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**ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ ТРУДНОСТИ И СОЦИОКУЛЬТУРНАЯ АДАПТАЦИЯ
КИТАЙСКИХ СТУДЕНТОВ В РОССИИ**

Шалина В.В., ассистент кафедры иностранных языков,
Кузбасский государственный технический университет им. Т. Ф. Горбачева,
г. Кемерово

**LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES AND SOCIOCULTURAL ADAPTATION OF
CHINESE STUDENTS IN RUSSIA**

Shalina V.V., assistant, Department of Foreign Languages
T. F. Gorbachev Kuzbass state technical university,
Kemerovo

Introduction

Since 2020 Kuzbass State Technical University and Chongqing University of Arts and Sciences (Chongqing, China) have been cooperating in such areas as education, science and innovative technologies as they are of common interest to both countries. Starting the new educational program in the “Metalworking Machines and Complexes”, the profile “Materials processing and technical control” strengthens mutually beneficial cooperation. Competitive application for opening the Chongqing University of Arts and Sciences’ joint network bachelor’s degree program has received an approval from the Chinese Ministry of Education.

The project format has got a scheme 3+1 which means that 3 years students are studying in China and the last year they will be studying and will defend their diploma in Russia.

A survey for Chinese students

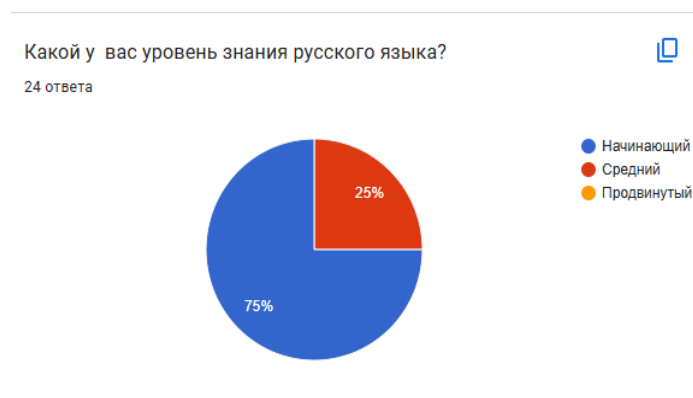
This academic year I have started to teach Russian as a foreign language for Chinese students. When we were studying different types of verbs, especially the verbs with prefixes, one thought came into my mind: How do they cope with it? They should not only just remember all these verbs, but also should differentiate them because the verbs can change their meaning depending on prefix which is used in particular situation. Therefore I started to formulate questions for the first part of my survey.

The other case which gave me some ideas for the second part of my research was the reading and analyzing texts concerning the topic “Russian National holidays. One of the texts was about a traditional holiday which is called Maslenitsa. Chinese people do not have such holiday phenomenon at all. So it was quite hard to explain something that does not have an analogue in other country. To better understand the essence and meaning of Maslenitsa, we used not only explanations of unfamiliar words, but also a system of associations (for example, the pancake repre-

sents the sun, which is a symbol of the spring's beginning). It is obvious that our cultures differ from each other a lot and I decided to discover how Chinese students adapt to Russian culture which is absolutely new one for them.

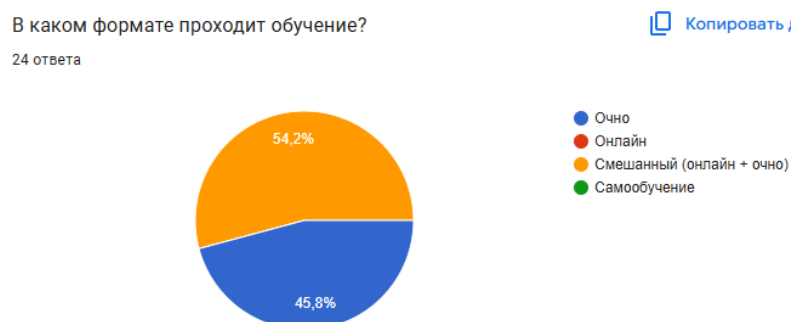
A survey was conducted among three groups of Chinese students to identify lexical, grammatical and stylistics difficulties in learning Russian language and to determine what social and cultural challenges they encountered while adapting to live in Russia. The survey consists of 41 questions and divided in two sections: the first one, which makes up a large part of it, is devoted to linguistic features, while the second section is focused on social and cultural issues of adaptation in Russia.

