

## **RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM**

### **STUDY TITLE:**

Institutional, programmatic, and pedagogical strategies for fostering heritage learner enrollments: Focus on Russian language programs

### **RESEARCHERS:**

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### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

You are being asked to participate in a research study investigating how Russian language programs in the United States and Canada support their heritage language learner-students (i.e., students who also learned Russian from their families and/or other ethnolinguistic communities groups that traditionally speak Russian).

The survey should take approximately 25 minutes to complete and consists of 7 broad areas:

- I. Background information about instructors and institutions
- II. Professional preparedness and professional development for HL teaching
- III. Student population and community demographics
- IV. Program structure
- V. Institutional support
- VI. Pedagogical strategies
- VII. Evaluation of program effectiveness

### **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The data for this project will be kept confidential.

### **YOUR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE, SAY NO, OR WITHDRAW**

Participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

- You have the right to say no.
- You may change your mind at any time and withdraw.
- You may choose not to answer specific questions or to stop participating at any time.

## CONSENT FORM

Please read the following information below before you agree to participate in the survey:

- You must have worked with heritage language learners of Russian in the last 5 years in any capacity.
- Your confidentiality and anonymity will be strictly kept.
- There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this survey.
- You may choose not to answer specific questions or to stop participating at any time.
- You will not receive monetary compensation for participating in this study.
- You must be 18 or older to participate in this survey.

I have been informed about the nature of this study and willingly consent to take part in it.

### Definitions:

For the purpose of this survey, we define “heritage learners” as students who grew up speaking or hearing Russian at home and/or in the community and can speak or at least understand Russian at the Novice High proficiency level. We refer to such learners in the survey as “HL students,” and to courses designed specifically for these learners as “HL courses”. We define “mixed classes” as courses that are primarily designed for Russian L2 learners (that is those who study Russian as a foreign language), but also enroll HL students.

## SURVEY QUESTIONS DRAFT

### I. Background information about instructors and institutions

1. Please enter the name(s) of your current institution(s).
2. What best describes your institution?
  - two-year institution/college
  - public college/university
  - private college/university
  - other (please specify)
3. What is the undergraduate enrollment of your institution?
  - Less than 2,500
  - More than 2,500, less than 5,000
  - More than 5000, less than 15,000
  - More than 15,000, less than 30,000
  - More than 30,000
4. What is the highest academic degree that you have received?
  - BA or foreign equivalent
  - MA or foreign equivalent
  - ABD or foreign equivalent

- PhD or foreign equivalent
  - Other (please specify)
5. What field is your highest degree in? Choose all that apply.
- Linguistics (applied or theoretical)
  - Second language acquisition
  - Literature (Russian or comparative)
  - Russian linguistics/Philology
  - Education
  - Russian studies
  - Other (please specify)
6. What is your first language or languages? Please list all in the order of dominance.
7. What kind of contract do you currently have? Please choose the one that best applies. [matrix]  
[categories]
- Tenured
  - Non-tenured
- [answers]
- Permanent/continuing
  - Three-year appointment
  - Annual appointment
  - Contracted to work on a semester basis
8. Were you hired specifically to teach Russian HL courses as part of your duties?
- Yes
  - No
9. How many years have you taught the Russian language overall?  
[dropdown menu]
10. How many years have you taught Russian as an HL in any setting?  
[dropdown menu]
11. Are you currently working with HL students? Choose all that apply. [skip logic]
- Yes, I am teaching a specialized HL course [skip to 13]
  - Yes, I have HL students in a mainstream Russian language class (any proficiency level)  
[skip to 13]
  - Yes, I teach an independent study with HL students [skip to 13]
  - Other (please specify)
  - No (if selected, skip to 12)
12. When was the last time you taught an HL course? (semester, year)
13. How often do you work with HL students in specialized classes?
- Every semester
  - Every other semester
  - Every other year
  - N/A
  - Other (please specify)
14. How often do you work with HL students in your mainstream Russian language classes of any proficiency level?
- Every semester

