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UNIVERSITY

Published since 1995

17#155

April 21, 2011

НАСТЕЖЬ

— News of Student life —



DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH? - WE DO!

INTRO

*Dear friends,
Hello!*

You are handed a new issue of the university's newspaper «Настер». Before I explain the reason it is only in English I'd like to suggest paying your attention to one important moment. Yesterday we were angry and upset, were wearing fur coats and preferred a lonely evening at home to a walk with friends. Today we are open to communication, ready to new meetings, are fanatically keeping

feet and spend free time in a pleasant company... The question is: why? The answer is hidden in six simple letters – spring is here! The weather is gradually getting warmer and we are all filled with a new life. The exciting feeling of future changes has appeared in our souls.

But the marvellous time of revival isn't the reason to give up studying. Thus, today is the Day of the English language. Our

university is proud of its students' achievements in different spheres of scientific knowledge including foreign languages such as English, French, German, Swedish. Today you can have a unique opportunity to show you're your good English skills in everyday life. And our team with this English issue will try to help you plunge into the language environment. We are «Настер»!! :)

Junior Researchers' Conference

We've got a good tradition at our university recently which supposes carrying out of the Junior Researchers' Conference. The distinctive feature of this conference is that work in sections is organized in the English language. It promotes not only the development of student's scientific activity, but it also helps to acquire communicative skills in a foreign language. It is very important to learn any language through practice in real-to-life situations.

The conference includes some

stages. In the beginning there is a festive opening ceremony. Dmitry Nikolaevich Lazovsky, the rector of university, usually greets participants and makes a solemn speech. He is a perfect example for all students as he speaks English well. Then students present their scientific works and discuss them in different sections. Sections are divided according to scientific fields developing at PSU.

Every year the number of students taking part in the international scientific conference is increasing. It means that the

youth understands the necessity of science development and the importance of speaking a foreign language. Undoubtedly it will contribute the future career promotion.

This year the Junior Researchers' Conference "EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL CONTEXT IN RESEARCH" will be held in April, 27 – 28. I hope you have already had enough time to apply for the conference. Good luck and speak English with pleasure!



Elena Kosarevskaya



Great Britain seen by a Belarusian

The United Kingdom is a country which has a great history. And this country has always had an important position in the world. That's why Great Britain is very interesting for everybody. I was very lucky, and I had a chance to see England.

My first glance at England was at a height of 9 000 metres, on board Minsk-London plane. And what I saw excited me so much. There were green flat fields, the English Channel with different types of water transport, winding rivers. And then I saw London, the capital of Great Britain. You fall in love with this city at first sight.

London stands on the Thames. This river is so amazing! It's really big. The Thames has been very important in the lives of London's residents since the times of the foundation of the city. And now it attracts tourists' and its citizen's attention.

My sighting of London started with the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben.

The Houses of Parliament were built in a Gothic style. And it's an enormous building. And nobody can imagine London without Big Ben. This big clock is a symbol of England. And another is of London attractions which I saw was Tower Bridge, this bridge is the most beautiful bridge I have ever seen. And when you walk up it you can view HMS Belfast, an 11,500-ton cruiser that opened the bombardment of the Normandy coast on D-Day and which is now a museum.

And the London Eye impressed me. This is the biggest observation wheel in the world. And it blew

my mind away! When you are 135 meters over the Thames River (the London Eye based on the bank of the River Thames) you can see a splendid view of London. It's so fantastic! You are like a bird in the English skies.

The next sight is Buckingham Palace, the residence of the Queen.

Of course this is a marvelous building, but I was ecstatic about the royal guard. Their clothes are so funny and unusual for me, especially their hats. It was so hot but they were very serious and they didn't share their moods with the people around them. And they always keep their emotion inside. And I felt sorry for them, because it's a really hard job.

And before starting my trip I had wanted to see Saint Paul's Cathedral. And it is worth visiting. Because this cathedral is an important feature of English life. Important services held in St Paul's include the funerals of Lord Nelson and Sir Winston Churchill; peace services marking the end of the First and Second World Wars; St Paul's was used for the marriage of Charles, the Prince of Wales, and Lady Diana Spencer. And I think you understand why I wanted to visit this place.

But in England you can be excited not, I have also visited some castles, only by London



although this city is worth seeing, I admired its castles. I have been to the Bodiam Castle (this is a 14th-century moated castle near Robertsbridge in East Sussex, England). And it's an enormous building surrounded by moat full of big fish. And it is in such a good state that I felt like it was the 14th century. And it's fantastic that people who works there were clothes of those times. That's why it seems that you've come back to the times of the knights.

