

## **Analysis of Artistic Description for Communicative-Activity Education of Philology Students (Based on the Works of Sergey Dovlatov)**

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### **Abstract**

*After the pedagogical potential of literary texts is discovered, selection and organization of texts which are to be used for pedagogical purposes are started to gain importance in Russia, where the target language of our study is spoken, and in many other countries. The reason why we ground our study on the works of Sergei Dovlatov is that his works are instructive and intriguing texts for the advanced-level Russian language readers since they have little nature descriptions, have unique portraiture descriptions, contain considerable metaphors and are open to cultural, political and sociological analyses. The purpose of this study is to detect the hardships faced during the implementations on the teaching of literary and, in particular, descriptive texts of communicative approach and to propose solution suggestions concerning these hardships.*

*In the light of the discoveries obtained from references it is found out that though the Russian language readers know Russian in an advanced level, they have difficulty in comprehending metaphors, similes, intertextual relations and descriptions (cultural, political etc.) all of which are found in literary texts. Conversely, it is seen that the descriptions which can be understood without cataphora and anaphora are grasped by the advanced-level Russian language reader more easily. During the sense-making process of a lecturer, it is experienced that these hardships can be surpassed in case different tactics are developed on the basis of communicative approach in relation to texts, the lucidity level of texts is enhanced with pre-text, intratext and post-text studies, and in case learning the culture of the target language is motivated. It is observed that in case unique texts which are used in language teaching are arranged as they should be, they enrich the process of teaching.*

**Keywords:** Literary description, descriptive texts, communicative approach, Sergei Dovlatov

### **Introduction**

In broad terms, text is verbal and written products which are logically and structurally complete and are composed for communication. Completeness, unity and consistency are essential elements for a product to be regarded as a text. There is always a certain tone in a text. For this reason, unity of tone is the most important characteristic of a text. Since each new sentence is based on a previous one, another important characteristic of a text is the correlation which establishes the chains of communication among sentences. In the center of almost all sentences there are people, objects, events, various terms and situations related to life. Therefore, texts are separated into three different lexical groups as narrative (story), argumentative and descriptive. Narrative texts are a type of text in which events are depicted in a certain sequence.

The focal point of our study is built on literary prose texts which take place as a subtopic of this broad term. After the pedagogical potential of literary texts had been recognised, the selection of literary texts (in Russian *тексторека*) started to be approached with utmost care both in Russia, which is the target language's homeland, and in many other countries.

However, recognizing the contributions of literary texts to basic language skills and transferring them to a theoretical platform became a formidable process even for Russian methodologists, where there were strong ecoles concerning this area. Nevertheless, the idea of the contribution of literary texts to word attack skills was previously approached with irony by some famous methodologists.

### **The Aim of the Study**

Strongly emphasizing the fact that communicative approach of all globally accepted language teaching approaches is obligatory for teaching Russian to the individuals whose native language is Turkish proposes a solution after detecting the difficulties encountered during teaching practises of literary and, in particular, descriptive texts of communicative approach.

### **Sampling**

Twenty-four Turkish recipients who knew Russian in an advanced level were made read the depictions that were found in different texts of Russian immigrant writer Sergey Dovlatov, and these recipients were asked on which texts they had difficulties (*see* Appendix-1).

### **The Place and Importance of Literary Texts in Foreign Language Teaching**

Those approaches in which literary disciplines were taught under various teacher-centered disciplines, in which students could not comprehend the purpose of a lesson and in which the concern was to find the answers required by the teacher are left behind. What made a contribution to this change was the understanding that the role of literary texts is not only to find the main theme of a text and to reveal the message which a writer wanted to transmit and that lessons havemore pragmatic influences and results. Besides, great writers have presuppositions and opinions indicating that each individual can read texts differently through their knowledges, cultures and values, and can make inferences variously. The words uttered about literature by the great Russian writer A. N. Tolstoy can be seen as an obvious example of this:

*“Literature is an art in which a reader uses words to create images which are diffused in imagination. You see something and write it with words; but a reader reads and the images you had seen turns into pictures, though with his own individual perception.”*<sup>1</sup> From this point of view, it is obvious how sound the approach is in which students are evaluated today according to the answers to the abovementioned demands as required by a teacher.

