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## **Thinking through Teacher Talk: Increasing Target Language Use in the Beginning Russian Classroom**

*William J. Comer*

In July 2012, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) adopted a position statement calling for instructors and learners to use the target language (TL) for 90% plus of instructional time. ACTFL's recommendation applies to all levels of instruction (K-16) and makes no distinctions for the degree of difference of the TL from the learners' first language (L1). Implementing this recommendation means that no more than five minutes of a 50-minute class hour should take place in the L1 of the learners, whether that class is the first day of high school Russian or a college class at an advanced level. For beginning Russian classes at the college level, this recommendation raises the question of how to conduct 45 minutes of instruction in the TL in a way that is comprehensible to the learners.<sup>1</sup> Implementing this recommendation may be particularly challenging for new teachers and beginning teaching assistants, especially if their language skills may not yet be solidly at an advanced level.

This article considers TL use only in the predominantly monolingual foreign language (FL) classroom where the learners and teachers all share a common language. This instructional context invites the kind of code switching that is a natural part of communication among bilingual speakers (Levine 2011; Cook 2001), and so it makes the ACTFL's target of 90% TL use challenging. The purpose of this article is to synthesize the findings from studies of classroom language use, identify impediments to TL use in the classroom, and offer specific suggestions and resources to help beginning teachers and teaching assistants of Russian navigate the difficulty areas.

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<sup>1</sup> We will leave aside for the moment the question of how ready the learners might be for this kind of immersion experience on the first day of class, and what effects it might have on enrollments.

### **Literature review**

Recent years have seen a number of studies on the dynamics of FL use in college literature classrooms (Donato and Brooks 2004; Polio and Zyzik 2009; Zyzik and Polio 2008) and other content-based instruction (Pessoa et al. 2007). More relevant to this article are studies that involve direct observation of language use in FL classrooms both at the high school and college levels both in the U.S. and in other countries at the beginning and intermediate levels of study. Duff and Polio (1990) were among the first to measure TL use in college FL instruction. They looked at instruction in 13 different languages that was being delivered by native speakers of the TL during two class sessions in the second-quarter of first-year college language classes. In their 26 hours of recordings, they found considerable variation in the amount of time instructors used the TL: one instructor used the TL 100% of the time, while another spent only 10% of class time in the TL. The average over the 13 different instructors/languages was 67.9% of class time spent in the TL. In considering reasons for this large variation, the researchers note that the instructor whose class was conducted 100% in the TL worked in a department that mandated exclusive TL use and strictly implemented the Direct Method. In the classroom with 10% use of the TL, the instructor himself thought he was using the TL about 45% of the time, and the department had no formal policy on language of instruction or on methods. In their follow-up study with this same data set, Polio and Duff (1994) revealed details about one Slavic language classroom that they observed, noting that only 33% of class time on average was spent in the TL. This follow-up study reached the conclusion that six areas often triggered L1 use in the classes that they had observed: Classroom Administrative Vocabulary, Grammar Instruction, Classroom Management (i.e., giving instructions), Expressions of Empathy/Solidarity, Unknown Vocabulary/Translation, and an Interactive Effect of Student L1 Use.

Macaro (2001) examined the L1 use of six French FL teachers in secondary school classrooms in England. All of his teachers had completed a 36-week course for teaching methods in the FL, were advanced-level speakers of French, and worked in the framework of the British National Curriculum that stipulates 100% use of the TL in the classroom. The researcher videotaped class sessions and found that the six teachers (in first through third-year French) used English in the classroom relatively little. English took up under 5% of class time for most sessions observed, although one teacher averaged about 12% of

class time in English. In his sample Macaro found no link between level of instruction and the teachers' use of L1. From follow-up interviews, Macaro noted that English was often used to deal with classroom disciplinary issues, build group empathy, and give instructions for activities, which, because of extensive use of jigsaw and cognitively complex activities, required detailed instructions.

Kraemer (2006) observed five teaching assistants on two occasions while they taught first-year German in a U.S. university classroom. She found that they used English most for course/curriculum management, L2/L1 translation, reviewing/repeating explanations, and making comments to individual students. Use of English in course/curriculum management was often segregated to the last five minutes of class, while English comments to individual students occurred during pair/group work or when the student initiated an exchange in English. English was also used for expressions of solidarity/empathy as well as for making cultural notes. Based on her findings, Kraemer (2006, 448) recommended that teachers "develop a set of classroom management and administrative vocabulary terms and expressions in German for TAs and students to use, which should be introduced in the first few weeks of each semester."

