

Title: Acquisition of the Conjunctions И, А and Но by Heritage and Traditional Students of Russian
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The coordinating conjunctions **и, а, но** can distinguish various semantic nuances and, to a certain extent, they semantically overlap in Russian. They might be rendered into English differently depending on the context and speaker's cognition. This is why they are troublesome words for English-speaking students of Russian.

As early as 1975, Townsend pointed out the necessity of focus on “small words” such as the conjunctions **и, а, но** for a better understanding of the words that cause difficulties to students of Russian. Several works were devoted to semantics and pragmatics of the coordinating conjunctions **и, а, но** (Kreidlin and Paducheva 1974; Sannikov 1989; Uryson 2005, 2006; Zaliznyak, Mikaelyan 2005), but there are no works in the area of acquisition of the conjunctions **и, а, но** by English-speaking students.

The purpose of this study is to fill in the gaps in this area and to bring the analyzed findings into class to help both traditional and heritage learners to acquire Russian coordinating conjunctions.

We identify, analyze, and compare error patterns of using the coordinating conjunctions **и, а, но** by heritage and traditional students ($N = 45$). The focus of this investigation is to find out what semantic shifts occur in the process of encoding and decoding of conjunctions by traditional and heritage learners of Russian.