

Title: Conceptual Integration in Russian Language Pedagogy

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As a relatively new and usage-based language theory, cognitive linguistics has an impact on applied research in a number of areas including foreign language learning and language pedagogy, which are dealt with in one coherent framework—Applied Cognitive Linguistics. Rooted in cognition, ACL deals with some of the most intractable problems in foreign language learning, and in Russian (Slavic) language learning in particular, such as idiomatic expressions, metaphor, polysemy, cases, aspect, verbs of motion, text analysis, etc. (see as e.g. Putz et al. 2001; Janda & Clancy 2002).

This paper presents the findings of the on-going language research project “Applying Innovative Methods and Techniques to Teaching Russian at the Centre for Russian and East European Studies: A Cognitive View”, which has been funded by the Centre for East European Language Based Area Studies (UK), with a major focus on cognitive-inspired explanations and exercises developed for the analysis of contemporary Russian mass-media texts. This paper argues that applying conceptual integration—a basic mental operation inherent only to human beings and a productive research framework for meaning construction and understanding (Fauconnier & Turner 2002)—to teaching Russian can make difficult Russian text phenomena explainable by pointing out the motivation behind relevant aspects of language. Applying conceptual integration helps to elucidate connections between Russian language, cognition and culture and enables learning Russian by insight which has been proven by many linguists to be much more effective than mere rote learning.

Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M. (2002). *The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities*. New York: Basic Books.

Janda, L., & Clancy, S. (2002). *The case book for Russian*. Columbus, OH: Slavica.

Putz, M. et al. (Eds.). (2001). *Applied cognitive linguistics II: Language pedagogy*. Mouton de Gruyter.