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Some problems of training students from Asian-Pacific region at the Russian University of Transport and the ways of overcoming them

В статье рассматриваются проблемы, возникающие у иностранных студентов, обучающихся в Российском университете транспорта. Эти проблемы включают в себя слабое знание русского и английского языков, низкий уровень творческой деятельности в учебном процессе, который проявляют студенты, некоторые социальные проблемы. Предлагаются пути решения этих проблем. Особое внимание уделяется онлайн-обучению студентов из Азии и российских студентов.

Ключевые слова: Азиатско-Тихоокеанский регион, изучение русского и английского языков, университетские традиции, онлайн-курсы

The paper discusses some problems the foreign students of the Russian University of Transport have. These problems involve lack of knowledge of Russian and English languages, Asian students' low creativity in the learning process, some social problems. The ways of resolving the problems are suggested. Particular attention is given to online education of Asian and Russian students.

Keywords: Asian-Pacific region, foreign students, learning Russian and English languages, university traditions, online courses

The Russian University of Transport is the leading transport university in Russia and an educational institution well-known all over the world. It has long traditions of training foreign students. Among its alumni are D. Jigjidnyamaa, CEO of Ulaanbaatar railways (Mongolia); Tran Phu Thuan, Chief of Vietnamese, association in Russia; Fu Zhihuan: 1998-2003 – Minister of Railways in China, 2003-2008 – chairman of financial-economic committee of the People's Republic of China [1].

In 2019 the Russian University of Transport (MIIT) took the 1001-1100 position in the The Three University Missions Ranking. Lately the number of foreign students studying at the Russian University of Transport has increased significantly: 1119 students from different countries of the world, most of them from the CIS countries such as Belarus, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic, but also from non-CIS Asian states such as the People's Republic of China, Mongolia, Malaysia, and a few students from Myanmar and Vietnam, and from African states such as Ghana and Guinea are studying at the Russian University of Transport.

The goal of this paper is to compare the problems Asian students face while studying at the Russian University of Transport with the problems described in the scientific papers.

First of all, as it was mentioned by O. P. Bykova, special attention should be paid to the categories of foreign students whose educational and cognitive traditions differ significantly from the Russian ones [4]. It is the students from non-CIS Asian states who have certain difficulties while studying at Russian Universities (the students from the CIS-states have less difficulties as they know both Russian language at an appropriate level and cultural traditions of the Russian Federation). The special mentality, socio-cultural and ethnopsychological characteristics of representatives of the Asia-Pacific region (China, Mongolia, Malaysia), of course, offer certain particularities in determining the content and technology in training. Knowledge of a foreign language (in particular, English) gives under-graduates the skills of intercultural and international communication. V.V.Pankova [5] highlights that unfortunately in some cases, Asian students' knowledge of English is poor. For example, in China the number of students in a language class at school is very large [3] (40-50 people), and the level of English proficiency of a student is often not high enough. This problem can be resolved by the opportunity given to such students to be enrolled firstly at a preparatory department to study Russian as a foreign language and only when they know Russian enough to be enrolled for the undergraduate course to major in this or that speciality ranging from engineering sciences to economics and management and to social sciences. Russian teachers don't know any oriental language and they don't need to know as they teach Russian as a foreign language following a specified methodology.

On finishing a course of Russian as a foreign language first year Asian students are able to listen to the lectures of Russian professors and understand them. Meanwhile studying English is also difficult, and the English teachers have to improve their pronunciation and intonation. Besides, the grammatical structure of the Oriental languages is quite simple, therefore, there are difficulties in mastering the grammar system of English. There are no special ESP textbooks designed to teach English to students from the Asia-Pacific region and, consequently, the teachers need to use and compile several educational supplies to teach English in the mixed groups of students. The problem can be solved by offering Asian students an extra course of English.

In general, not only in a language class, there is a problem of transferring the characteristics of Oriental model of education into the Russian environment. For example, Chinese education is based on the traditional idea that the older the teacher, the more experience he or she has, and it is forbidden to argue or to express one's own opinion. The other problem is the following. The students' preferred method of learning is memorization without analysis and interpretation. The Chinese students seldom show creative activity [3]. They prefer to talk less, but to listen more. Perhaps this is appreciated within some settings, but not in the academic situation, the purpose of which is to improve the student's communicative competence. The lectures need to apply extra efforts to develop Asian students' creativity.

