

Title: TPR and Mastering Russian Multi- and Unidirectional Verbs of Motion

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Verbs of motion are difficult for the Russian language student to grasp. For most students, this difficulty involves the difference between uni- and multi-directional verbs, as well as the basic conditions under which each type must be used. In this presentation, the authors present new and effective means by which first- and second-year students master verbs of motion. Utilizing some of the basic concepts of Total Physical Response theory, the authors have created a “charade game,” where students act out situations that embody a specific motion verb. By both physically performing and visually seeing the motion associated with a verb, it will be argued that this game enables students to understand the basic differences between motion verbs more effectively than conventional teaching methods.

In testing the effectiveness of this method of teaching, the authors have conducted various experiments with both a target and controlled test group. In one group, the Russian charade game is implemented in learning the verbs of motion; in the other control group, students learn and practice verbs of motion without such a game with more conventional methods. At the end of each experiment, the students in each group are tested as to their understanding of verbs of motion. This research hopes to prove informative and beneficial to both the theoretical and practical aspects of Russian language acquisition. On the one hand, this research will prove valuable to the theory of Russian language acquisition by evaluating, explaining and analyzing TPR theory. On the other hand, this research offers teachers of Russian a new and effective method to teach their students verbs of motion, a method that can, more generally, prove successful and beneficial to second language acquisition and pedagogy.