England is a surprising country! Because it saved its traditions of the past, its special culture. But also this country adapts to new times. Great Britain combines old and modern, tranquil inns and up-to-date buildings, calm life in the country and busy life in big cities. England is a country of contrasts. You can't leave the United Kingdom without falling in love with it. And I will never forget this trip, because England will remain in my heart forever!

Kristina Kislova

A unique man of our university



Why do you prefer English from such a great number of languages?

I mean not only to study but to teach as well. I cannot answer this question because it's not a matter of preferences. At school we had no choice, especially in mine where languages were taught from the 1st Grade. So from the 1st Grade to the 11th I was studying English and from the 6th Grade to the 11th I was studying German. And I never thought of English as a language for my future career. But I still think the choice which was made by my teachers for me was the right one.

What are the main features of English you can single out?

The only feature I'd like to highlight is that English is, so to speak, easy to deal with and at the same time is very informative language. When you come across a sentence or a fragment in English you can immediately see whether there's sense in it or not. For example we may have a look at some sentence or a piece of text in Russian and find it eloquent,

we'll say it's brilliant, it sounds great. But if we take the same extract in English we may say that this part is nonsense. The text has lost its brilliance in the process of translation. The reason is that English somehow emphasizes the meaning. And the meaning, the sense predetermines the eloquence. The idea is not mine that is why I'm so sure in it.

Is it possible to master a foreign language without deep knowledge of your mother tongue?

It's absolutely impossible. The first thing you should keep in mind is that without true sincere love to your own language you'll never be able to master any foreign language. You'll be like an ogre from the poem by W.H. Auden: "But one thing is beyond his reach / The Ogre cannot master speech."

Can you recall any funny situations in which you managed to take advantage of your knowledge in English?

Let me think... Unfortunately I cannot recall any on the spot. But there are funny cases which happen almost every day here, in the University. Students often mispronounce words and it's not rare when the slips of the tongue sound ridiculous. I usually translate what they've said. For instance the English phrase car hire sounds like Belarusian *kaxae* (makes it easy to memorize). Well once I heard such a variant *harcire*. I tried not to pay attention, but everybody laughed.

Your colleagues are ladies. What do you feel working in such atmosphere?

I find it great. The only disadvantage is that you feel a little bit confused because of this international women day. You know it's hard to please every

lady of the Chair but I think I just need to try best. May be someday I'll succeed. The advantages are numerous. I don't want to boast.

Are you satisfied with the average level of English among our students?

It wishes to be better. The reason is that the majority doesn't understand what they need English for. One thing I can offer is to organize international excursions, international exchange programs. Travelling is the best way to learn English. Students will feel the wish to study if they come across native-speakers abroad.

Without any doubts, when you were a student, you had your own ways of learning English. Could you share some of your secrets?

In 1998 I entered the University then went to the USA and in a year came back. So this advantage may be considered as a secret way to some extent. Well, still I have some personal useful tips. 1st: reading poetry enriches your vocabulary and trains your memory; 2nd: everyday use of English. My teacher – Maria Dmitrievna Putrova – used to say: Language is a kind of shoes you should have put on all the time. That's why even in V Kontakte I organize groups where my students can discuss different issues in English. I hope this informal communication is useful.

And, finally, do you have a dream?

Yes, I do have a dream. It's very simple. I have about 50 places I would love to visit before I die. They are different and the reasons to visit them are different as well.



Mikhail Drozdetsky

Fashionable foreign language

They say, nothing is stable. This is true for our time as well – the modern world isn't stable. It's developing, it's changing. Besides it lives according to its own laws. Progress creates new standards and ideals. Thus the ideal of a modern person is a successful communicative and well developed person. Besides it's getting popular to study foreign languages. And this article is devoted to them.

English? French? German?

There has always been the problem of foreign languages choice. We asked the students of PSU which language they'd chosen and why. The most common are English and German. They started their learning at school, and of course it's much easier to continue the learning process rather than to start a new one. That's why almost all the respondents continue to study the same language at university.

Do you speak English?

As it is well known, the most popular and necessary language to study is English. We asked students studying it to assess their language

skills. Here's what we found out: the majority (about 45%) thinks they have intermediate language skills. The rest of them hardly speak English (elementary level, about 10%) or speak it fluently (upper-intermediate or advanced – less than 4%). According to



statistics, the average level is the intermediate one.