In addition to improving language skills, literary texts have also an important role in transmitting culture. Language is a system of signs and each sign within this system has a reference area and a reality in the external world to which it refers; this reference area is also related to culture<sup>2</sup>. The trilogy of literature, language and culture complete each other and help one another to progress and, in this manner, can be likened to a trivet stand. At this point, Kaplan’s evaluation of the relationship between literature and culture is noteworthy.

*“...literature, in this sense, can be likened to the mirror reflection of culture. This means that whatever there is on the field of culture, it is possible to find their reflections in literature.”*<sup>3</sup> The mirror analogy of literature brought along the determination of literary texts as a means in foreign language teaching and also the development of theories related to the organization and implementation of teaching process.

In her thesis on text teaching to foreigners, Russian methodologist Prof. N. V. Kulibina states that the relationship of a reader with a text is one of the communication types, and also emphasizes its significance in

<sup>1</sup>A. N. Tolstoy, *Sobraniye Soçineniy v 10 tomah*, Hudojestvennaya literatura, Moskva 1961, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> Hikmet Asutay, *Dil, Kültür ve Eðitim*, Eðitim Kitabevi Yayınları, Konya 2007, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> M. Kaplan, *Kültür ve Dil*, Dergah Yayınları Kitabevi, İstanbul 2009, p.11.

language learning process saying “*The way to provide psychological comfort in class is to choose a literary text which a foreign student might wish to understand and can understand.*”<sup>4</sup>

In other words, she draws attention to the importance of principles in text selection. She expresses that art is a means of recognizing oneself and others, a way to communicate with oneself and with other people and, in this way, she points out to the contribution of literary texts to learning skills saying that the goal of a person who is directed to a text is not the text’s itself but what is behind that text. A. N. Leontyev, who put forth the psychological bases of communicative approach in Russia, claims that there is only one way to this contribution and gives the formula for it: “*There is only one way to this: communication should be continued as a form of art, and instead of producing it from ready-made templates, people should be encouraged to produce it over and over again, an excitement should be created.*”<sup>5</sup>

Beside many publications of methodologists made in Russia on the advantage, organization and functioning of texts, there are also studies conducted in our country which mention the importance of literary texts in language learning. Özbay and Melanlıoğlu array the advantages of literary texts in language learning.

1. *Since literary texts provide examples in vocabulary teaching, the meaning of a word can be understood easier and permanently.*
2. *Literary texts provide skills about knowing life and about having a general view and comprehension concerning happenings and experiences.*
3. *Literary texts provide text analysing and comprehension skills.*
4. *Literary texts provide information about the culture of a target language.*”<sup>6</sup>

### Utilization of Original Texts in Foreign Language Learning

Texts are the leading means which provide the establishment of communication in a target language. Texts make learning easier in case they are arranged as necessary because a text is “*a semantic, structural and a communicative being which provides the utilization of natural language in a communicative environment and which has specific units over unity.*”<sup>7</sup> By some means or other, texts are utilized in all stages of language learning. A language which is used for communication becomes reflected on texts which are, in their turn, among the most influential means of creating communication. “*Language speaking takes place within the scope of certain communication conditions and text types. When we speak or write, we produce texts which are made of related sentences.*”<sup>8</sup> Though there is a consensus on the advantages of texts utilized in foreign language learning, there is an issue which is concerned with what kind of texts shall be used in basic theoretical studies. Generally, there is a classification which divides texts used in language teaching as **pragmatic text** and **fictional text**. Nevertheless, we believe that it will be agreeable to offer a third class as **simplified text** which is suggested by Uduz in addition to the classes above. The defenders of **simplified text** claim that these texts provide more comprehensible material (in Russian *входной материал*) because these texts increasingly accord through less complex lexical characteristics (words that are frequently used), *simplified* semantics and repetitions.<sup>9</sup> In another study, Durmuş draws attention to the advantages and drawbacks of original and simplified texts:

<sup>4</sup>N. V. Kulibina, *Hudojestvennyy Diskurs Kak Aktualizatsiya Hudojestvennogo Teksta v Soznanii Çitatelya*, Web. [http://www.gramota.ru/biblio/magazines/mrs/28\\_211](http://www.gramota.ru/biblio/magazines/mrs/28_211), : 22.03.2016.