Wilkerson (2008) conducted a qualitative study of L1 use in the college Spanish FL classroom, and she found widely varying patterns of TL use. Her participants all had multiple years of teaching experience and were either native speakers of Spanish or non-natives with ACTFL-certified Advanced or Superior level language skills, so that the variations in the amount of TL use could not be attributed to limitations in the instructors' proficiency in the TL. Wilkerson concluded (2008, 315) that "English was used during classroom instruction to save time, demonstrate authority, and reduce ambiguity, and these categories of usage often co-occurred." In her view, the instructors' right to code switch at any time during class reflected their authority to control classroom discourse. Wilkerson found another demonstration of authority in how one native speaker of Spanish preferred to use English translations rather than to explain unknown words through gestures and pantomime, because she considered such activities "clowning around." Another instructor in the study used the TL almost exclusively in the classroom, but his students often did not understand the content of his speech, and in their course evaluations, they complained that the teacher was unsympathetic because he would not use English to help them

overcome difficulties in comprehension. Wilkerson's findings point out how the choice of L1 or TL often overlaps with instructors' notions about their role as teacher and their selection and sequencing of student learning tasks.

Grim (2010) observed French instructors teaching 3<sup>rd</sup> semester college or 3<sup>rd</sup> year high school French. Her data included 7.5 hours of recordings for each group, and all her participants were native speakers of French or had a high level of oral proficiency. Overall, she found that the high school teachers used English roughly 32% of class time; while the college teachers used it only about 6% of class time (although one college teacher used English frequently in one-on-one conversations with students during pair work). Grim's study confirms the previous literature's list of triggers for L1 usage (explaining grammar, giving instructions, expressing empathy/solidarity, and giving translations for lexical items and phrases). A notable difference was that secondary school teachers often used English to deal with classroom discipline issues that were absent in the college classroom.

Grim is also the first to distinguish two types of teacher translation in the classroom: immediate translation (where the instructor says the TL word and then immediately provides the L1 equivalent in the flow of TL discourse) and delayed translation (where teacher uses a TL word, does a comprehension check with the learners and then perhaps gives the translation). Grim recommends delayed translation as a more valuable classroom technique since the comprehension check focuses the learners' attention on a specific word and provides the moment for them to notice the word.

Hobbs, Matsuo, and Payne (2010) examined the code-switching behaviors in Japanese foreign language classrooms, finding that native-speaking instructors of Japanese were more likely to use English than the TL in class. Teachers who were non-native, but fluent speakers of Japanese, were much more likely to use drawings and illustrations to keep the classroom in the TL. The authors attribute the differences in the teachers' use of the TL to their own experiences as language learners. Most of the native speakers of Japanese had experienced English foreign language classes that were conducted mostly in Japanese, and so they had a tendency to teach the way that they were taught.

While the articles reviewed above all make a number of recommendations to increase the amount of class time spent in the TL, only Moser, Harris, and Carle (2012) describes an intervention to

improve the quantity and quality of teacher talk in the TL. They worked with Japanese native speakers who were training to teach English in Japanese elementary schools. As part of the training program, teachers first listened to a native English speaker give instructions for a task (i.e., drawing a picture based on the speaker's description of a scene) that the trainees carried out. Afterwards, the trainees took on the role of teacher and presented the same task to a sample class and their instructions were audio recorded. The teachers then had to transcribe the recording and compare the transcription with the original instructions given by the native speaker. This instructional sequence was repeated, and afterwards, the trainees reported improved confidence and ability to use English in the classroom.

The findings from these different studies are remarkably consistent in recognizing areas that trigger L1 use in the classroom: managing course/curricular goals, giving classroom directions, repeating explanation/metalinguistic discussions, translating specific lexical items, and creating empathy/rapport with the learners. While only one of the studies above mentions language use in teaching a Slavic language, my personal observations of elementary Russian classrooms with early career language teachers confirm that these five areas are regular trouble spots. Before thinking about pedagogical solutions to support beginning teachers as they navigate these areas, one must consider the issue of the proficiency level of beginning teachers and teaching assistants of Russian.