4 years of study - to be or not to be?

The obligatory four-year system of foreign languages study has been introduced in our university recently. There's been a lot of arguments about it. We found out what the students think about it. As it turned out the majority wasn't really happy to study a foreign language an extra year. Their reasoning was the following: everybody has the right to

make his own decisions; a lot of students think they will get enough knowledge during the three years of study. Others can have take courses in foreign languages in order to improve their language skills. But there were some who do support our administration's decision to study languages longer. Well, it depends!

Polyglots

Carrying out the survey, we decided to ask the students what other languages they would like to study. There were different answers: Spanish, Italian, Chinese, English, German... But the majority would be glad to study French. Probably the reason is its melody. But some of them decided it's better to improve their skills in the studied language.

That's all we managed to find out. Besides we had a chance to talk about the weather with the English, to try croissants with the French and to learn the recipe of spicy sausages from the German. We had a good time and as usually - with a benefit for our beloved newspaper. Study languages and get smart!



Ann Shevyako

Mystery of the Cadet building, or meeting with a ghost

The time I want to tell you about I was working as a guard in the Cadet building. It was being restored at a full speed. The ruins of this great in the past building gradually started to look a monumental and beautiful building. I was really proud of my work. I thought it was very important for us to save the rich historical heritage for our descendants. I liked watching the mighty walls of the Cadet building, they were so beautiful and mystic in the Moon light! I invented short stories about its past and when I had some free time I wrote them down. I was a real fan of the Cadet building! I guarded not a heartless stone building but an adorable child. I was crazy about it.

It was a usual evening of my night shift - just as hundreds of identical evenings I had had before. Darkness went slowly down on the quiet street. It was really marvellous seeing it and I enjoyed the charming silence and calmness of that spring time. I sat in my working room in front of an open window reading a book. Suddenly I heard a loud sound as though something heavy fell down in the hall. I thought: "What is it?" – and went there quickly. I decided children had climbed through a window in the building to play and broke something. I wanted to punish them so I moved quickly and noiselessly. But there weren't any children. I would never forget what I saw in the hall! The Cadet building didn't seem to me a wonderful, beautiful, marvelous place any more, it was no more a place where I had a good time – something white was

hanging in the air just in front of my eyes! I felt some unpleasant trembling in my knees...

Something weightless was hanging in the air. It was not moving and it seemed to be looking at me. I started to think hurriedly what it



could be. A rag? A window shade? A jacket? Could I have left something in there? What could I leave there? Meantime an enigmatic object slowly flew towards the window. I could hardly stand on my feet from fear. What should I do? Should run? Or stay where I was? Or just stop breathing? I looked attentively at the UFO and I was ready to die at that moment, so terrible it was! The UFO moved towards the window, I was staring at it...

And suddenly - I don't know

how it happened - it appeared right in front of me! Before my feet got me away from there I had a second to see a face with big sad eyes, a straight nose and white lips, it was an ordinary human face, but it wasn't a human being, I didn't see his legs! It was a ghost, and it was flying in the air!

I ran away as fast as I can! I stopped only when I ran behind the Cadet building and hid behind the fence. I was tired and really afraid of the ghost with a human face. I thought it would pursue me, but the ghost didn't fly out of the building.

I didn't know what to do. I was at work and had to guard the building so I had to come back immediately, but there was a ghost! The chance to meet him face to face again didn't seem nice to me. Complete darkness surrounded me. I couldn't decide what to do. I hated this terrible piece of rag because I had to hide behind the fence in great fear!

I was so afraid of this unidentified object that I just sat down on the ground near the fence and stayed there before the sun rose and the first citizens appeared in the street. Then I came back to the hall where I had seen the ghost the night before. My knees were trembling, my back was wet... The hall was empty, nothing reminded about the yesterday's incident.

As you understand I couldn't work there after the ghost's night visit. So I'm guarding a storage now and I'm satisfied with my life. I hope never to meet a ghost again.



Irina Naumenko

«Универсальный» разговорник

Непривычно видеть в номере, посвященном Дню английского языка, статью на русском? Но как иначе. Ведь далеко не все в совершенстве владеют языком мирового масштаба. Кто-то учил или учит немецкий, кто-то пытается освоить французский, ну а кому-то просто тяжело даются иностранные языки (мало кто даже на своем родном белорусском общается).