<sup>5</sup>A. N. Leontyev, *Leksii po Obşçey Psihologii*, Smisl, Moskva 2000, p. 299.

<sup>6</sup>M. Özbay & D. Melanlıoğlu, “Kelime öğretiminde örneklemenin önemi ve Divanü Lügat-it Türk”, *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*. 5(10), 2008, pp. 49-58.

<sup>7</sup>Ö. Demircan, *Yabancı Dil Öğretim Yöntemleri*, Ekin Yayıncılık, İstanbul 1990, p. 95.

<sup>8</sup>C.Şenöz Ayata, *Metindilbilim ve Türkçe*, Ara Yayıncılık, İstanbul 2005, p. 61.

<sup>9</sup>M. Durmuş, “İkinci/Yabancı Dil Öğretiminde Sadeleştirilmiş Metin Sorunları Üzerine”, *Bilig*, S. 65, 2013, pp. 135-150.

*Since the studies which emphasize the importance of the utilization of original texts in language learning and the principal argument on which these studies are based claim that the ultimate purpose of language learning process is to develop the verbal and written skills in a target language, they are closely linked with the significance of rendering learners exposed to verbal and written materials in a target language as much as possible. In other words, learners face with the real language thanks to original materials. On the other hand, there are studies which state that a positive motivation is provided towards target language with the help of original materials. In addition to these, since simplified texts contain limited words and the complex grammatical structures they contain are deprived of syntactic and grammatical structures to which learners should be exposed to, original materials become much preferred.<sup>10</sup>*

To the question whether original and simplified texts are alternatives to each other in all cases, Durmuş claims that materials prepared according to both approaches have strong and weak sides.<sup>11</sup> For this reason, it is usual to feature linguistic materials in certain cases which are prepared according to one of these two approaches. Regardless of the type of linguistic material (original or simplified), the purpose is to enhance the comprehensibility level of a text as much as possible through pre-textual, intra-textual and post-textual studies, to develop language skills, and to provide motivation for learning the culture of a target language. Yet, while doing this, as Krashen and Terrell stated, difficulty level of a text should be a little bit higher than language levels of recipients.<sup>12</sup>

It is a conscious preference for us to choose Sergey Dovlatov's works in our study. Since the target population of our study consists of advanced level students, providing original texts does not constitute a problem. Simplification is made considering students' worries. However, since advanced level students overcome these worries to a large extent after they reach to a certain point, they do not face considerable troubles in comprehension. Always reading adapted texts constitutes problems for fulfilling one's potential, and give reason to lack of self-confidence in case original texts are confronted out-of-class. Dovlatov's prose are mainly narrative texts. There are a few depictions in them but the depictions with which cultural elements are reflected transparently are original. In order to help students understand these elements, it will be beneficial to teach them with a teacher who has a knowledge about the culture and the historical characteristics of that period and the linguistic delicacy of the writer.

### **Utilization of Descriptive Texts in Second/Foreign Language Teaching**

We have adverted to the advantages that texts, in general, and literary and original texts, in particular, can provide. In this section, we would like to mention to the advantages of descriptive texts. The most important advantage which this type of texts can provide is their throwing light upon many linguistic topics within the scope of their own structural and semantic features. Uzdu expresses another important benefit of these texts with the words below:

*Beside written and verbal products, utilization also of visual products is important in order to increase the number of senses used and, in this way, to make it easier to learn. Visual products which are used with texts and sentences have significant roles in helping students to make a sense. In this respect, since descriptive texts within written products try to visualize the text within the mind of a student, these texts can be seen as dense products in terms of sensual richness.<sup>13</sup>*

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<sup>10</sup>M. Durmuş, "İkinci/Yabancı Dil Öğretiminde Özgün ve Değiştirilmiş Dilsel Girdi Üzerine", *Turkish Studies*, Volume 8/1 Winter, 2013, pp. 1291-1306.