- Every other semester
  - Every other year
  - N/A
  - Other (please specify)
15. How often do you offer independent study with HL students?
- Every semester
  - Every other semester
  - Every other year
  - N/A
  - Other (please specify)

## II. **Professional preparedness and professional development for HL teaching**

16. What kind of specialized and systematic training for teaching HL students have you had? Choose all that apply.
- a. A summer STARTALK program
  - b. Formal university courses on HL acquisition and/or HL instruction
  - c. N/A
17. Which of the following professional development opportunities on the topic of HL acquisition and/or pedagogy have you participated in in the past 5 years? Choose all that apply.
- Reading research literature devoted to practice and research in HL acquisition and/or pedagogy
  - Attending or presenting at conference sections/streams on HL acquisition and/or pedagogy
  - Participating in workshops or continuing education on HL acquisition and/or pedagogy
  - Joining an email listserv or discussion group for teachers of Russian as HL
  - N/A
  - Other (please specify)
18. How often do you engage in professional service and/or advocacy for HLs and HL teachers and students at the university, state, or federal level? [skip logic]
- Never(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) very often (10)
19. [if other than 'never' in 4] Please provide examples of how you have engaged in professional service and/or advocacy for Russian HL students.
20. How often do you conduct research on the topics of HL acquisition and/or pedagogy?
- Never(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) very often (10)
21. How often do you collaborate with your colleagues who teach other HL languages with the goal of enhancing your pedagogical approach? [skip logic]
- Never(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) very often (10)
22. [if 'never' in 6] Please explain what prevents you from collaborating with your colleagues who teach other HL languages.
23. [if other than 'never' in 6] Which heritage languages do the colleagues you collaborate with teach?
24. [if other than 'never' in 6] Please explain how you collaborate.

25. Which of the following professional development opportunities and/or professional service opportunities on the topic of HL acquisition and/or pedagogy would you like to see offered? Please check the five (5) that you consider the most important for you at the present time in your situation.
- A journal or regular sections in existing journals devoted to practice and research in Russian HL teaching
  - Language enhancement opportunities (working on your own proficiency in Russian)
  - Opportunities for action research (research on your own classroom that you yourself conduct)
  - Regular conference sections or streams for teachers of Russian as HL
  - An email list serve or discussion group for teachers of Russian as HL
  - Workshops or continuing education on select topics (select topics will be displayed in the next question)
  - Opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with teachers of other HLs
  - Opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with colleagues who actively research HL acquisition
  - Guidance on advocacy for Russian HL students and HL teachers at the university, state, or federal level
  - Other (please specify)
26. Which workshop or continuing education topics are you interested in? Choose all that apply.
- Heritage Language teaching methodology
  - Heritage language acquisition/bilingualism
  - Using technology in HL teaching
  - Making one's own teaching materials
  - How to assess Russian HL students' language learning
  - Incorporating culture into HL classroom
  - Understanding and using World-Readiness Standards (5Cs) for Learning Languages
  - Understanding and using ACTFL proficiency levels for evaluating Russian HL students
27. How do you feel about teaching Russian HL students? Choose all that apply.
- I enjoy working with HL students
  - I find it easy working with HL students
  - I find the challenge of working with HL students worth my time and effort
  - I find it challenging working with HL students
  - I find it extremely challenging working with HL students
28. In your opinion, what is the greatest gap in your professional development today which may affect your work with HL students?
29. If you feel well prepared to work with HL students, what, in your opinion, has prepared you most?

### **III. Student population and community demographics**

30. In a typical year, how many Russian HL students are enrolled in Russian language courses at your institution (either specialized or mixed classes)?
- less than 5

