

Title: Cross-Cultural Communication Problems as a Topic in Teaching Heritage Students or Combining the Uncombinable

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Numerous studies report the increasing number of Russian Heritage students who enroll in language classes in the US universities. These students already possess the ability to communicate in Russian and they are normally more interested in Russian culture and development of their literacy skills.

Very often Heritage classes combine students with very different language proficiency level , educational and cultural background, and Russia/ Russian life experience and they may be considered as one of the most challenging classes for the language instructor who has to tailor course materials to maintain students' motivation and give all students an opportunity to actively participate in the class.

According to preliminary studies an ideal curriculum addressing the specific needs of heritage students would be culture/content based and would include essential information on linguistic, communicative, and cultural lacunae. In my presentation I am going to discuss some types of texts (precedential texts and texts on cross culture communication problems) which should fill in cultural gaps and help to combine in the class diverse students.

Debra Fiedman, Olga Kagan. Academic Proficiency of Russian Heritage Speakers: A Comparative Study. In Heritage Language Education.

Olga Kagan, UCLA, and Kathleen Dillon. A New Perspective on Teaching Russian: Focus on the Heritage Learner. UC Consortium for Language Learning and Teaching.

Maria Polinsky. Heritage Language Narratives. In Heritage Language Education.

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