**Maria Bondarenko, PhD**

**‘Semantic labels’ as alternative strategy for learning basic verbs of notion at low-proficiency levels of Russian L2 instruction.**

Verbs of Motions, as a part of Russian aspectology, constitute one of the most difficult topics in Russian L2 instruction. The difficulty consists in the fact that the meaning of specific types of Verbs of Motion used in specific contexts is determined by a complex combination of temporal, aspectual and situational features. So, it can be formalized only partially.

In traditional Russian L2 instruction, the number of directions has been used the most often as a universal tool for conceptualizing the semantic of Verbs of Motion. However, teaching practice shows that students have many difficulties, especially at low-proficiency levels, to apply the abstract analysis based on the opposition between *UNI- vs. MULTI-directional motion* in close to real-word creative language usage.

In this paper, first, we will try to identify, from the perspective of theoretical linguistics, some cognitive, theoretical and instructional limitations of the opposition *UNI- vs. MULTI-directional motion*. Then, we will introduce the instructional strategy of ***semantic labels (cемантические этикетки)***, which can be used as alternative (or complimentary to the traditional) teaching method at low-proficiency levels.

Instead of searching for a universal meaning unifying all contextual varieties of every Verb of Motion, the semantic labeling method suggests to formalize a limited number (=16) of essential contexts associated with individual meaning for four basic Verbs of Motion (ИДТИ, ХОДИТЬ, ЕХАТЬ, ЕЗДИТЬ). Our driving hypothesis consists in that essential characteristics of these context/meaning associations can be verbalized through **rephrasing in the target language** (= **semantic label**). We distinguish six basic **semantic labels** falling into two series.

*1st series :*

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ПЕШК**О**М

или внути города, когда

неважно как, на транспорте или нет

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НА ТР**А**НСПОРТЕ

или в другой город, в другую страну

*2nd series :*

Я БЫВ**А**Ю (БЫВАЛ/БУДУ БЫВАТЬ) ТАМ

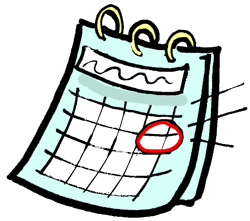
ПЕРИОД**И**ЧЕСКИ

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Я **БЫЛ** ТАМ. Один раз.

Это факт

**[](http://www.google.ca/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjRvvXJz9jZAhUixYMKHXs4BjAQjRx6BAgAEAY&url=http://clipart-library.com/doctors-appointment-cliparts.html&psig=AOvVaw3b7cbBgw-80T1CDy5hRdS0&ust=1520457418072295)**

Я ПЛАН**И**РУЮ

я собир**а**юсь

Я (**БЫЛ/БУДУ)** НА ПУТ**И** В...

Это процесс

Combination of one ‘label’ from each series, in addition to tense indication, provides an adequate description of a context, which exclusively requires one of four basic Verbs of Motion. Cf. :

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= Я ХОД**И**Л

Я **БЫЛ** ТАМ.

ЭТО ФАКТ

ùùùzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz



ПЕШК**О**М

или внутри города,

когда неважно как

= Я **Е**ДУ

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Я НА ПУТ**И** В...

**Э**ТО ПРОЦ**Е**СС

НА ТР**А**НСПОРТЕ

(в другой город)

= Я ИД**У**

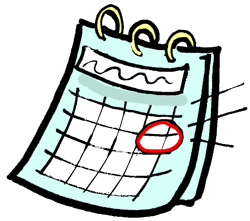
(= Я ПОЙД**У**)



ПЕШК**О**М

или внутри города,

когда неважно как

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Я ПЛАНИРУЮ   
я собираюсь

In the paper, we will discuss advantages of the semantic labeling and will provide some examples of using this method in different activities within Russian L2 courses taught at the University of Montreal in 2012-2018.