<sup>11</sup>İbid., p. 142.

<sup>12</sup>Krashen, S & T. D. Terrell, *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom*, Pergamon, Oxford 1993, p.32.

<sup>13</sup>F. Uzdu, (2008). *Betimleyici Metinlerin Dilsel Özellikleri ve Bu Tür Metinler Yoluyla Sözcük Öğretimi*, Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, İzmir 2008, p. 92.

During the acquisition of a foreign language through text types, the difference among text types become clearer for students. A student who can make a distinction among narrative text, expressive text and descriptive text can transfer this distinction correctly to written or verbal products which he/she will create. The experiences acquired through different types of texts become reflected in their various skills in a positive manner. Medina offers a program as given below for these kind of activities:

1. *Selection of a text which bears typical characteristics of a text type*
2. *Offering of examples*
3. *Handling different canals*
4. *Implementation*
  - 4.1. *Comparison*
  - 4.2. *The object of depiction*
  - 4.3. *Words*
5. *Research-analyzing*<sup>14</sup>

While descriptive texts are handled during the first stages of learning, during the later stages recipients form sentences and then paragraphs with portrait, object, location depiction words and structures. Outcomes of this type of texts show changes for students who are on a higher level.

### **Linguistic Characteristics and Depiction Texts of Sergey Dovlatov**

*The prominent structures used in a language by an individual are unique to that individual and reflect the organization of consciousness, individual world perspective, and the individual's way to execute the potential of expressing the world encircling the speaker.*<sup>15</sup> The possession of linguistic characteristics unique to a writer of an original literary text is expressed in Russian with the word “*индивидуальность*”, and is a separate research area analysed under the term *linguistic personality*. Plainly speaking, *individual style* can be defined as the style of linguistic personality.<sup>16</sup> *Individual style* can be seen in elements chosen by a writer such as type, manner, means of expression, unique syntax, way of creating sense for words etc.<sup>17</sup>

Sergey Dovlatov does not use long sentences in his prose. In case the writer's works, letters and correspondences are analysed, it can be seen that there are a few reasons for this preference. Literary critic Andrei Aryev explain this situation with two reasons: the first reason is that Dovlatov has a principle to start each word within a sentence with a different letter. In order to achieve this more easily, the writer chooses to use shorter sentences. The second reason according to Aryev is the wish of the writer to transmit his opinions in a more concentrated manner.<sup>18</sup> However, in his autobiographical work *The Reserve*, the words uttered by the protagonist shed light on the reasons why the writer does not compose long sentences and does not write long portraits or nature depictions:

*We arrived in the tourism center at six o'clock. There was a Russian landscape along our way with hills and a river. The passion towards lifeless things always irritated me. I always thought that there is something wrong with money and stamp collectors, travel lovers, people who take an interest in cactus and in aquarium fish. I have never understood the protracted sleepy patience of fishermen, futile courages of mountineers, proud self-confidence of lap-dog owners. Jewish people were indifferent towards nature, they say. This is one of the criticisms against Jewish race. They have no country of their own and they are indifferent to others'. Maybe it is like that. Who knows. Perhaps, I am influenced from this for a part of mine is Jewish. In a word, I don't like enthusiastic audiences. I don't believe in their admiration.*<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Medina, 2002/2003:151-153; quoted by Uzdu, 2008:94):

<sup>15</sup> O.V. Şatalova, *Sintaksişekşakaya Harakteristika Yazıkovoy Liçnosti*, Avtoref. Dokt. Dis., Moskovskiy Gosudarstvenniy Oblastnoy Universitet, Moskova 2012, p.29.

