



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Pedagogical Anthropology and the Promotion of the Russian Language in China: the Role of Associative Experiment in the Digital Environment

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ABSTRACT

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Based on a comprehensive empirical study, this article analyzes the peculiarities of the perception of Russia and the Russian language among Chinese youth. The aim is to identify the factors shaping attitudes toward the Russian language in the digital environment and to propose strategic directions for its promotion in China. The research integrates a linguistic experiment (free associative method), an analysis of a sociological survey and content-analyses of open-ended responses (corpus of 2050 word occurrences). It is revealed that the image of Russia in the minds of Chinese youth is formed mainly around three semantic cores: the stereotypical-behavioral (24% mentions), the political-historical (22%), the natural-geographical (18%). Chinese social media (WeChat, Xiaohongshu, Weibo, Douyin), are established as the primary information channel about Russia, producing a fragmented, predominantly stereotypical image. Content-analyses identifies the most frequent word forms in the respondents' answers concerning the image of Russia, revealing a predominance of everyday and media-related lexical units (vodka, harsh, Putin, Red Square, USSR) that are unrelated to the educational potential of the language. The conclusion justifies the need to adapt strategies for promoting the Russian language with an emphasis on broadcasting the independent cultural value of Russia and the development of horizontal communication formats.

INTRODUCTION

The year 2026 is marked by a number of significant events in the humanitarian field of Russian-Chinese relations: the Cross-Years of Education of Russia and China, the 30th anniversary of the establishment of strategic partnership relations, as well as the progressive expansion of the presence of the Russian language learners: according to available data, more than 28,000 students in 180 universities and 26,000 schoolchildren in 125 schools in China are learning it.

Nevertheless, according to modern research, the effectiveness of promoting the Russian language in the Chinese audience is currently associated with a number of challenges that require the active introduction of hybrid and online learning formats (Kireeva et al., 2025). In our opinion, the success of this activity is determined not only by the quality of educational programs, but also by the broader socio-cultural context – namely, the image of Russia, which is broadcast in the Chinese information field and fixed in the public consciousness (Kong, 2025) of online learning formats (Kireeva et al., 2025). With strong government support, e.g. inclusion in state examinations, an increase in the number of educational programs, there is a shortage of promotion strategies adapted to the Chinese digital environment that take into account user preferences and linguistic and cultural perception. Moreover, there is a contradiction in the predominance of traditional, grammar-oriented and testing-based teaching methods when Chinese youth request authentic, multimodal and practice-oriented formats that match the patterns of content consumption on Chinese social networks such as WeChat, Douyin, Xiaohongshu, etc.

In pedagogical anthropology, the study of the associative fields of the target audience makes it possible to design educational strategies that take into account the cultural codes of students. The present study uses an associative experiment to identify factors influencing the motivation of Chinese youth to learn Russian and promote it in China's digital space.

In this regard, there is a need for a comprehensive data analysis to identify the linguistic and cultural foundations of the image of Russia in the Chinese mass consciousness and to develop scientifically sound strategies for promoting the Russian language in the Chinese digital environment, taking into account user preferences and features of the Chinese Internet ecosystem, which is the purpose of this study.

It is necessary to pose the research questions in this study, which are as follows: What are the linguistic and cultural foundations of the image of Russia in the minds Chinese youth, and what strategies for promoting the Russian language in the Chinese digital environment correspond to the identified value dominants and user preferences? The purpose of the study is to identify the structure and content of the image of Russia in the associative field of Chinese youth and to propose ways to create strategies for promoting the Russian language and education in China.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the main channels for obtaining information about Russia by Chinese youth and their impact on shaping the image of the country;
2. To identify the key associative clusters structuring the image of Russia in the linguistic consciousness of Chinese youth;
3. To conduct a content analysis and identify the most common word forms in the respondents' responses regarding the image of Russia and analyze them;
4. To establish the level of awareness of Chinese youth about Russia in various fields, as well as the motivational barriers and drivers of learning Russian and studying in Russia;
5. To formulate recommendations for the promotion of the Russian language and educational programs in China, taking into account the identified associative dominants and preferences of the target audience.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is based on a mixed methodology combining a sociological survey, a psycholinguistic experiment (the method of free associations), content analysis, linguistic and cultural analysis, multimodal analysis and statistical processing of the results. The results of the presented research make a theoretical, methodological and applied contribution to the development of linguoculturology, intercultural communication, methods of teaching Russian as a foreign language (RFL), and strategies of language policy. The study was conducted remotely between February and March 2026.

