

Student-Centered Teaching of Russian: A Roundtable in Memoriam of Dr. Cynthia Martin

[ACTR 50th Anniversary Virtual International Conference](#), April 25–26, 2025

This roundtable is dedicated to the memory and scholarship of Cynthia Martin. The roundtable is based on the volume Dr. Martin and Svetlana Nuss co-edited for the *Routledge Russian Language Pedagogy and Research* series in 2022 titled *Student-Centered Approaches to Russian Language Teaching: Insights, Strategies, and Adaptations*

<https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Russian-Language-Pedagogy-and-Research/book-series/RLPR>

This roundtable expands on the volume and includes new participants and ideas.

Part 1, April 25, 2025: Cori Anderson, Daria A. Kirjanov, Svetlana Nuss (chair), Snezhana Zheltoukhova

Part 2, April 26, 2025: Ludmilla A'Beckett, Tatiana Maslova, Michal Místecký and Denisa Místecká, Natalia V. Parker, Svetlana Nuss (chair)

Name, email, and affiliation	Title of Presentation, 12–15 minutes	50-word abstract
Section I, April 25, 2025		
Svetlana Nuss , svnuss@alaska.edu editor of the <i>Routledge Russian Language Pedagogy and Research series</i> (USA)	Student-Centered Teaching: From Principles to Practice	What is student-centeredness, anyway? The presentation introduces multiple facets of student-oriented teaching: From definition to framework; knowing your students; normalizing linguistic discomfort as a sign of growth; rethinking grading. I end by sharing a vision of human-centered, equity-focused education.
Snezhana Zheltoukhova , szheltoukhova@stetson.edu Stetson University (USA)	Preparation for the Study Abroad: The Action-Oriented Approach	I would like to talk about the ways technology might be engaged in the process of preparing first and second-year students for a short-term study abroad immersion experience. The preparatory stage allows students to immerse in the target culture and create interpersonal connections with peers for a more engaging and productive experience in Russian-speaking countries.
Cori Anderson cori.anderson@rutgers.edu	Putting Students in the Driver's Seat	How to create opportunities for students to be in control of their learning: creating

Rutgers University (USA)		mastery pathways tailored to individual needs, student-led speaking practice, and independent reading and listening assignments. How to put the focus on student learning at the syllabus level, and how to keep students invested in learning.
Daria A. Kirjanov dkirjanov@newhaven.edu University of New Haven (USA)	Using Instagram and Song Lyrics to Motivate Student-Centered Learning	I will focus on classroom strategies that foster a student-centered learning experience. In discussing students' exploration of their personal identities and interests as an important motivational strategy, I will show how Russian-language Instagram-based projects and contemporary Russian-language song lyrics can motivate learners to align their personal identities and interests within a new cultural context.
Section II, April 26, 2025		
Ludmilla A'Beckett berchonok@gmail.com University of the Free State (South Africa)	Cooking and traveling: Activation of immediate interests in warm-up exchanges	I will discuss several approaches that could be used at the beginning of each lesson as an engagement practice. The warm-up talks motivate students to develop their vocabulary and grammatical strategies in order to pursue their common interests. The structured warm-up exchanges facilitate culture and language acquisition and provide a foundation for long-term learning commitments.
Natalia V. Parker natasha.parker@ucl.ac.uk University College London (UK)	Learners' cognitive processing strategies as a different perspective of learners-centered approach	My short presentation will focus on how to help students understand their cognitive processing and develop their individual strategies for developing their language skills. In addition, I will touch upon how learners' cognitive limitations should be considered in lesson planning.
Michal Místecký and Denisa Místecká mmistecky@seznam.cz University of Ostrava (Czech Republic)	Post-2021 (social) media perspectives of the Russian language and their implications for student-centered learning	Our presentation will pay attention to how the image of the Russian language has evolved since the outbreak of the Russo-Ukrainian War in February 2022.

		<p>The research is a follow-up to the investigation we presented in the Routledge volume co-edited by Cynthia Martin. We will adopt the corpus linguistics viewpoint and focus on both traditional media and the reaction to the military conflict on Czech social media. Last but not least, we will present how our findings may be linked to student-centered teaching of Russian and to outreach campaigns organized by schools for prospective pupils.</p>
<p>Tatiana Maslova maslovatat@gmail.com Independent Scholar</p>	<p>Fostering Strategic Self-Regulated Learning in a Beginner's Russian Course</p>	<p>The presentation focuses on a teaching method aimed at enhancing students' strategic self-regulation of cognition, affect, and sociocultural interaction. It demonstrates how incorporating 'can-do surveys' and group discussions of self-regulation strategies in the first semester of Russian can improve students' metacognition and foster self-regulated learning.</p>