<sup>16</sup> V.V. Drujinina & A.A. Vorobjitova, *Lingvitorişekşakiy Parametri İdiostilya kak Virajeniye Mentaliteta Yazıkovoy Liçnosti Uçonyogo* (A.F.Losev, izdatel'stvo FLINTA, Moskva 2014, p. 37.

<sup>17</sup> V.V. Ledenyova, *Osobennosti İdiolekta N. S. Leskova: monografiya*, MPU, Moskva 2000, pp. 126-127.

<sup>18</sup> A.YU. Aryev, “İstoriya Rasskazçika”. *Dovlatov S. D. Sobraniye soçineniy: v 4t. – T. 1. – Azbuka-klassika, SPB. 2006*, p. 33.

<sup>19</sup> S. Dovlatov, (2011). *Zapovednik*, Azbuka, Sankt-Peterburg 2011, pp. 12-14.

On the other hand, it is possible to analyse the depiction style of Dovlatov within the scope of the writer's literary stand. The writer believes that long nature and, in particular, portrait depictions are meant to crowd out the place of the reader. For this reason, he composes his depictions in a way to create a general image in the reader's mind, and while doing this, he makes use of metaphors or various reference types.

### Conclusion

A material which aims to improve a student's linguistic and cultural levels in target language should also enhance their desires to discover the target language and culture while, on the other hand, should decrease their worries that occur during learning.<sup>20</sup> In this context, the works of Sergey Dovlatov present a rich material since they reflect both Soviet culture and the culture of Russian diaspora in America, to where he migrated. However, it is observed as a result of the study that during the analyses of descriptive texts which take place in various works of Sergey Dovlatov, recipients could not perceive these descriptions equally, they understood them wrongly or, even though they translated these descriptions almost correctly, they could not understand most of the paratextual references. One of the reasons for this situation is that recipients focus on lingual clues which are embedded in a statement instead of focusing on referential context (Safran, Senghas and Trueswell, 2001: quoted by Nazan Kızıltan)<sup>21</sup>. In case the findings obtained from the descriptive examples in Appendix-1 are analyzed, it is observed that 90% of the recipients took part in the comprehension and interpretation process of the references numbered 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 22, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 39. Among those references with which recipients had no difficulty in comprehension, quotation and interpretation there are examples from Dovlatov concerning adverbs (12,13,28,31) and the conjunction *который* (4), concerning descriptions of portraits (32,33), of emotion (30), and about the weather (5, 6, 7). The reason is that these descriptions in these contexts are understandable without cataphoric and anaphoric references.

Though the recipients knew Russian in an advanced level, they had difficulty in descriptions which were taken from literary texts, and particularly in descriptions which contained irony (1, 16, 21, 40), metaphor (17, 18, 20, 21, 41), simile (19), intertextual relations (15, 21, 35, 37), culture (2, 21), issues about Soviet realities such as politics (23, 26, 27, 36, 38, 39, 41). The most important factor here is that the abovementioned reasons have a limit. For this reason, these kind of descriptions can frequently be higher than the competence level of recipients. At this point, during the analysis of references, the person who conducts the lesson should develop techniques on the basis of communicative approach according to the contexts of texts in order that interpretation process results in success. The level of textual comprehension should be improved, lingual skills should be enhanced, motivation towards learning the culture of a target language should be provided as much as possible with pre-textual, intra-textual and post-textual studies.

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<sup>20</sup>Anne Green and Bonnie Earnest Youngs "Using the Web in Elementary French and German Courses: Quantitative and Qualitative Study Results". *CALICO JOURNAL* 19, 2001, pp. 89-122.

<sup>21</sup>N. Kızıltan, T. Tunç and E. Özçelik "Çocukların Yazınsal Metinlerde Kullanılan Sözcelerdeki Göndermeleri Kavrama Edinci", *Dilbilim Araştırmaları*, 2008, pp.91-110.

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## APPENDIX-1

1. Она спросила:

[She asked:]

-чай или кофе?

[Tea or coffee?]

-пожалуй, кофе.

[I'd rather have coffee.]

-какой желаете?