Поэтому мы и решили вставить в спецвыпуск хотя бы одну статью, так сказать, для начинающих. Ведь всякое в жизни бывает, и кто знает, куда нас может занести судьба. Каждый из нас может попасть в ситуацию, когда рядом будут люди, понимающие только английскую речь. Язык жестов – это, конечно, универсальная штука, но не мешало бы, знать хотя бы парочку стандартных фраз, чтобы хоть как-то реагировать при общении с иностранцами.

Начнем с того, что будем правдивы и не станем скрывать от окружающих, что на языке не говорим. Поэтому запоминайте, если к вам назойливо начнет приставать иностранец, вас спасет простая фраза: «I don't speak English» (Ай донт спик инглиш), что в переводе значит «Я не говорю по-английски».

Начало положено, идем дальше. Теперь стоит научиться вежливо объяснять, что вам ничего не понятно. Иначе придется с глупым выражением лица ждать, когда же у иностранца иссякнет энергия и закончится фантазия. Что ж, думаю, это не нужно ни вам ни ему. Поэтому запоминайте: «Sorry, I don't understand you» («Сори, ай донт андэстэнд ю») – Извините, я вас не понимаю.

Можете также добавить «Do you speak Russian?» (Ду ю спик раши?), что значит «Вы говорите на русском?». Вдруг вам повезет, и ваш собеседник ока-

жется полиглотом. В противном случае он хотя бы будет точно знать, что с вами можно пообщаться только на этом языке.

Теперь на случай, если вы вдруг заблудитесь в незнакомом городе, главное, помнить название отеля или адрес того места, где вы остановились. И плюс к этому выражение «Where is ... (и название необходимого места)» (уэя из ...). Вот только если вам начнут объяснять на словах, вам это мало поможет. В этом случае желательно носить с собой карту. Или искать такси, которое сразу доставит до нужного места.

Когда вам помогут, не забудьте сказать «спасибо». Есть несколько вариантов: «Thank you» (сэньк ю) – более официально, «Thanks» (сэнькс) – неофициально, «Thank you very much» (сэньк ю вэри мач) – усиленная благодарность. Значение одно и то же, так что вам решать, сколько вы сможете выучить. Да, кстати, не забудьте дружелюбно улыбнуться. Улыбка универсальна, ее и переводить не надо. И с ее помощью можно усилить любую благодарность.

Раз уж научились благодарить, стоит научиться извиняться. Здесь есть два варианта. Если, например, вы хотите отвлечь кого-нибудь от важных дел, чтобы что-то спросить, стоит сказать «Excuse me» (экскуз ми). Ну а если вы что-нибудь натворили, например, наступили прохожему на ногу, стоит сказать «I'm sorry» (Айм сори).

С другой стороны, если на ногу наступили вам и извинились, стоит ответить «It's all right» (иц ол райт) или «It's OK» (иц окей). Не забывайте, нужно быть вежливыми и удерживаться от нецензурной брани на родном языке, даже если рядом никто этого не поймет, даже если нога болит очень сильно.

