

# The Roads We Take. The Metaphor of a Journey in Lenin's Works and Their Finnish Translations

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## Abstract

Vladimir Lenin is one of the most contradictory figures in Russian history. And probably the most translated political writer in the world (Index Translationum). Lenin's numerous works cover multiple topics and genres. He wrote in a very aggressive style, attacking his opponents, accusing them of ignorance, short-sightedness and naivety, and even calling them names (Prihod'ko 2012). His works are full of metaphors of all kinds. The existence of translations of these works into many languages makes it possible to study not only original metaphors but their translations as well.

In our talk, we will present a corpus-based study of the metaphor of a journey in Lenin's works. This metaphor is very typical for the human conceptual system (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 44-45) and in Lenin's works, it is one of the most important (the road from capitalism to communism, the route the party should take to guide the people to a better society, etc.). This metaphor is realised with various nouns with the meaning 'way, road': *put'*, *doroga*, *dorozhka*, *tropinka*, etc. The most frequently used are the metaphors with the word *put'*: *iskat' put'* 'to search the way', *sbit'sja s puti* 'to get lost on the way', *pravil'nyj put'* 'the right way', etc.

The analysis of the Finnish translations show various tendencies: (1) same translations for different metaphors, (2) variability of translation equivalents in early translations and their unification in later translations, (3) demetaphorisation of some contexts. These tendencies are connected with the process of canonisation of Lenin's works (Tamarkin 1983), the simplification translation universal (Baker 1996), and probably with existence/non-existence of certain metaphors in the target language.

The use of some of the analysed metaphors in present-day Russian and Finnish political discourse will be traced in the presentation.

## References

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**A brief bio (100-150 words):**

**Mikhail Mikhailov** is a Full Professor of Translation Studies (Finnish and Russian) in the Master's Programme in Multilingual Communication and Translation Studies at Tampere University, Finland. He is one of the authors of the book "Corpus Linguistics for Translation and Contrastive Studies" (Routledge 2016). He compiles multilingual corpora and develops web-based corpus software. His research covers corpus-based translation studies with a particular focus on parallel and comparable corpora, corpus-based discourse analysis, terminological studies, and translation technologies.

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