- 5-10
  - 10-20
  - 20-30
  - above 30
31. In a typical year, how many HL students enroll in your mainstream language courses? [matrix]
- First-year Russian:
  - Second-year Russian:
  - Third-year and/or fourth-year Russian, including content-based courses
32. Even if you have not surveyed your HL students, do you have a sense of why they come to your Russian language classes? Choose three that are most prevalent, in your opinion.
- To improve their language
  - To learn about Russian culture
  - To receive a perceived easy A
  - To connect with their family in the US or abroad
  - To connect with a community
  - To prepare for a future profession
  - To read Russian literature in the original
  - Other (please specify)
33. The majority of Russian HL students (more than 60%) who enroll in Russian language courses (HL specialized or not) at your institution can ... Choose all that apply.
- ... can recognize Cyrillic letters
  - ... can read and understand a short uncomplicated text
  - ... can write a few words in Russian (using block letters or cursive)
  - ... can write a meaningful message albeit with mistakes (using block letters or cursive)
34. Do your Russian HL students learn literacy skills in Russian prior to enrolling into college-level Russian courses through, for example, community-based schools, private teachers, etc.? [skip logic]
- Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure
35. [if yes in 5] Please indicate what percentage of Russian HL students in your program learn literacy skills in Russian prior to enrolling into college-level Russian through the following learning opportunities. Choose all that apply.  
[matrix]  
[categories]
- a. Community-based schools/programs
  - b. Private lessons (including lessons by family members)
  - c. STARTALK program
  - d. NESLI-Y
- [answers]
- 0%
  - More than 0% but less than 25%
  - Between 25-50%

- Between 50-75%
- Between 75-100%
- Not sure

### III. **Program structure**

36. Does your institution offer a major in Russian and/or related fields (Russian language and literature; Russian studies, Russian linguistics, etc.)?
- Yes
  - No
37. In a typical year, how many majors and minors does your program graduate? Insert 0 (zero) if your program does not graduate majors and minors in Russian. [matrix]
- Major
  - Minor
38. In a typical year, what percentage of these graduating majors and minors are Russian HL students?
- 0%
  - More than 0% but less than 25%
  - Between 25-50%
  - Between 50-75%
  - Between 75-100%
  - Not sure
39. In a typical year, what percentage of Russian HL students end up majoring or minoring in Russian?
- 0%
  - More than 0% but less than 25%
  - Between 25-50%
  - Between 50-75%
  - Between 75-100%
  - Not sure
40. How often does your institution offer at least one specialized Russian HL course (not including independent studies)?
- Every semester
  - Every other semester
  - Every other year
  - On an ad-hoc basis
  - Never
41. What is the official minimal enrollment number a HL course has to have to be authorized by the administration?  
... students
42. What are some of the reasons for not receiving authorization to offer a specialized HL course at your institution? Choose all that apply.
- Not meeting the institution's enrollment requirement
  - No qualified person to teach such a course

- Not enough faculty to teach
  - Other (please specify)
43. How many specialized Russian HL courses does your institution offer (not including independent study)?  
.... courses
44. Do you regularly offer independent study focusing on Russian HL students?
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
45. How many independent studies focusing on Russian HL students do you offer in a typical year?
46. How many credits per semester are each of your specialized Russian HL courses (including independent studies)? [matrix]  
[categories]
- Introductory HL course
  - Advanced HL course (including content-based courses)
  - Other
- [questions]
- How many courses (if applicable)?
  - How many credits each (if applicable)?
  - Course titles (if applicable)
47. How many colleagues in your program teach Russian to the HL students, including yourself?
- 0
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - Other (please specify)
48. Does your institution have a language requirement? [skip logic]
- Yes
  - No
49. [if yes in 13] How many semesters is your institution's language requirement?  
[dropdown menu]
50. Is your language requirement differentiated for Russian HL students and L2 students?
- Yes
  - No
51. How many specialized HL courses satisfy the language requirement? (for example, 2 specialized HL courses may satisfy the language requirement, even when 4 semesters are normally required)
52. Can HL students test out of the language requirement? [skip logic]
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
53. How can HL students test out of the language requirement? Choose all that apply.

- in-house exemption/placement exam
  - NEWL score
  - seal of biliteracy
  - other (please specify)
54. In a typical year, what percentage of Russian HL students test out of the language requirement?
- 0%
  - More than 0% but less than 25%
  - Between 25-50%
  - Between 50-75%
  - Between 75-100%
  - Not sure
55. What is the greatest program-level challenge to addressing the learning needs of HL students in your program?

