinet* – exercise room, gym. If you wish to stay trim you want to keep yourself slim and fit. The verb is commonly used in the sense of ‘cut small amounts off’: for example, you can trim someone’s hair, a hedge, or a budget.

**univerzalen** – general (e.g. factors, effects, results). The term universal applies in all



cases, to every part of the world or universe, or to a whole group or society; the Slovene term seems to be used more widely or loosely (similarly to *globalen*).

**urbanizem** – town planning (EU), city planning (AmE). The term **urbanism** is used to refer to city life and also to planning, but the latter less frequently than the given terms. Note that in EU texts, *urbanist* is translated by 'town-planning professional' and *urbanistični predpisi* by 'town-planning regulations'.

**uta**, *pasja uta* – (dog) kennel. A **hut** (e.g. in a garden) is used by people.

**varirati** – fluctuate (e.g. statistics, trends). The Slovene term is sometimes used in journalistic reports, such as on the state of the economy, where *vary* would not be used.

**vizitka** – business card (i.e. with name, job title, contact details), greetings card (e.g. birthday card, get well card, congratulations). **Visiting cards** (or 'calling cards') were frequently used in the past among the middle and upper classes when making a social call or sending a gift.

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