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Language and culture of a country as acting form of "soft power"

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Abstract. Learning a language, on one hand, promotes the Russian mentality, making it clear enough for foreign citizens, and, on the other hand, ruins "Friend and Foe" stereotype barriers. "Soft power", which replaced the theory of "cultural and ideological hegemony" of the Italian philosopher A. Gramsci in the 1930s – an integral component of information wars that have an informational and psychological impact on the recipient state in order to achieve both political and military goals. The global information war and the manipulation of consciousness through the media and social networks are becoming indispensable conditions for disinformation and rumors, leading to the so-called "infodemic". The article examines a "Learn Russian language with Nastia" program as an effective teaching method.

Key words: digital media, soft power, educational programs, RT / Russia Today, Maghreb countries.

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Научная статья

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Язык и культура страны как действующая форма «мягкой силы»

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Аннотация. Изучение языка, с одной стороны, способствует развитию русского менталитета, делая его достаточно понятным для иностранных граждан, а с другой — разрушает стереотипные барьеры «друг и враг». «Мягкая сила», пришедшая на смену теории «культурной и идеологической гегемонии» итальянского философа А. Грамши в 1930-е гг., — неотъемлемый компонент информационных войн, оказывающих информационное и психологическое воздействие на государство-реципиент с целью достижения, как политических, так и военных целей. Глобальная информационная война и манипуляции сознанием через СМИ и социальные сети становятся необходимыми условиями для дезинформации и слухов, ведущих к так называемой «инфодемии». В статье рассматривается программа «Учим русский язык с Настей» как эффективный метод обучения.

Ключевые слова: цифровые медиа, мягкая сила, образовательные программы, RT / Russia Today, страны Магриба.

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The degree of influence of new digital media competition in the world. Of course, the process of transmitting a certain and cultural programs is so significant that it is intention inherent in educational and cultural already capable of changing the social behavior programs of programs largely depends on the of consumers, thereby proving the importance of culture of the destination country, the culture of the "soft power" as the main instrument of geopolitical state has an invaluable influence on the formation of public opinion in the destination country, and this is where soft power appears. The concept of "soft

power", formulated by the political scientist Joseph Nye [Nye 2005] being characterized by him as the ability of the state to achieve what it wants in the international arena by attracting sympathy, and not by means of threats, pressure, handouts or bribery.

Soft power is the ability of a country to convince others to do what it wants, without force or coercion. Soft power is the ability to achieve politically significant results not through forceful pressure or financial assistance, but through image attractiveness and sympathy. This influence has its positive and negative sides.

Thus, an increase in the quality level of educational programs leads to an increase in the media literacy of content consumers, and the expansion of the addressee's sphere of contacts with cultural achievements, science, and art of another country through the media can ultimately significantly change public opinion about it.

Television programs of the past have ranged from political, economic, and social to sports and artistic, attracting different social and age groups to view, building audiences, and laying the groundwork for the views and values that the government is targeting at a given time. It is obvious that the relevance of this study is justified by political, linguacultural and social reasons, which include planning the formation of content depending on the desired programmed audience response as well as formation of features of public behavior in connection with the content consumed. The establishment of high-quality mutual understanding between countries, representing the destination country on the world stage, and in the Arab states in our focus as well.

Currently, before broadcasting any news, the media channel studies the viewing market, the content of programs that can attract a large audience. The combination of highly rated programs with wide coverage and quality content requires, in our opinion, the special attention of a researcher.

In this regard, to achieve the goal as to study the features and degree of influence of the cultural and educational programs of RT / Russia Today in Arabic on consumers of information content the following tasks were must be solved. Analyze the features of creating high-ranking cultural and educational programs RT (Russia Today), aimed at the countries of the Arab East and, in particular, Maghreb countries. To study the direction and content of these programs from the point of view of the cultural characteristics

of the countries of the Arab East and as well as to analyze the impact of the RT television channel (broadcast in Arabic) and the site of the same name <https://arabic.rt.com/> on target audiences.

For revealing the reaction of the addressee to the changing content of cultural and educational programs RT (broadcast in Arabic) and the site of the same name <https://arabic.rt.com/> during the infodemic period the questionnaire was created as a measurement tool to identify the most influential programs that implement the concept of "soft power" while broadcasting to the countries of the Arab East and, in particular, Maghreb countries. In the focus of research the analyses the features of promoting cultural and educational programs RT (broadcasting in Arabic) and the site of the same name <https://arabic.rt.com/>, teaching the Russian language.