#### IV. **Institutional support**

56. Does teaching HL students count towards your overall teaching load? Choose all that apply.
- Yes, and I am compensated for it
  - Yes, but I am not compensated for it
  - No, I mostly teach HL students through independent studies or additional tutoring
  - Other (please specify)
57. Does your program have a unified instructional approach to working with HL students, either official or non-official? [skip logic]
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
58. [if yes in 2] Please explain how you implement a unified instructional approach to working with HL students in your program.
59. What resources are available to you for professional development in the area of HL pedagogy at your institution? Choose all that apply.
- In-house funding available for research
  - In-house funding for teaching innovation
  - Funding for conference participation
  - In-house funding available for workshops targeting HL pedagogy
  - In-house workshops/seminars
  - Formalized local teaching community
  - Other professional support (please specify)
60. Does your program/institution advertise special learning opportunities for Russian HL students? [skip logic]
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
61. [If yes in 5] What are some approaches to advertising such opportunities? Choose all that apply.
- Information published on the program's website

- Information shared with incoming freshmen
  - Information shared on social media
  - Information shared during Open House or similar college- or university-wide activities
  - Community-based platforms (e.g., Russian-speaking radio, newspapers, community events)
  - Other (please specify)
62. Does your institution support and/or co-sponsor community-oriented events of interest to your local Russian-speaking community, such as festivals, guest lectures, music recitals, etc.? [skip logic]
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
63. [if yes in 7] Please list examples of the community-oriented events of interest to your local Russian-speaking community that your institution supports.
64. Do you feel adequately supported by your institution in teaching Russian as a HL?  
Not at all supported (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Fully supported (10)
65. What is the greatest institutional-level challenge to supporting HL students, in your opinion?

## **VI. Pedagogical strategies**

66. Do you have a placement test or placement procedure for HL students? [skip logic]
- a. Yes, we have a separate placement test or procedure for HL students
  - b. Yes, but we use the same test or procedure for all placements
  - c. No
67. [if yes in 1] What does your in-house placement test or procedure for HL students consist of?  
Choose all that apply.
- a. Essay
  - b. Discrete grammatical item test
  - c. Oral interview
  - d. Other (please specify)
68. In your opinion, how effective is the placement test that you use (or have to use) in placing your HL students appropriately?  
Not effective at all (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Very effective (10)
69. Please explain why you chose that description of your placement test.
70. Which courses do your HL students sign up for usually?
- a. Mainstream beginner course (1st and/or 2nd semester)
  - b. Mainstream intermediate course (3rd and/or 4th semester)
  - c. Mainstream third and/or fourth year course, including content-based courses
  - d. Specialized HL course
  - e. Other (please specify)
71. If you have HL students in your mainstream language classes, how often do you differentiate instruction? [skip logic]  
Never (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Always (10) NA

72. [if other than never or NA in 6] Please explain how you differentiate instruction in your mixed classes.
- Differentiated syllabus in the mainstream classes, i.e., a significant part of your syllabus and your activities are developed for the HL students in your course and it is different from the topics and activities you design for the mainstream students
  - Non-differentiated syllabus in mainstream classes, i.e., only a small portion of your syllabus and your activities are designed for HL students and/or you address the pedagogical needs of your HL students on an ad hoc basis
  - Other (please specify)
73. If you have specialized HL courses, how often do you differentiate instruction for the HL in them?  
Never (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Always (10) NA
74. [if other than never or NA in 8] Please explain how you differentiate instruction in specialized HL courses.
- Differentiated syllabus in the HL specialized classes, i.e., a significant part of your syllabus and your activities are developed for HL students with different proficiency levels and/or skills in mind
  - Non-differentiated syllabus in HL specialized classes, i.e., only a small portion of your syllabus and your activities are designed for HL students with different proficiency levels and/or skills in mind and/or you address the pedagogical needs of your HL students on an ad hoc basis
  - Other (please specify)
75. If you offer more than one specialized course for HL students, how are students grouped? Choose all that apply.
- By oral proficiency levels
  - By literacy skills
  - By content or topic
  - Other (please specify)
76. In your opinion, which areas, from a pedagogical standpoint, do your HL students need the most work on? Drag and drop to rank.
- Vocabulary
  - Grammar and syntax
  - Heritage identity
  - Russian/Soviet culture
  - Literature of the Russian-speaking world
77. Regardless of setting (specialized course or mainstream mixed class), what topics do you cover with HL students? Choose all that apply. [new page]
- Vocabulary
  - Grammar and syntax
  - Heritage identity
  - Russian/Soviet culture
  - Literature of the Russian-speaking world
  - Other (please specify)