[How would you like your coffee?]

**Коричневый** наверное (Жизнь коротка)

[**Brown**, please]

2. Регина Гаспарян происходила из благородной **обрусевшей** семьи.

[Regina Gasparyan was coming from a **Russianised** noble family.]

Славилась тяжелым характером и **экзотической** восточной красотой.

[She was famous for her heavy character and **exotic** southern beauty.]

Все понемногу ухаживали за красивой, начитанной, стройной Региной. (Жизнь коротка)

[Everyone was courting beautiful, well-educated, graceful Regina.]

3. **Отвратительная** сцена на таможне. (Жизнь коротка)

[The **mawkish** scene at the customs.]

4. И, пожалуйста, без цветов, **которые** имеют обыкновение вянуть.

[And please, no flowers **which** tend to fade.]

Постскриптум: не споткнитесь о мои ботинки, **которые** я ночью выставляю за дверь. (Жизнь коротка)

[P.S: Don't step on my boots **which** I left behind the door at night.]

5. Вышел на улицу. К этому времени **начало темнеть**. (Жизнь коротка)

[I went outside. It had already **started to get dark**.]

6. А между тем **становилось** все прохладнее. (Жизнь коротка)

[Meanwhile, it **started** to get colder.]

7. К этому времени **стемнело**. (Представление)

[It was **dark** now.]

8. Наш **шестиэтажный** дом **массивно** выступал из темноты. (Малоизвестный Довлатов)

[Our six-storey house was **massively** bursting into sight out of darkness.]

9. Окна мои **призывно** светились. (Жизнь коротка)

[My windows were glowing **invitingly**.]

10. Дома у меня рояль, альков, серебряные ложки... картины чуть ли не эпохи Возрождения... и никакого секса. А в гараже-разный хлам, покрышки старые, брезентовый чехол... (Компромисс)

[I have a grand piano, an alcove and silver spoons at home... The paintings are almost from the age of Renaissance...and there is nothing about sex. At the garage, there are gimcrackery, old wheels, tarp cover...]

11. Мы быстро проскочили невзрачные северо-западные окраины ленинграда. Далее следовали однообразные поселки, бледноватая зелень и медленно текущие речки. (Компромисс)

[We slipped past the plain north-western outskirts of Leningrad. What followed this was monotonous settlements, pale greenery and rivers flowing slowly.]

12. На ходу он **сосредоточенно** застегивал брюки. (Компромисс)

[On the way, he was buttoning up his trousers **intently**.]

13. За Нарвой пейзаж изменился. Природа выглядела теперь менее беспорядочно. Дома-более аккуратно и строго. (Жизнь коротка)

[The landscape changed after Narva. The nature seemed less disorderly. The houses were more accurate and strict.]

14. Наконец мы подъехали к Таллину. Миновали безликие кирпичные пригороды. Затем промелькнула какая-то готика. (Компромисс)

[At last we were in Tallinn. **Lifeless, bricky nature** was passed behind. Then, a kind of gothic-like things started to shoot past.]

15. Я выбрался из автомобиля. Мостовая отражала расплывчатые неоновые буквы. Плоские фасады сурово выступали из мрака. Пейзаж напоминал иллюстрации к Андерсону. (Компромисс)

[I got out of the car. The pavement was reflecting the blurry neon letter. Flat facades were severely bursting into sight out of darkness. The landscape was reminding me of Anderson's illustrations.]



16. Буш – это нечто фантастическое. (Жизнь коротка)

[Bush is exactly a *fantastic* person]

17. Впервые я разглядел Гришанино лицо. Он был похож на водолаза. Также одиноки не проникаем. (Жизнь коротка)

[I saw Grisha's face for the first time. *He looked like a diver. He was such a lonely, impenetrable person.*]

18. Дверь мне отворила женщина лет пятидесяти, худая, с бледно-голубыми волосами. Кружева ее лилового пеньюара достигали золотых арабских туфель. Лицо было густо напудрено. На щеках горел химический румянец. Женщина напоминала героиню захолустной оперетты. (Жизнь коротка)

[The door was opened by a woman in her fifties, a slim woman who had pale blue hairs. Her lacy dressing gown was reaching her golden-coloured Arabic shoes. Her face was powdered thickly. On her cheeks there was a gleaming chemical rosiness. The woman looked like a heroine in a country opera.]

