

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

# Absolute Beginner S1 #1

## Meet the Russian Bi-Lingual Fabio

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# 1

# INTRODUCTION

Natalia: Привет, я Natalia.

Yura: Yura here. Welcome to Absolute Beginner Season 1 Lesson 1; Meet the Russian Bilingual Fabio. This series of lessons is created especially for you to be your guide into everything Russian. But most importantly, Russian language.

Natalia: That's right. So take our hand and don't be afraid to make all 25 steps with us through this lesson series.

Yura: In this lesson, you'll learn how to introduce yourself in Russian and ask for permission using the Russian word [можно].

Natalia: And the conversation takes place in a park.

Yura: The conversation is between two young people, Ben and Veronica who have just met.

Natalia: The speakers are strangers so they will be speaking formal Russian.

Yura: So listen to the conversation and learn how to make the most out of your trip to Russia.

# DIALOGUES

Yura: Здравствуйте, извините, можно с вами познакомиться?

Natalia: Да, конечно. Меня зовут Вероника. А как вас зовут?

Yura: Бенджамин. Можно просто Бен.

Natalia: Очень приятно, Бен!

Yura: Мне тоже очень приятно!

Yura: Okay. Let's do that one more time.

Natalia: Сейчас ещё раз, медленно.

Yura: Здравствуйте, извините, можно с вами познакомиться?

Natalia: Да, конечно. Меня зовут Вероника. А как вас зовут?

Yura: Бенджамин. Можно просто Бен.

Natalia: Очень приятно, Бен!

Yura: Мне тоже очень приятно!

Yura: Okay. One more time with natural native speed with the translation.

Natalia: Ещё раз с естественной скоростью носителя языка с переводом.

Natalia: Здравствуйте, извините, можно с вами познакомиться?

Yura: Hello, excuse me. May I get to know you?

Natalia: Да, конечно. Меня зовут Вероника. А как вас зовут?

Yura: Yeah, sure. My name is Veronica. What's your name?

Natalia: Benjamin. Можно просто Бен.

Yura: Benjamin. You can call me Ben.

Natalia: Очень приятно, Бен!

Yura: Nice to meet you, Ben.

Natalia: Мне тоже очень приятно!

Yura: Nice to meet you too.

## POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Yura: So it's normal to meet people in public places in Russia, isn't it?

Natalia: Well, it was much more popular about 20 years ago when there were almost no nightclubs or bars people could meet each other in.

Yura: How about now? Can I just come up to a girl on a bus stop and tell her, I want to meet her?

Natalia: Why not? The key is the right approach. If it's not late night, if you're not dressed freaky, if you're not drunk or arrogant, then you definitely have a chance. Oh, and you should definitely start with asking for permission to get to know a person.

Yura: Yeah, I've heard that it's the most common conversation starter in Russia. You won't get no for an answer but you'll sound polite.

## VOCAB LIST

Now, let's take a look at the vocabulary for this lesson. The first word is.

Natalia: здравствуйте

Yura: Hello.

Natalia: здравствуйте

Yura: And the next word is.

Natalia: извините

Yura: Excuse me, I am sorry, pardon.

Natalia: извините

Yura: And the next word.

Natalia: можно

Yura: It's allowed to, can, may, it's possible to.

Natalia: можно

Yura: And the next word is.

Natalia: с

Yura: With.

Natalia: с

Yura: And the next word is.

Natalia: познакомиться

Yura: To meet, to get acquainted, to get to know.

Natalia: познакомиться

Yura: And the next word.

Natalia: конечно

Yura: Of course, certainly.

Natalia: конечно

Yura: And the next word.

Natalia: меня зовут

Yura: My name is.

Natalia: меня зовут

Yura: And the next word.

Natalia: как

Yura: How.

Natalia: как

Yura: And the next word.

Natalia: просто

Yura: Simply, just.

Natalia: просто

Yura: And the next word is.

Natalia: очень

Yura: Very, very much, really.

Natalia: очень

Yura: And the next word.

Natalia: приятно

Yura: Nice, pleasant.

Natalia: приятно

Yura: And the next word is.

Natalia: тоже

Yura: Too, also.

Natalia: тоже

## KEY VOCAB AND PHRASES

Yura: Now let's take a closer look at the vocabulary and phrases for this icebreaking dialogue. What's the first word, Natalia?

Natalia: Здравствуйте, "hello". Of course, if you want to sound more informal and casual from the very beginning, you can say "привет", which is, "hi".

Yura: Should I consider the age picking the greeting?

Natalia: Sure. If a girl is over 20, I definitely choose "Здравствуйте" for the first greeting. Being polite has never failed anyone. Besides, girls like the gentleman approach.

Yura: Okay. Good to know. So our guy greeted a girl, now he has to explain the purpose of his intrusion into a peaceful ice cream afternoon. He starts with, "Excuse me".

Natalia: "Извините". Actually, it means both "excuse me" and "I'm sorry" in Russian. So if that guy accidentally stepped on a girl's foot, he'd also say "извините".

Yura: He didn't luckily. What was his "извините" for?

Natalia: For asking whether he could get to know the girl which sounded as "можно с вами познакомиться?". Once again, "можно с вами познакомиться?".

Yura: Literally, is it okay to get to know you, right? So the first word was "можно". What does it mean, Natalia?

Natalia: "Можно" is a universal word for asking or giving permission. But we get to it later in the grammar section.