Foreign students live far from home and families, they experience difficulties in social sphere. When they arrive to Russia they don't have close relationships with anybody, and they have little or no friends. To some other students' surprise, foreign students while living in the hostel, in its ethnic diversity, cook the dishes of their national cuisines, which seem to be unpleasant and untasty to some other students, follow their own traditions, and show emotions differently. Eventually foreign students are involved into the social activities within the university traditions as these traditions are the greatest aspects of the university experience. Collegiate traditions provide a sense of community and school spirit. Some collegiate traditions are common in different universities all around the world, for example, a matriculation ceremony or going in for sports.

Sports Centre at the Russian University of Transport holds physical training classes for students and a swimming pool with five lanes. Sports Centre is the training ground for varsity teams in 19 sports and it is used for sports competitions among Moscow student teams. Some students love hiking. It combines the features of some sports such as orienteering and cross country running and adventure travelling. Students from different countries enjoy fresh air, beautiful landscapes, surprises, gifts and the unique atmosphere of life on the edge, mutual assistance, and romanticism.

Since 2005 every year University holds Friendship Festival. Its aim is to rally the newly enrolled students of the first-year groups into teams. The freshmen show their responsibilities, tolerance and patience so that everyone gains experience and feels confident in his team, finds his level and place in a team. The goal is to find the best way for

conveying the customs and traditions of different countries, to cook a dish of national cuisine, sing songs or dance. Friendship is a really useful event that helps students get closer, solve problems together and find a common language with each other.

Students' lives far from the parents have another aspect as well. It is the absence of parents' control. Sometimes students feel more freedom and less responsibility. Russian universities follow a democratic style of communication that differs from the authoritarian one that dominates in the Eastern countries. Some Asian students do not cope with complex training programs (so don't some Russian students) and go back to their homes. The employees of the Department of Interaction with Foreign Students and Organization of a Student Recruitment supervise the learning process, they are the foreign students' second mothers and fathers, and the University itself becomes the second home for its graduates.

This year 612 foreign students have been enrolled to the Russian University of Transport. The University is constantly moving towards doubling the number of foreign students. Foreign students can spend about 10 years in Russia getting the bachelor, master and post-graduate degrees. They come back to their Motherland ready to contribute significantly to the domestic economy development.

The Russian University of Transport implements bilateral educational Russian-Chinese programs (double degree programs). Thanks to such programs, students of the Russian University of Transport can study at leading universities in China. Online-education at the Russian University of Transport is developing rapidly. Foreign students get knowledge through online courses. Russian students also can get knowledge from Asian professors online on the educational platform EdX [5]. For example, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University online programs are popular. But education as a way of socializing a person can not be carried out in a completely online form. Thus, in the Asia-Pacific region, and in other regions of the world as well, there are processes to strengthen the internationalization of education and the formation of a unified educational space.

The potential of the Asia-Pacific region is huge both in terms of population and in terms of the pace and proportions of socio-economic development. Currently, there is a significant increase in the trends of internationalization of education. Both Russian students and the ones living in the Asia-Pacific region mutually benefit from these trends of international cooperation in the sphere of education.

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Tourist attractions in Japan

В статье рассматриваются самые известные с точки зрения молодого европейца туристические объекты Японии. Описаны основные достопримечательности: храмы, музеи, тематические парки, прекрасные уголки природы. Несомненно, страна обладает богатым туристическим потенциалом для молодых путешественников из России.

Ключевые слова: туризм, туристические объекты, Япония, храмы, парки, красота природы

The paper analyses the most famous tourist attractions in Japan from the point of view of a young westerner. The main attractions such as temples, museums, thematic parks, beautiful pieces of nature are described. The country for sure has a rich tourism potential for young Russian travellers.

Keywords: tourism, tourist attractions, Japan, temples, parks, nature beauty

Japan is a truly unique country; it is of great interest to the inhabitants of the European and American regions. Japan is a country of the rising sun, with its long and ambiguous history, centuries-old traditions that have survived to our time.

Japan is the country which combines ancient history and modern achievements. It is one of the most developed countries of the world. Its history is inseparable with the history of China and other Asian countries. The Japanese imported rice sowing, methods of metal processing and construction, many philosophies, including Buddhism. Over time, Japan has been becoming more and more distinctive: the syllabic alphabet Kana was invented, chronicles and literary works were created. Nowadays Japan has highly developed education, science and technology, medicine and social insurance, nature preservation, but the country saves the most significant remains and