### **Teaching Assistants' Initial Language Proficiency**

The teachers observed in the above studies were all certified as having advanced or higher language proficiency or were native speakers of the TL. In the author's personal experience, beginning teaching assistants sometimes have less than advanced skills (often closer to the Intermediate High level of Russian), particularly if they are starting graduate school and teaching immediately after completing an undergraduate Russian program and have only had limited experience studying abroad.<sup>2</sup> For the undergraduate-major-turned-teaching-

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<sup>2</sup> In a perfect world, all teachers and teaching assistants would be ACTFL Advanced-Mid speakers or higher *before* they begin teaching, but this is probably unrealistic since a typical outcome for an undergraduate major in Russian is Intermediate High. Recognizing the linguistic limitations of beginning teachers and having a plan to address

assistant (even with advanced-level proficiency) the classroom is likely to be the first time where he/she will have to manage the interactions of others in the TL. Thus, beginning teachers definitely need linguistic as well as pedagogical support for preparing their teacher talk. For them, TL fluency factors into all of their other pedagogical choices in managing their classroom and activities. A language program supervisor needs to be aware of such issues and to think about ways to support the ongoing development of that teaching assistant's TL skills.

In my observations, Russian native speaker (NS) teaching assistants do not necessarily have an easier time in their first teaching experience, particularly at the beginning level. If the NS teacher is a very strong speaker of English, he/she may overuse English in the classroom. The NS may need considerable guidance in when, how, and why English L1 speakers struggle with Russian phonology, morphology, and syntax. Another obstacle for the Russian NS in staying in the TL is a culturally based reluctance to point to one's own body to illustrate TL vocabulary items, such as body parts, clothing, and facial expressions.

## **Discussion and Potential Remedies**

### **TL in managing classroom activities**

While Duff and Polio (1990) found that one teaching assistant using the Direct Method was able to conduct class 100% of the time in the TL, and Grim found that college instructors who used simple directions could rely on the students to understand these tasks, the question remains: how do we make instructions for tasks comprehensible to learners, particularly if we use tasks that are more cognitively engaging and that demand higher-order thinking skills? While the techniques of the Direct Method work well in an immersion environment, giving the directions for a complex communicative information gap activity in the TL may leave learners puzzled and unable to complete the task in a manner that reaches both the task's communicative purpose and language goals.

One possible solution to this problem, particularly at the start of instruction, is to outfit the printed materials given to learners with instructions in English. Students can read the written L1 instructions as

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them and expand their level of language competency both for the classroom and their future professional life seems a more viable approach.

the teacher explains the task orally in the TL. The printed text then becomes a way of “subtitling” the teacher’s TL talk.

Appendix 1 provides a sample four-step opinion gap activity that has instructions in English. Because this opinion sharing activity embeds all the grammar that students need to carry out the task in the task materials as structured input, students are unlikely to make mistakes with adjective-noun agreement as they exchange opinions.

Following the materials that the students see, the reader will find a sample of the classroom teacher talk that might be used to guide the students through this activity, while keeping the class entirely in the TL. Following Hatch (1983), this teacher talk relies heavily on verbal modification of the TL and non-verbal cues to make the teacher talk more comprehensible to the language learners.<sup>3</sup>

This kind of modeling of teacher talk is quite valuable for beginning teachers, and language program directors should give multiple models of “teacher talk” at regular intervals over the course of an academic year, so that beginning teachers can see what is possible in the TL, how to make it comprehensible to the learners, and how their teacher talk can grow in vocabulary and syntax over an academic year.

The sample activity in Appendix 1 also demonstrates a solution to another typical problem in TL use and classroom management. When the task design requires learners to give a report back to the group, the instructions need to provide learners with the scaffolding for how to accomplish the report. Including an explicit structure for learners to use in reporting back can help the teacher make a smooth transition back from group work to the whole class forum, without having to use English to summarize the task.

Even with the input structured and the teacher talk modeled, the activity in Appendix I might go badly if the teacher makes poor pedagogical choices in implementing it (i.e., gives the instructions for all four steps at once; does not perform meaningful comprehension checks; does not make eye contact with the learners while explaining; does not monitor the student pairs during performance, etc.).

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<sup>3</sup> One reader of a draft of this article offered a different model of teacher talk for Step 1 simplifying the opening by replacing *Представьте себе* with the single word *Ситуация*, and removing the reference to article length from the instructions. This comment is a useful reminder that effective TL teacher talk can vary among instructors.