78. In planning lessons for HL students, what do you mainly focus on? Choose one.
- Mainly on grammar I want them to learn
  - Mainly on vocabulary I want them to learn
  - Mainly on tasks and communicative functions I want them to be able to perform
  - Mainly on content I want them to learn
  - Other (please specify)
79. Which language skills do you focus on when working with HL students, regardless of setting (specialized course or mainstream mixed class)? Drag and drop to rank.
- Speaking
  - Writing
  - Reading
  - Listening
80. What best describes your instructional approach to working with HL students? Choose all that apply.
- Project-based
  - Task-based
  - Communicative approach
  - Grammar-translation
  - Content-based teaching (literature, culture, etc.)
  - Other (please specify)
  - Not sure
81. Please say more about your instructional approach (for example, why do you use these instructional approaches with HL students).
82. Please describe your approach to teaching grammar to HL students. Choose all that apply.
- Focus on **forms** (grammatical drills)
  - Focus on **form** (contextualized, usage-based grammar exercises)
  - Conceptual grammatical explanations
  - Grammar explained as it comes up in context
  - I only provide comments on grammar on an ad hoc basis
  - I do not teach grammar
83. What kinds of teaching materials do you use in teaching your Russian HL students? Choose all that apply.
- I mainly use one textbook.
  - I use a collection of various materials (e.g., some chapters or activities adopted from HL textbooks, some adopted from Russian L2 textbooks, web-based resources, etc.)
  - I create my own materials from scratch and do not use any textbooks.
  - Other (please specify)
84. Specify which textbooks or materials you use in your HL classes.
85. How satisfied are you with the teaching materials you use?  
Very unsatisfied (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Very satisfied (10)
86. If you have HL students in your mainstream language classes, how often do you differentiate assessment? [skip logic]  
Never (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Always (10) N/A
87. [if other than never in 6] Please explain how you differentiate assessment in mixed classes.

88. If you have specialized HL courses, how often do you differentiate assessment for the HL of various levels? [skip logic]

Never (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Always (10) N/A

89. [if other than never in 22] Please explain how you differentiate assessment in specialized HL courses.

90. How satisfied are you with the assessment instruments and approaches you use for HL students (including mixed and specialized HL courses)?

Very unsatisfied (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Very satisfied (10)

91. Please explain your choice with regards to how satisfied you are with your assessment instruments.

92. What is the greatest pedagogical challenge to working with HL students, in your experience?

## VII. Evaluation of program effectiveness

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

93. My language program is successful in teaching Russian to HL students.

Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Strongly agree (10)

94. My language program provides adequate support for HL students.

Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Strongly agree (10)

95. My personal strategies working with HL students have been successful.

Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Strongly agree (10)

96. I could do more to support HL students in my program.

Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Strongly agree (10)

97. My institution/program could do more to support HL students.

Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Strongly agree (10)

[Open-ended and other questions]

98. In an ideal world, assuming you had resources and time, what would you do for HL students in your Russian language classes? What do HL students need that you cannot currently provide? What are the obstacles to providing that?

99. In an ideal world, assuming your institution/program had resources and time, what would your institution do for HL students in your Russian language classes? What do HL students need that your institution/program cannot currently provide? What are the obstacles to providing that?

### Thank you!

We sincerely thank you for your participation in the survey. We hope that the analysis of the survey responses will bring us closer to a better understanding of the specific needs of the Russian language instructors who work with Russian HL learners and the success our colleagues enjoy in working with this specific population. We plan to share the results of the survey in a number of different venues, including conferences and academic journals.