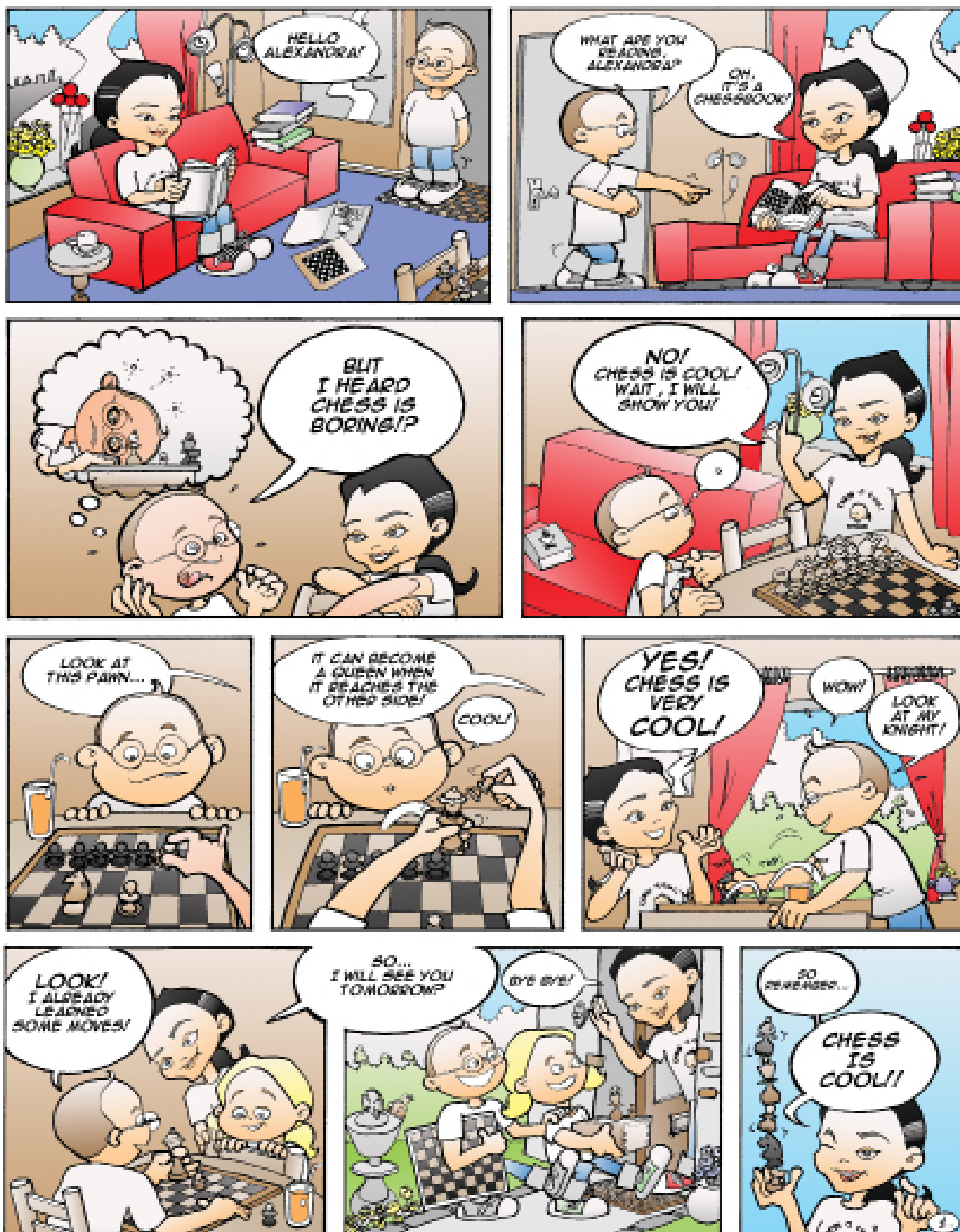
Теперь стоит запомнить не-

сколько простых фраз речевого этикета, которые часто употребляются в различных ситуациях. При знакомстве, либо при встрече англичане обычно задают вопрос «How are you?» (хау а ю), что можно перевести как «Как ты?» или «Как дела?». Не то что бы они очень хотят знать, как вы поживаете, просто из вежливости так принято. Поэтому и ответ обычно стандартный: «Fine, thanks» (файн, сэнькс) – хорошо, спасибо. Этого вполне достаточно. У них не принято вываливать на всех сразу при встрече все свои проблемы. Поэтому просто ответьте, что все хорошо и задайте в ответ тот же вопрос.

Кстати, еще одна особенность англичан заключается в поздравлениях с праздниками. Они, подписывая открытки, используют одну простую и опять-таки стандартную фразу «With good wishes» – с наилучшими пожеланиями. Они считают, что если желаешь человеку, например, здоровья, значит, считаешь, что ему этого не хватает. Получается, что даже если именинник полностью здоров, его называют больным. Так можно и обидеть, вместо того, чтобы поздравить. А у нас наоборот, мы обычно стараемся исписать всю страницу открытки пожеланиями.

Что ж, надеюсь, этот «универсальный» разговорник поможет вам. Но мой вам совет, учите английский! Никакой разговорник не сможет вам помочь – только собственные знания и опыт общения. Ведь даже если с помощью разговорника вы сможете задать интересующий вопрос, то кто даст гарантию, что вы поймете ответ. Так что, учебники в руки, наушники в уши и вперед! Успехов вам в этом не легком деле!





Worked on the production:

editor Nikolay Radievskiy
 technical editor Anastasia Samusenko
 corrector Galina Palyakova

You can search the colour version here: www.psu.by

**Printed in the Editing Publishing Department
 of «PSU»**

Order.....661
 Signed print.....21.04.2011
 Circulation.....298 экз.

If you have smth to say - write nastej.psu@tut.by