For other kinds of activities, the teacher may use multiple choice as a way to scaffold learners' responses to stay in the TL. For example, many beginning textbooks present the clothing words in Russian in the first or second chapter, before students can use them in sentences to express notions of wearing, liking, or having these objects. A typical activity to practice the clothing words is to have learners sort them into categories ("things you would wear to the beach," "formal wear for a fancy event," "summer clothes," "winter clothes," etc.). At this stage of language learning, the category names are most likely to be in English, but this can lead students down the garden path to complete the activity by making statements like "сандалии is beach wear." To avoid that kind of L1 usage in the classroom, the teacher can label the English categories in Russian (i.e., колонка/группа А, колонка Б, etc.) and model the preferred response form: Сандалии — это колонка А. Although hardly elegant, the student response is nevertheless in Russian, it communicates meaning in the TL, and it helps keep the teacher and the class in the TL as well.<sup>4</sup>

Over the course of a semester and first year of instruction, the L1 instructions for regularly used activity types can slowly make the transition to the TL with particularly difficult words and phrases, glossed as needed.

### **TL usage in giving classroom instructions**

Closely related to classroom/activity management in the TL is how to give various kinds of activity instructions in Russian. The commands for many classroom activities or instructional actions are rarely explicitly taught or even used in beginning Russian textbooks produced in the U.S., while beginning textbooks produced in Russia often use only the simplest of activity types. As a reference for the beginning teacher, Appendix 2 contains a lengthy bilingual list of instructions for different kinds of classroom activities, starting with the simplest and working to more complex interactions. The bilingual list also contains selective

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<sup>4</sup> Polio and Duff note a 'reciprocal reinforcing effect' for TL use (1994, 320). That is, a teacher's use of the TL tends to influence students to use the TL. The converse is likely to be true as well — helping the students to stay in the TL helps the teacher to stay in the TL. Hobbs, Matsuo, and Payne (2010) suggest that this effect may also occur within a teacher (i.e., a teacher's own use of the TL may prompt him/her to use TL for more and longer stretches).

commentaries on language usage to help non-native teachers notice difficult grammatical details about the phrases that new teachers may have heard hundreds of times as learners, but never uttered before stepping into the classroom as teachers. Language program directors should encourage their beginning teachers to write into their lesson plans all the instructions that they will need to deliver in a class hour and think about how they can illustrate these terms.

As instruction progresses, parts of this bilingual list can be shared with the learners and added to their recognition or active vocabulary. As learners master specific TL lexical items typical of instructions, these words can be used in written instructions for classroom activities and for homework schedules.

### **TL and classroom comprehension checks**

If the purpose of teaching class in the TL is to communicate in the TL and thereby provide comprehensible input for the learner's TL acquisition, then teachers must make sure that communication is happening and that their TL input is indeed comprehensible. This means that teachers need to pause regularly to check learners' comprehension, asking questions like *Вы поняли? Понятно?* not as mere display questions, but as real questions that deserve real verbal answers from the learners. Teachers need to show that they expect and value the learners' responses to such questions, and that the learners' answers determine the course of the teacher's next communication.

Teaching beginning teachers to ask such questions, however, is only the first part of the equation. We need to assure that the learners themselves have TL means to indicate not only comprehension (*да, нет*), but to signal the kind of help they need. That means, we need at a very early stage to teach them phrases and sentences for requesting clarification. See Appendix 3 for a list of essentials that learners must be empowered to use in class regularly, as part of real communication between teacher and learner. These essentials can be memorized chunks in the learner's vocabulary, long before the grammar instantiated in them has become a topic for discussion. Teachers might bring a poster with these phrases on them to class for the first month or two to encourage students to learn them and use them.

Comprehension checks are just as important in presenting vocabulary and structures. Slideshows (in PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) are a convenient way for teachers to present lexical items or grammar forms

with images in a sequenced order. The major drawback in using such presentations in the language classroom arises from the very teacher-centeredness of the activity. While the slides allow teachers a way to combine text and image so that they can stay in the TL, teachers do need to ask “what are the learners doing while I talk?” If the learners have no tasks to do while listening to the teacher’s talk, then there is no guarantee that learners will attend to the teacher’s talk, and so it may never become linguistic input for them. During a slide show featuring new vocabulary, the learners might complete a worksheet matching new TL lexical items with L1 equivalents. The learners thus create their own bilingual vocabulary list that they can use as a reference in subsequent activities.