19. Такого чудовищного беспорядка мне еще видеть не приходилось. Обеденный стол был завален грязной посудой. Ключья зеленоватых обоев свисали до полу. ...с продавленного дивана встал мужчина лет тридцати. У него было смуглое мужественное лицо американского киногероя. Лацкан добротного заграничного пиджака был украшен гвоздикой. Полуботинки сверкали. На фоне захламленного жилища Эрик Буш выглядел космическим пришельцем. (Жизнь коротка)

[I had not seen such a monstrous mess whole my life. Dining table was so dirty with unwashed dishes. Outworn greenish wallpapers were dangling down. A man in his thirties stood up from the sofa. He had a dusky, brave face like that of American actors. He had a carnation on the lapel of his quality jacket which was bought abroad. His half-boots were shining. On the background of the messy house, Eric Bush was standing like an alien.]

20. Короче, привычный советский детектив без выстрелов, но с жертвами. (Малоизвестный Довлатов)

[In short, a regular Soviet detective without shots but with prey.]

21. Кем я только не был в жизни! Стилягой и жидовской мордой. Агентом сионизма и фашиствующим молодчиком. Моральным разложившим политическим диверсантом. (Ремесло)

[There was nothing in this life whom I did not become. A hipster and an animal faced Jewish. A sionist agent and a fascist guy. An enemy of morals and a political saboteur.]

22. В Тбилиси широко отмечались знаменитая годовщина-семилетие республики. Огромный зал Дворца культуры имени Либкнехта был переполнен. (Наши)

[In Tbilisi, they were celebrating the seventh anniversary of the foundation of republic. The big hall of the Cultural Palace named Liebknecht was jammed with people.]

23. Он мог сойти за душевнобольного, если бы не торжествующая улыбка и не выражение привычного каждодневного шутовства. Какая-то хитроватая сметливая наглость звучала в его безумных монологах. В этой тошнотворной смеси из газетных шапок, лозунгов, неведомых цитат. (Заповедник)

[If he had no joy and an human-specific joker expression his face, he could go mad. In these sickening headlines, slogans and unknown quotes of newspapers, his crazy monologue sounded something like clever impudent]

24. Я давно заметил: у наших художников имеются любимые объекты, где нет предела размаху и вдохновению. Это в первую очередь борода Карла Маркса и лоб Ильича. (Заповедник)

[I have recognized for long: our artists have beloved issues in which inspiration and depth do not know any limit. In the first place come the beard of Karl Marx and the forehead of Il'yich.]

25. Я даже не спросил где мы встретимся? Это не имело значения. Может быть, в раю. Потому что рай – это и есть место встречи. И больше ничего. Камера общего типа, где можно встретить близкого человека. (Заповедник)

[I did not even asked where we were to meet. It did not have a meaning. In heaven, perhaps. Because *paradise is a place to meet. Nothing else. A common chamber where can meet your people.*]

26. Я оглядел пустой чемодан. На дне – Карл Маркс. На крышке – Бродский. А между ними – пропащая, бесценная, единственная жизнь. (Чемодан)

[I looked at the empty suitcase. *There is Karl Marx at the bottom. And Brodsky at the top. Between them lost, good for nothing, the only life.*]

27. Свобода представлялась нам раем. Головокружительным попури из доброкачественного мяса, запрещенной литературы, пластинок Колтрейна и сексуальной революции. (Ремесло)

[Freedom seemed paradise to us. Paradise, to us, was a dizzying mixture of quality meat, prohibited literature, a John Coltrane vinyl and sex revolution.]