A total of 270 respondents from China participated in this study, the core of the audience is formed by Northeast and Northern China, including Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Heilongjiang Province, and the central city of Beijing. The remaining 31% of participants represent the totality of other regions of China. The sample consisted of young people aged 16 to 40 years, all being citizen of People's Republic of China and speaking Chinese. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. For the linguistic experiment, the word "Russia" was chosen to identify spontaneous and characteristic associations for the mass consciousness. The content analysis was carried out using the Voyant Tools platform. Where detailed responses from respondents were analyzed. As part of our research, an analysis of the tonality of lexical units was also carried out, during which positively and negatively colored word usage was identified. Fractions of the total corpus are calculated for each lexical unit. The share of the author's interpretation is low, all statements are based on empirically confirmed data.

RESULTS

This survey was conducted to study the perception of Russia by the Chinese audience, including sources of information about Russia, attitudes towards Russian education, motivation in learning Russian, and interest in Russia as a possible destination for study.

The percentage of channels for obtaining information about Russia is as follows: social networks – 55%; national media – 25%; Russian media – 0%; university, teachers – 7%; friends, acquaintances – 3%; personal travel experience – less than 1%.

Russian Russian is a language that 90% of respondents have never studied, while the vast majority of respondents who study Russian (10%) say they know it at an elementary level, while only a few respondents know it at an intermediate and advanced level. Russian Russians, however, 41% of respondents say they are ready to learn Russian to enter a university, while 28% are ready to learn Russian if they can enroll in Russia. The remaining 31% of respondents either refrained from answering or were not ready to learn Russian for admission.

The respondents' responses demonstrated a potential interest in education in Russia (45%), while only 8% of respondents were informed about educational opportunities. Also, more than 62% of respondents have never heard of *Rossotrudnichestvo*. The most attractive fields for the respondents were Engineering, medicine, IT, economics and international relations. 56% of respondents believe that the popularity of the Russian language is growing, while 69% want it to spread further.

Thus, taking into account the survey results, it is necessary to actively promote information about various quota programs on Chinese social networks, create more attractive content for Chinese users about learning Russian and learning opportunities in Russia.

On the basis of the sociological survey, a linguistic experiment (the method of free associations) was also conducted, including a request to cite associations with Russia. The associative experiment is used in linguistics to study linguistic consciousness, stereotypes and mental images of the world inherent in representatives of a particular nation (Svetkina, 2021). It allows you to record the uncontrolled reactions of the subjects, which is especially important when working with an audience of a different ethnicity and culture, since this factor directly affects the formation of certain associations (Magomedova, 2020). It should be noted that the associative field generated by a certain stimulus word captures a person's life experience, the sum of his knowledge and a system of values, which means that the results of an associative experiment can serve as a basis for modeling a collective worldview materialized in linguistic forms (Vardomatsky, 2024). The use of associative experiment data in teaching foreign languages makes it possible to create educational material that can contribute to a deeper understanding of foreign culture and successful intercultural communication (Monakhova et al., 2022).

The data obtained during the associative experiment demonstrate that the image of Russia in the minds of respondents is formed around several key themes (Table 1).

Table 1: Associative clusters of the image of Russia

Name of the associative cluster	Content
History and Geopolitics	1) Mention of leaders: V.V. Putin, V.I. Ulyanov (Lenin), I.V. Stalin, M.S. Gorbachev, Peter I, Catherine II, etc. 2) Historical events: USSR, the Great Patriotic War, the Battle of Moscow, the Battle of Leningrad, the Battle of Stalingrad, the October Revolution, the Cold War, the dissolution of the USSR, Perestroika, etc. 3) Contemporary realities: the Special Military Operation, sanctions, friendship with China, trade, international relations, etc.
Geography and Nature	1) Russian territory: the largest country in the world, Siberia, the Far East, stretching across Eurasia, etc. 2) Bodies of water: Lake Baikal, clean rivers and lakes, etc.