To present a grammar point, the presentation slides might be organized so that each one of them requires the learners to match a TL sentence featuring the grammar point with a picture that accurately reflects the meaning of the TL sentence. For example, a teacher could introduce prepositional case phrases to describe location by asking students to match phrases like *Студенты уже в библиотеке* with either a picture of students in a dorm room or students in a library. After students see and hear the phrase and select the appropriate illustration, the teacher might orally contrast the nominative form of the word “Да, здесь библиотека» with the form on the slide «А где студенты? Они в библиотеке». The slide show can start with the most regular prepositional forms and progress in a structured way to more complex forms, such as nouns in *-ия* and *-ие* (*Студенты в общежитии / в аудитории / на экскурсии.*). The principles for creating structured input activities have been described in detail by Farley (2005). After working through this set of slides and processing them for meaning, the teacher might follow up with a noticing activity. In such an activity, students might complete a worksheet that puts words from the slide show in two contrasting columns, one where the words appear in their nominative and the second column for locational phrases. The words in each column are complete except for their endings (e.g., *библиотек\_\_* in first column, *в библиотек\_\_* in the second), and learners must fill in the chart as the group reviews the slide show. Such an approach ensures that learners are connecting the structure with its meaning at the same time that it actively involves them in constructing a table, contrasting the nominative and prepositional case endings. Most significantly, this kind of presentation

of grammar can be done entirely in the TL, without recourse to grammatical terminology and metalinguistic explanation.<sup>5</sup>

### **TL→ L1 translation**

The glossing of an unknown TL word with the L1 equivalent is an inevitable feature of the language classroom, but teachers have the option of deciding how and when to introduce the L1. As the pedagogical suggestions above make clear, the L1 gloss can be introduced in print form as a kind of subtitling for the teacher's TL talk.

Careful lesson planning (and well-timed suggestions from the language program director) may alert beginning teachers to unfamiliar TL vocabulary that is likely to arise in connection with a particular activity. In planning the lesson, the teacher can decide if the word can be illustrated with a photograph, a drawing on the board, a gesture, or with a synonym/antonym in the learners' active vocabulary.

In spontaneous classroom situations, the author agrees with Grim's assertion (2010) that delayed translation is preferable classroom practice and beginning teachers should be encouraged to use that approach, especially for lexical items that are soon to enter the learners' active vocabulary. While immediate translation (i.e., the teacher's automatic glossing of a TL word with the L1 equivalent) appears to save time, frequent code switching may be very disruptive to learners' attempts to recognize what is actual TL usage.

### **L1 and TL for expressing empathy/solidarity**

This area seems the most resistant to the continuous use of the TL, and perhaps that is to be expected, particularly at the beginning level. While certainly learners can be taught words of praise early on (e.g., *отлично, молодец, прекрасно, замечательно*), and they will learn to recognize requests to try again (e.g., the teacher's *Еще раз, пожалуйста*), the L1 may be needed to make deeper connections between teacher and student when a serious situation arises (e.g., student gets sick or shares an emotionally charged statement). While the use of L1 might suggest the failure of the TL to be a means for real communication, these topics fall outside of the regular classroom sphere, and perhaps the choice of

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<sup>5</sup> As needed, TL grammar terms can be introduced to the students. Certainly the words for the main parts of speech (*глагол, существительное*, etc.) are helpful, as are concepts like, *словарная форма, предложение*, and others.

language in the teacher's response justifiably falls outside of usual practice.

### **Concluding thoughts**

The models of teacher talk presented in this article are exactly that—models that teachers can adopt and adapt to fit their particular instructional contexts. ACTFL's policy statement on 90% plus of TL use in the language classroom is a challenge to the profession, especially for Russian teachers since the language's core vocabulary is so unrecognizable to English speakers and the language is so morphologically and syntactically complex. Nevertheless, as a profession we must rise to the challenge, and as a profession, we can help our newest colleagues the most by providing them with models and tools for staying in the target language.

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## **Appendix 1: Sample Task with Scaffolding for Students and Teacher Talk Model**

*Instructional context:* First-semester Russian class, after approximately 25-30 hours of instruction. The activity provides structured input on adjective endings in Russian, and two different structures for expressing opinion (по-моему / я думаю).

*The students see:*

Activity:       Какая это тема?

Step 1. Imagine that you are a journalist and you've been assigned the following topics for a 1,000-word article. How would you rate these topics? Put a check mark in the appropriate column(s).

