

Title: Negative Transfer in the Writing of Proficient Students of Russian: A Comparison of Heritage Language Learners and Second Language Learners.

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This presentation will report the findings of a study designed to explore the phenomenon of negative transfer from English into Russian in the writing of students at the upperintermediate to advanced level of proficiency. Specifically, the study addresses the following questions:

(1) What are the most common types of negative transfer from English that occur in the writing of students of Russian at the upperintermediate to advanced level of proficiency?

(2) Are there differences in types and amount of negative transfer used by heritage speakers of Russian vs. second language speakers at comparable levels of proficiency? If so, what are the differences?

The research was conducted at the Russian Language Flagship Partner Program at Portland State University. Participants in this research were 13 advanced students from Russianspeaking backgrounds (heritage speakers of Russian) and students who have learned Russian in a variety of academic and nonacademic settings (predominantly, native speakers of English). The study was based on analysis of the written work of students completed during one quarter (essays, inclass writing samples, and other assignments). Errors were coded into twelve categories and frequencies compared statistically between the groups.

Implications of the findings will be discussed with particular reference to teaching heritage speakers and second language learners in the same classes. The presentation will be of interest to anyone interested in heritage and second language acquisition of Russian, language transfer in learners of Russian, development of teaching materials, or the teaching of advanced language courses.

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