28. Бутерброды кончились, – проговорил он с фальшивым трагизмом. Старухи брезгливо меня рассматривали. Стало немного легче. Зарождался обманчивый душевный подъем. (Заповедник)

[‘Sandwiches are finished’ said he, *with an artificial tragedy*. Old women looked at me with *disgust*. I was relieved a bit. I felt a deceptive contentment.]

29. В львовском автобусе было тесно. Коленкоровые сиденья накалились. Желтые занавески усиливали ощущение духоты. (Заповедник)

[The bus to Lviv was crowded. Calico seats were heated up. Yellow curtains was adding to the sultry air.]

30. Вновь оштукатуренные стены кремля наводили тоску. (Заповедник)

[Again, Kremlin's plastered walls was drowning a person in melancholy.]

31. Я вышел на бульвар. Тяжело и низко шумели липы. Я давно убедился, стоит задуматься, и тотчас вспоминаешь что-нибудь грустное. Например последний разговор с женой. (Заповедник)

[I went to the boulevard. The lindens were rustling very low and slowly. I had already been convinced that when one is lost in thought, there is something for sure to be remembered with melancholy. Last conversation with a wife, for example.]

32. Нельзя быть художником за счет другого человека... Это подло! Ты столько говоришь о благородстве. Асам-холодный, жестокийизворотливыйчеловек. (Заповедник)

[One cannot be an artist at the expense of others...This is dishonorable! And you talk much about that nobility. Yourself is a cold, hardhearted, sly person.]

33. Это был широкоплечий, статный человек. Даже рваная, грязная одежда не могла его по-настоящему изуродовать. Бурое лицо, худые мощные ключицы под распахнутой сорочкой, упругий, четкий шаг. (Заповедник)

[He was a broad shouldered and sturdy person. Even the torn, dirty clothes could not spoil his brown face, his thin but powerful collarbone under unbuttoned shirt, his resilient, confident step.]

34. Дом Михаила Ивановича производил страшное впечатление. На фоне облаков чернела покосившаяся антенна. Крыша местами провалилась, оголив неровные темные балки. Треснувшие стекла-заклеены газетной бумагой. (Заповедник)

[The house of Mikhail Ivanovich was making a terrible impression. The antenna was blackened with the clouds in the background. The roof was collapsed in places revealing uneven beams. The fractured windowglass was sealed with newspapers.]

35. Там он и женился. К нему приехала самоотверженная однокурсница Лиза. Она поступила, как жена декабриста. (Наши)

[He married there. His self-sacrificing classmate Liza came close to him. She behaved just like the wife of a decembrist.]

36. Функционер – очень ёмкое слово. Занимая официальную должность, ты становишься человеком функции. И ты уже не принадлежишь себе. В угоду функции твои представления незаметно искажаются. (Ремесло)

[Incumbent person is a very capacious term. Occupying an official position, you become a man of duty. You do not belong to yourself anymore. Your opinions become distorted unconsciously in order to please duty.]

37. Сталина в деревне не любили. Видно, хорошо помнили коллективизацию и другие сталинские фокусы. (Заповедник)

[Stalin was not loved in the villages. It is clear that they did not forget the collectivization and other tricks of Stalin.]

38. Заходил в редакцию и отставной диссидент Караваев. Это был прирожденный революционер, темпераментный, мужественный и самоотверженный. Недаром он двадцать лет провел в советских лагерях. (Ремесло)

[Retired dissident Karavayev visited the editorial office. He was a natural born revolutionist, energetic, brave and self-sacrificing man. It was not for nothing that he spent twenty years in Soviet camps.]

39. Цурикова я знал по работе на отдельной точке. Это был мрачный, исхудавший зек с отвратительной привычкой чесаться. (Зона)

[I knew Tsurikov from work but he was working in another department. He was a morose convict with a disgusting habit of itching.]

40. Изображение Ленина-обязательная принадлежность всякого номенклатурного кабинета. (Компромисс)

[The picture of Lenin: the compulsory accessory of all the rooms of the class in power.]

41. Обыкновенный советский воздух, дорогая. (Соло на ундервуде)

[It is usual Soviet air, my dear.]