	интересная тема	неинтересная тема	трудная тема	лёгкая тема	оригинальная тема
русская ико́на					
ру́ские ко́миксы					
Пу́тин и ру́сская поли́тика					
Additional topics					

Step 2. Getting ready to share your opinions. Listen and repeat after your teacher the combinations of adjectives plus the word тема. Be sure to soften your т in тема.

Your teacher will give you two minutes to repeat these phrases to yourself until you can say them smoothly.

Step 3. Compare your answers with a partner by taking turns reading the topic aloud and then giving your opinion. Use this as a model for your statements.

По-мо́ему, ру́сская ико́на — интере́сная те́ма.

If you agree with your partner, respond:       Я то́же так ду́маю. [=I think so, too.]

If you disagree, respond:                       Я так не ду́маю.

Circle any cells in the table where you and your partner have the same opinion.



хочу вас слышать [turn your head to the learners, grasp your earlobe with two fingers and draw attention to your ear.]

Номер 3. Давайте сравним ответы [turn your hands upright and make a weighing motion, with one hand rising and the other falling] – что думаете вы, а что думает ваш партнёр. Скажите ваши мнения / ваши идеи по очереди [hand motion back and forth between the two students]. Скажите, что вы думаете о каждой теме. Вот образец. [Point and read the model. Have them repeat the word по-моему. Point to scaffolding for their responses.] Надо слушать вашего партнёра. Вы тоже так думаете? Да? Тогда скажите: Я тоже так думаю. Вы так не думаете? Нет? Тогда скажите: Я так не думаю. Понятно? [Wait for actual response.] Говорим по очереди. Сначала вы, потом партнёр. [Hand motion again back and forth between two students.]

Если вы и ваш партнёр думаете одинаково [point to words “same opinion”] – вы думаете, что это интересная тема, и ваш партнёр тоже думает, что тема интересная, то обведите [make a circle] эту клетку в таблице.

Номер 4. Что вы узнали? Какие у вас с партнёром общие мнения? [point to the words “same opinion.”]

## **Appendix II: Bilingual list of instructions with commentary on the Russian usage.**

*Group A:* Instructions for classroom actions. They are given in imperatives, but many of them could also be used in the first person plural form in a classroom.

1. Слушайте<sup>6</sup>

Listen

2. Читайте

Read

3. Пишите

Write

4. Слушайте и повторяйте (за преподавателем)

Listen and repeat (after your teacher)

5. Идите к доске / подойдите к доске

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<sup>6</sup> Imperfective imperatives are appropriate when giving a generic command.

Go up to the board

6. Прочитайте первое предложение<sup>7</sup>  
Read the first sentence.
7. Напишите диктант  
Write a dictation.
8. Напишите упражнение номер... в рабочей тетради  
Write exercise #... in your workbook.
9. Ответьте на вопросы<sup>8</sup>  
Answer the questions
10. Посмотрите видео (фрагмент, интервью) без звука/ со звуком!  
Watch the video (excerpt, interview) with sound / without sound.
11. Посмотрите на доску (на экран)  
Look at the blackboard (at the screen).
12. Откройте учебник на странице 45 (сорок пять)!<sup>9</sup>  
Open your textbooks to page 45.
13. Переведите с русского на английский!<sup>10</sup>  
Translate from Russian to English.
14. Обратите внимание на формы глагола «мочь»!<sup>11</sup>  
Pay attention to the forms of the verb мочь.
15. Ответьте на вопросы, используя слово «который»/ конструкции типа «для того, чтобы»...  
Answer the questions using the word который / using constructions like для того, чтобы...
16. Перескажите текст от лица автора / с точки зрения одного из персонажей.<sup>12</sup>  
Retell the text from the author's point of view / from the point of view of one of the characters.
17. Подчеркните/Обведите правильный ответ!  
Underline / circle the correct answer.
18. У вас осталась одна минута! Осталось две минуты / пять минут.

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<sup>7</sup> Perfective imperatives are appropriate when the task has been made more specific with a specified exercise or the quantity of language work is indicated.

<sup>8</sup> отвечать/ответить is not a transitive verb in Russian. It requires кому? (for a person) and на что? (for a thing)

<sup>9</sup> Note that the prepositional case is used in на странице; the number following should be a cardinal number in the nominative case.

<sup>10</sup> Note с + genitive and на + accusative to indicate the direction of the translation.