According to survey the majority of respondents has been studying Russian for 3 years and rates their language proficiency at beginner and intermediate levels. It might sound confusing, but there are several reasons of these differentiations between expected answers and real ones. First of all, according to participants, the main criteria of high language proficiency are speaking skills. As they consider spontaneous, unprepared speech more difficult to produce, we can see that most of students have chosen the answer beginner level (Pic. 1).



Pic. 1 The language level

The format of learning Russian language that was used in Chongqing University is mixed (full-time and online). In Kuzbass State Technical University we use only full-time format, so the students attend Russian language class once a week (Pic. 2).



Pic. 2 The format of learning

Chinese students express general opinion that Russian language is difficult to learn, especially listening section and also speaking part. The main reason for challenges, according to students' opinion, is the lack of practice and the complexity of the rules of Russian language. That is why it was quite logical that they would like to add more speaking practice during their classes (Pic. 3).



Pic. 3 The most difficult part to learn

Grammar and lexis are also quite complex parts for studying, but the interesting fact that Numerals was chosen as an easy topic (Pic 4).



Pic. 4 Numerals

Concerning vocabulary and texts, the hardest one is “Study”, because all the students are studying technical specialties and it means that they always face with terms (Pic. 5).



Pic. 5 Difficult topics

The second part of the survey is devoted to social and cultural adaptation of Chinese students in Russia, but first of all, I would like to give some variations of this definition.

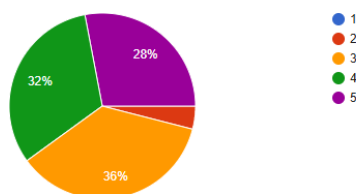
The term “sociocultural adaptation” does not have a single author; moreover it may be called interdisciplinary because it is used in various fields of knowledge: philosophy, sociology, cultural studies, psychology, pedagogy, anthropology, medicine and others. The definition of a concept is related to studying a particular science. For example, L. L. Shpak defines sociocultural adaptation as “a form of mutual adaptation of subjects and socio-cultural environment based on the exchange of spiritual and practical opportunities and the results of activities in specific adaptive situations” [1].

T.G. Stefanenko defines sociocultural adaptation as “a complex process, in case of successful complication of which a person achieves conformity with the new cultural environment, accepting its traditions as his own and acting in accordance with them” [2].

V. V. Gritsenko defines sociocultural adaptation as “a process that results in a change in individual’s external behavioral strategies in response to the demands of a new sociocultural environment” [3].

The second part of the survey has revealed that it was not so difficult to make friends among the groupmates and half of the respondents have friends with Russian students (Pic. 6).

Насколько легко было найти новых друзей среди местных студентов? (1 - очень легко, 5 - очень тяжело)
25 ответов

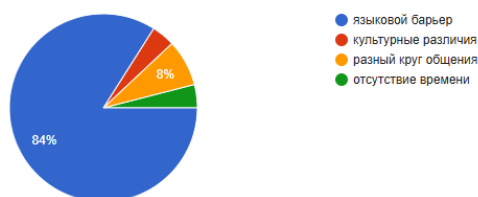


Pic. 6 Local friends

However, they consider the language barrier to be the main obstacle in communicating with the local people (Pic. 7).

Какие препятствия в общении с местными чаще всего встречаются?
25 ответов

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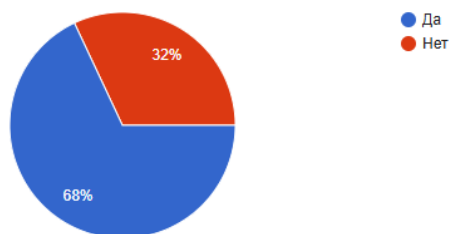


Pic. 7 Obstacles in communication

The study also revealed that the majority of Chinese students actively spend their time choosing interesting leisure activities (Pic. 8).

Знаете ли вы, как интересно провести свободное время (парки, музеи, кинотеатры), и пользуетесь ли местными возможностями для отдыха?

25 ответов



Pic. 8 Leisure activities

Conclusion

Definitely Chinese students face with some difficulties while they study Russian as a foreign language. Russian has another structure, which is flexional (developed system of endings) in contrast, Chinese is isolating where each symbol is a separate concept. Beside language structure we also have different cultures and national traditions, most of them do not have analogues, and they are unique. Sometimes it is difficult to understand and perceive, but if you are interested in learning about new country, its language and culture, that process becomes a part of a little journey, where you discover something new with pleasure.

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