In the research, the provisions were obtained that deserve the status of scientific novelty like effectiveness of the used communication models are revealed. Semantic analysis of cultural and educational programs of offline and online discourse was carried out at the level of semantic meanings of language units, announcements of entertainment and news programs, compositional features of programs of the cultural and educational cycle.

Russian language instruction through media platform presented in 2019-2020 on the RT TV channel as well as on its website RT Online with a special program named "Learn Russian language with Nastia" with 34 full lessons targeting at Arab Maghreb countries. RT TV channel and its website RT Online in a program "Learn Russian language with Nastia" started virtual classes with 50 Russian Words borrowed from Arabic: abrikos, avariya, algebra, almaz, amulet, benzin, tsifra, and soon gained support of 277 000 followers on the on Instagram and 1 137 followers on Facebook and 2 037 followers on YouTube channel, and 70 100 followers on TikTok. Russian lecturer Nastia recommended her students practicing Russian with her, and «copy her pronunciation»⁶. The first wave of learners are Arab speaking football fans who came to Russia in the period of World Cup 2018. It started as one of the educational TV programs, which had a great interaction from the audience, in the period of May to July 2018; the Facebook website

⁶ Russian with Nastya. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXRt-HjEaTF6JgregWoopjw>. Open access.

got 3 million views that time. The program goes on the RT channel is an example of a good quality educational program (Fig. 1). The language course was implemented as the disclosure of the main attractions of Russia and training, in parallel, typical tasks in the Russian language. At first, these were videos released in the afternoon, at 15.00–16.00, as a

rule, between newscasts [Muzykant 2021]. Gradually, the convergence process expanded broadcasting and a whole page was created for teaching the Russian language. It included the exercises as well as materials for testing and homework. This made it possible to consolidate the topics studied on the air.

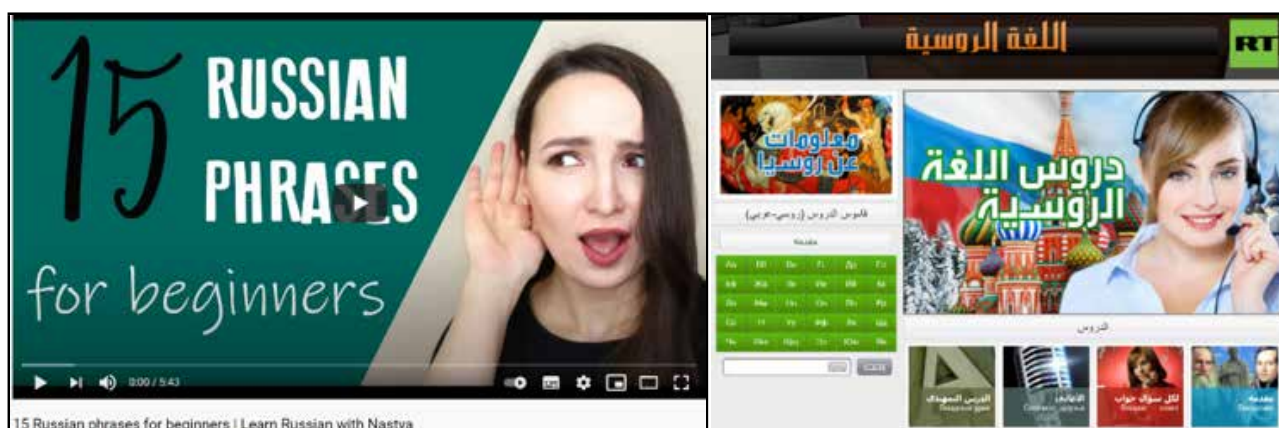


Fig. 1. Nastia in RT educational program disclosed of the main attractions of Russia language

The following characteristics of the program are given on the TV site: it is an intensive course in learning the Russian language, started with explanation in Arabic of Russian alphabet:

انثا ، افرح 33 ةيسورلا ةغلل ايف ةيسورل ةيدجبال ريبك امه دح انالكش امنم افرح نيثالثلو ناقطني ال امنم ءامسأل او ملعل ءامس أو ةلمج لك أدبتو . ريغص رخأل او نم لمجل او تاملكل بتكتتو . ريبك فرحب ةيفارغلل ايعبطم امه دح انالكش فورحللو . نيميلا يل! راسيل افرحأ خيرات يل ععال طال اكل ذلكم كنكمي . ةباتكلل رخأل او ةيسورل ةيدجبال / *In the Russian language there are 33 letters, two of which are not pronounced, and thirty letters of which are two forms, one of which is capital and the other small. Each sentence, proper names, and geographical names begin with a capital letter. Words and sentences are written from left to right. The letters have two forms, one typographical and the other for writing. You can also see the history of the letters of the Russian alphabet. One of the program presenter is a correspondent and presenter at RT Online & RT Arabic*¹.