<sup>11</sup> обращать/ обратить внимание requires на + accusative

<sup>12</sup> Note the difference in prepositions expressing "from:" от лица + кого but с точки зрения + кого/чего

You have one minute left. There are two/ five minutes left.

19. Подберите антонимы!<sup>13</sup>

Think up antonyms (for the given words).

20. Подберите определения к данным словам!

Think up descriptive words for the given words.

21. Послушайте текст еще раз и восстановите его по опорным словам!

Listen to the text again and reproduce it on the basis of these key words.

22. Послушайте текст и отметьте в своем списке слова (названия/имена), которые вы услышите!

Listen to the text and mark in your list the words (names), which you will hear.

23. Поставьте галочку в колонке, которая отражает ваше отношение к данной теме!

Put a check mark in the column, which reflects your opinion on the given topic.

24. Поставьте предложения в нужном/логичном порядке!

Put the sentences in the required/logical order.

25. Разделите данные слова по группам!

Sort the given words into groups.

26. Разделите слова на две группы по смыслу.

Sort the words into two groups based on their meaning.

### **Group B.** Directions for working with dialogs

1. Послушайте / Прочитайте диалог и ответьте на вопросы!

Listen to / read the dialog and answer the questions.

2. Восстановите правильный порядок реплик!<sup>14</sup>

Put the lines from the dialog in the correct order.

3. Восстановите пропущенные реплики!

Put in the missing lines of the dialog.

4. К ответам нет вопросов. Придумайте их!

---

<sup>13</sup> Russian in these kinds of tasks uses *подбирать/подобрать* (to select, choose) since antonyms already exist in the language, and the student needs to select the best one for the context. This is different than “think up an ending to a story” (= *придумайте конец истории*), since this task requires the student’s imagination.

<sup>14</sup> The nominative singular is *реплика* = a line of dialog. *Строчка* can be used in locating information in a prose or poetic text.

Think up questions to go with these answers.

5. Разыграйте диалоги! Разыграйте ситуации!  
Act out the dialogues. Act out the situations.
6. Составьте аналогичные диалоги!  
Create similar dialogues.
7. Составьте диалоги по образцу!<sup>15</sup>  
Create dialogues according to the model.
8. Составьте диалоги по рисункам!<sup>16</sup>  
Create dialogues based on the drawings.
9. Переделайте/трансформируйте диалог в рассказ!  
Transform the dialog into a story.

**Group C.** Directions for working with Pairs/Groups

1. Работайте в парах! Работайте с партнёром / соседом!  
Work in pairs. Work with a partner / person sitting next to you.
2. Узнайте у партнера ...<sup>17</sup>  
Find out from your partner...
3. Спросите партнера о...  
Ask your partner about...
4. Задайте своему партнеру следующие вопросы и запишите его/её ответы.  
Ask your partner the following questions and write down/record his/her answers.
  
5. Возьмите интервью у одного студента вашей группы, и узнайте...<sup>18</sup>  
Interview a student in your group.
6. Проведите опрос среди студентов вашей группы, и узнайте...  
Survey the students in your group and find out...
7. Сравните свои ответы с ответами партнера!  
Compare your answers with your partner's.
8. Будьте готовы рассказать другим студентам то, что вы узнали у партнёра.

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<sup>15</sup> The nominative is *образец*.

<sup>16</sup> The nominative is *рисунок*.

<sup>17</sup> Note the governance of *узнавать/узнать у кого что*. The imperative here is from the perfective infinitive *узнать*; the imperfective imperative would be *узнавайте!*

<sup>18</sup> The Russian counterpart to the English verb "interview" is "take an interview from." Note the governance of *брать/взять что у кого* = to take something **from** someone

Be prepared to tell other students what you learned from your partner.

**Group D.** Instructions for working with pictures and illustrations

1. Назовите предметы, которые вы видите на картинке!<sup>19</sup>  
Name/label/list the objects you see in the picture.
2. Опишите ситуации, изображённые на рисунках!  
Describe the situations depicted in the drawings.
3. Сравните два изображения одной комнаты и найдите различия между ними!<sup>20</sup> Compare the two images of one room and find differences between them!
4. Какую разницу / Какие различия вы видите между этими картинками?  
What differences do you see between the two pictures?