Yura: Okay. So let's move on to the key word of the conversation. To get acquainted, to get to know each other.

Natalia: "познакомиться". So the phrase was "познакомиться с вами".

Yura: I think it was "с вами познакомиться" also.

Natalia: The word order is very flexible in Russian. You can put "с вами" with you before or after "познакомиться". It doesn't matter actually.

Yura: Oh good. At least I wouldn't have to worry about the word order.

Natalia: Yeah. So the girl heard your exotic foreign accent and decided not to play hard-to-get hot ticket. She says "да, конечно".

Yura: Yes, of course. She sounds quite enthusiastic for a random acquaintance.

Natalia: Moreover, she says her name right away, Меня зовут Вероника.

Yura: My name is Veronica. Меня зовут literally means, "I am called" but it's translated into English as, "my name is."

Natalia: Right. Next, she asks the guy's name А как вас зовут?

Yura: Literally, "how are you called". And it's translated as "what's your name". The more informal way to ask a name would be using a different word for "you". The informal "you" which is "тебя".

Natalia: Right, "как тебя зовут?".

Yura: What was the little "А" in the beginning? You didn't just say, "как вас зовут?", you said "А как вас зовут?"

Natalia: Oh, that means something like "and". "And what's your name?" It's used very, very often in Russian. It's kind of a transition word between the topics, questions, you'll get a feeling of it very quickly.

Yura: Okay. So the guy's name is Benjamin.

Natalia: Yes, "Можно просто Бен". "Просто" means "simply" or "just".

Yura: Let me just add something. Almost all Russian names have short forms. For example, a guy named Alexander is usually called Sasha by his parents and friends. A girl named Elena is usually called Lena.

Natalia: Yeah, that's right. So you'll be hearing the phrase "Можно просто" quite a lot in Russian.

Yura: So now, they have to say how happy they are about meeting each other.

Natalia: Очень приятно

Yura: Literally, it means "very nice". But it implies that a person is very glad to meet you. What can you answer to that?

Natalia: Мне тоже очень приятно!

Yura: "Мне тоже" means "me too". You can actually say "мне тоже" without repeating "очень приятно" again.

Natalia: Yes. You would sound very informal but "мне тоже очень приятно" sounds more enthusiastic and intimate.

Yura: So basically, the more words you say at your first meeting, the more enthusiastic about it you sound. So if you want your acquaintance to feel your enthusiasm and disposition, you can pull all the words you learned in today's dialogue together and get the following phrase - Мне тоже очень приятно познакомиться!

Natalia: Right. But if you decided that it's too early to get too friendly and close, moreover, you think you don't want to do that at all.

Yura: Too many words, Natalia. If you want to sound formal, polite and mannerly in your answer to "nice to meet you", you can say just one word - взаимно -, likewise.

Natalia: Yes. "Взаимно" works in any situation. It's formal, polite and the most neutral reply.

## GRAMMAR POINT

Yura: So let's take a closer look at the grammar in this lesson.

Natalia: The focus of this lesson is.

Yura: Asking for permission.

Natalia: Yes. And the key word here is "Можно". Можно is a universal word for asking or giving permission. It's like, "can I" or "is it okay too", in English. The best thing about this word is that you can use it without any pronoun.

Yura: You mean, the phrase, "can I" will go without "I" in Russian, right?

Natalia: Yes. Moreover, in English, you also need the auxiliary verb "is" to form a question like, "is it okay to?". In Russian, we don't need it either.

Yura: In Russian, it's more blunt and direct, I guess. All questions like "can I", "may I",

"is it okay to", "is allowed to", "is it possible to", can be formed with only one word in the beginning of a sentence - "можно".

Natalia: That's right. I'll give you a couple of examples to understand it better like "Можно курить?" - "Is it okay to smoke?" Or "Можно войти?", "Can I come in?"

Yura: So "можно" is the word to ask for permission, personal or general.

Natalia: Right. Next, we had one more important word, "с вами". "С" just means "with" and "вами" meant "you".

Yura: Doesn't "you" sound something like "вы"?

Natalia: It does. But in the sentence "можно познакомиться с вами", it's modified. Just remember that the phrase "with you" always sounds like "с вами".

Yura: It's formal with you, right? How does the informal version sound?

Natalia: "С тобой". So again, "с вами" – "с тобой".

Yura: Natalia, wasn't there another phrase with "можно"?

Natalia: Yes, there was: "Можно просто Бен."

Yura: What was that?

Natalia: It's okay to just call him Ben. The word "можно" is something we have just learned.

Yura: But I thought it was just for asking permission?

Natalia: For asking or giving, both. In Russian, the only difference between the question and the statement is the intonation. So if you say, "можно?", that will mean, "is it okay?" But if you firmly say "можно" - that's a statement. That means you are giving the permission.

Yura: I see. So he's giving her permission to call him Ben.

Natalia: That's right.

Yura: Okay. That just about does it for this lesson.

Natalia: Attention, iPhone, iPod or iPad users.

Yura: Listen, tap and swipe your way to fluency with our Russian language apps.

Natalia: Grow your vocabulary and practice on the go with Russian language applications.

Yura: Fun and easy to use. Russian apps are available on iTunes.

Natalia: Visit our iPhone page on [RussianPod101.com/iPhone](http://RussianPod101.com/iPhone) now to learn more.

Yura: Have a great day.

Natalia: До скорого!