Launching of such a kind program capable of competing with international media required the creation of an error-free theoretical concept: the principles of international broadcasting became a kind of culmination of many years of work to determine the place and image of Russia in the context of world experience.

To understand how Russian language teaching

is implemented, we present a list of programs for 2019–2020.

How to Use Verbs of Motion (lesson 31): "We use two general types of verbs to talk about motion in Russian. For our purposes we will call them groups *идти* and *ходить*. It is convenient to use them because whoever you are speaking with understands at once what time and direction you are talking about and how often you move that way. It is better to learn these verbs in pairs"². Main Russian verbs of motion (Meanings of verbs of motion – Verbs of motion and tenses – Conjugation of verbs of motion in Present and Past Tenses):

Я иду в офис, я хожу туда каждый день.

Speaking about the beginning of Motion. Verbs of Motion with the prefix "no-".

Летом мы поедем на дачу.

Verbs of Motion with the Prefixes "в-" and "вы-".

Извините, Александр вышел на минутку, он скоро будет!

Verbs of Motion and the prefixes "при-" and "у-".

Я приехал от родителей вчера.

Verbs of Motion and the prefixes "под-" and "от-".

*Отойди оттуда и подойди сюда*³.

Obviously, the proposed topics are closely related to the realities of reality, that is, with what is useful

1 Introductory lesson, 2021. URL: <https://arabic.rt.com/lessons/russian/>. Open access.

2 Verbs of Motion, 2020. URL: <https://learnrussian.rt.com/grammar-tables/verbs-of-motion/>. Open access.

3 Ibid.

for students of the Russian language for practical activities. The practice-oriented approach is implemented on the basis that learning the Russian language is important for people who want to learn about it at the initial stages, and the focus is on a fundamentally different audience.

Here are examples of such activities in the program:

Задание 1. Слушайте и закончите диалог.

Task 1. Listen and drag the words to complete the text.

Света: Алло, ты где?

Лена: Я только из метро. А ты где?

Света: А я уже в кинотеатр. Стою в кассе.

Лена: А где кинотеатре? Слева или справа от метро?

Света: Ты уже ? Посмотри, он слева от метро.

Лена: Всё, вижу, так... в кинотеатр.

Света: Я вижу тебя. Иди сюда!

How to use Verbs of Motion with the Prefixes *в-* and *вы-*. Вставьте пропущенные слова – выйдете (вылетели)

Задание 2. Слушайте и закончите диалог.

Task 2. Listen and drag the words to complete the text.

Джон: Алло, Джим, мы уже с женой из Ак-пулько.

Джим: Хорошо, когда будете в аэропорту в Лондоне, позвони ещё раз.

Джон: Ты нас встретишь?

Джим: Я нет, но мой водитель встретит вас.

Сейчас я скажу тебе его номер телефона. Он будет ждать вас около аэропорта. Вы из аэропорта и увидите его.

Джон: Хорошо, я помню его.

All the actors of the language learning programs are unique because of different prerequisites for starting language training. Such integration of educational activities contributes to the formation of a culture of communication with the aim of setting foreign language cultural values as well as develop abilities of mediatized intercultural communication.

Conclusion

According to the provisions presented in the recommendation, the teaching via TV is not effective enough without feedback. At the same time, "soft power" is often manifested in the form of a special form of political power, which presupposes the ability to achieve the desired results based on dialogue and sympathy. It is natural that the language and culture of a country are capable of acting in the form of "soft power", excluding violence in international relations, indirectly influencing world politics, thanks to the promotion of the views of the recipient country to the target audiences of the recipient countries.

Nevertheless, "soft power" is able to influence the decisions of countries, changing the way of thinking of entire groups of the population, including through public diplomatic work. This practice makes the application of "soft power" formats the most preferable way for the presence of the state in a particular region.

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