**Group E.** Bilingual list of directions to typical written exercises

1. Вместо пропуска вставьте глаголы в нужной форме!  
Fill in the blank, putting the verbs in the required form.
2. Вставьте пропущенные / необходимые слова!  
Write in the missing / needed words.
3. Закончите предложения!  
Complete the sentences.
4. Закончите предложения, используя глагол...  
Complete the sentences using the verb...
5. Закончите предложения, используя данные слова для справок!  
Complete the sentences, using the given words from the reference set.
6. Закончите предложения, употребите слова в скобках в нужном падеже!  
Complete the sentences; use the words in parentheses in the required case.
7. Замените форму единственного числа формой множественного числа!<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Назовите* is the imperative of *назвать*. Note the preposition usage: **in** the picture/drawing/ photograph = **на** картинке / на рисунке / на фотографии. Note as well the diminutive *картинка* for a picture or illustration.

<sup>20</sup> *разница* is a mass noun, used only in the singular. If you need to count individual differences/distinctions, use *различие*, which has singular and plural forms. Russians will sometimes stretch the grammar here, making the ironic quip: *Это две большие разницы*.

Replace the singular forms with plural ones.

8. Заполните пропуски в тексте нужными формами данных слов!

Fill in the blanks in the text with the required forms of the given words.

9. Исключите лишнее слово из данных тематических рядов!

Remove the extraneous word from the given thematic clusters.

10. Образуйте от данных прилагательных существительные с суффиксом –ость- !

Form nouns with the suffix *-ость* from the given adjectives.

11. Ответьте на вопросы, заменяя выделенные слова местоимением!

Answer the questions, replacing the highlighted words with a pronoun.

12. Отгадайте загадки!

Solve the riddle.

13. Раскройте скобки и поставьте слова в нужной форме<sup>22</sup>

Put the words in parentheses into the required form.

14. Распределите по группам однокоренные слова!

Sort words with the same root into groups.

15. Решите кроссворд!

Solve the crossword puzzle.

16. Слова, данные в скобках, поставьте в нужном числе и падеже!

Put the words in parentheses in the required number and case.

17. Соедините левую и правую колонки!

Match the right column with the left.

18. Соедините синонимы / антонимы!

Match the synonyms/antonyms.

19. Соедините части предложения!

Match the parts of the sentences.

20. Составьте предложения из данных слов!

Make sentences out of the indicated words.

21. Составьте предложения, используя одно слово из каждой колонки!

Make sentences, using one word from each column.

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<sup>21</sup> Note the governance: *заменять/заменить что* (accusative) *чем* (instrumental); no preposition is used.

<sup>22</sup> Note that the equivalent for “put” with words and phrases uses *ставить/поставить*; consequently, a word “stands” (= *стоять*) in a sentence or in a specific case or form (e.g., *это слово стоит в именительном падеже*).

22. Составьте список (перечень)...

Make a list (enumeration) of...

23. Переделайте/трансформируйте пассивные конструкции в активные! / Замените активные конструкции пассивными!

Transform the passive constructions into active ones. Replace active constructions with passive ones.

24. Установите соответствия между выражениями в первой колонке и словами во второй колонке!

Match the phrases in the first column with words in the second column.

25. Напишите сочинение на тему...<sup>23</sup>

Write a composition on the topic...

26. Напишите краткое изложение текста.

Write a short summary of the text.

### Appendix 3. Comprehension Checks

#### Teacher's inquiries

1. Всё понятно? / Всё ясно?
2. Вы понимаете? or Понимаете?
3. Вы поняли?
4. Если вам что-нибудь будет непонятно, поднимите руку!
5. Скажите, пожалуйста, по-английски, что вы поняли!<sup>24</sup>

#### Essential phrases for students to manage their learning in class.

1. Извините, но я не понял / поняла.
2. Повторите, пожалуйста!<sup>25</sup>
3. Объясните еще раз, пожалуйста!
4. Как сказать по-русски...?
5. Как по-английски будет слово...?
6. У меня есть вопрос.<sup>26</sup>
7. Можно задать вопрос по-английски?
8. Как пишется слово...?

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<sup>23</sup> Note the use of на + accusative for "on the topic."

<sup>24</sup> Note the stress on что. This strategy asks the learner themselves to summarize in the L1, allowing the teacher to remain in the TL.

<sup>25</sup> While English places the "please" first, Russian generally puts the imperative verb first with *пожалуйста* following.

<sup>26</sup> As an attention-getter, *есть* is appropriate here since there is an emphasis on the existence of the question.