	3) Climate: cold climate, harsh climate, snowy winters, etc.
Culture and Art	1) Literature: L.N. Tolstoy, F.M. Dostoevsky, A.S. Pushkin, A.P. Chekhov, "War and Peace", etc. 2) Art: Ballet, "Swan Lake", classical music (Tchaikovsky), figure skating, etc. 3) Architecture: Red Square, the Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral, the Hermitage, Peterhof, etc. 4) Folk crafts: Matryoshka dolls, Khokhloma, Palekh, etc. 5) Cinema: "Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears", Soviet films.
Science, Technology and Sports	1) Space: Yuri Gagarin (the first human in space), satellites, etc. 2) Industry: Heavy industry, the military-industrial sector (tanks, artillery), nuclear energy, oil, gas, etc. 3) Sports: Figure skating, football (soccer), rhythmic gymnastics, ice hockey, etc.
Stereotypes and National Character	1) Stereotypes: A combative, tough people ("战斗民族" - the most common descriptor, translated as "Warrior Nation"), endurance, openness, boldness, courage, hospitality, laziness, a lack of smiling, heavy drinking, etc. 2) Symbols: The bear (as a symbol of Russia), vodka, friendship with China, etc. 3) Physical appearance: Russian beauties/beautiful young women, blue-eyed blonds, etc.
Material Culture and Everyday Life	1) Food and beverages: Vodka (the absolute leader in the food category), caviar, 黑面包 (black bread, e.g. Borodinsky), chocolate (especially "Alyonka"), borscht, pelmeni, cheese, kvass, Olivier salad, blini, sausage, etc. 2) Goods and retail: Russian shops / 商品店, souvenirs (chocolate, matryoshka dolls), OZON (marketplace), etc.

In terms of the percentage of the total number of significant mentions, the "Stereotypes and National Character" cluster led the results of the experiment (Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of associative clusters by share of mentions

Name of the associative cluster	Share of mentions, %
Stereotypes and National Character	24%
History and Geopolitics	22%
Geography and Nature	18%
Culture and Art	16%
Material Culture and Everyday Life	12%
Science, Technology and Sports	8%

The conducted associative experiment showed that the image of Russia in the mass consciousness of Chinese speakers is formed mainly around three semantic cores: stereotypical-behavioral, political-historical and natural-geographical. Cultural markers occupy a stable but not dominant position, while material culture and the scientific and sports sphere are much less represented. In the study by A.A. Sorokina and M.S. Maximenkova (2020), who interviewed Chinese students living in Russia, found that the cluster "Geography and Climate" is in a leading position in terms of frequency of mentions. This may be due to the fact that most of the interviewed students have lived in Russia for some time.

The dominance of the cluster's national character indicates that the perception of Russia is largely mythologized and based on stable stereotypes transmitted through media and Internet culture - first of all, the fighting people, the bear, vodka, and the harsh climate.

As K. Beukeboom (2025) points out in his work, generalization in language is the fundamental mechanism of communication of stereotypes. The stability of these stereotypes is ensured by three points: the content of the stereotype, essentialism and the perceived entitativity of the category. In the Chinese associative field, "Russia" belongs to the category with high entitativity, since it is represented as an integral country, which is expressed in the private use of generalized nominations ("Russians", "people"). Russian Russians consider the use of adjectives such as "combative", "harsh", "hardy", "drinker" to be characteristic of the Russian people, indicating essentialization, as these qualities are transmitted to all Russian people, regardless of the situational context.

The high proportion of political and historical associations reflects the current information agenda and Russia's involvement in global political discourse through the eyes of the Chinese audience. However, according to the results of the experiment, knowledge of the cultural realities of Russia in the Chinese mass consciousness is fragmented, canonically limited and stereotyped. Literary

names are often not accompanied by specific examples of the authors' works, and it can be assumed that the respondents are not so familiar with Russian literature.

As S. N. Kaysarova, O. A. Urazova and O. V. Shleinikova point out in their study (Kaysarova, 2025), Chinese manufacturers and exporters of goods that sell Russian products very often turn to stereotypical images to attract buyers. However, this phenomenon only leads to a distortion of the cultural context, because Russian dolls, for example, are painted with sunglasses and fashionable accessories. Obviously, such a matryoshka doll cannot be considered native Russian. Using images symbolizing Russia is a way of manipulating the feelings of potential consumers. In this scenario, stereotypical ideas about Russia in people's minds are only simplified and strengthened, and even with a high level of Chinese sympathy for Russia, knowledge about it and its culture remains rather superficial.

Next, the respondents were asked to rate their awareness of Russia in various fields from 1 to 10. According to the block of questions on awareness in various fields, the highest level of knowledge of the respondents was shown by the sphere of politics and diplomacy, the average awareness score was **5.9**. Then comes the sphere of economics (**4.1**) and culture (**3.9**). As for the complexity of the language, 19.4% of respondents rated its complexity at 10, the average difficulty score of the Russian language for respondents was **6.3**, which is a high barrier to entry. The average score of the usefulness of the Russian language career was **5 out of 10**. Russian rated the highest indicator of the usefulness of the Russian language (for tourism) at **6.3**, which may be the main driver for promoting the Russian language in China.

The responses of the audience of respondents showed that they are ready for digitalization. 54.5% are ready to study online. Online courses (54.5%), mobile applications (48.1%) and student exchanges (48.1%) are the most in demand.

From a linguistic point of view, we observe the phenomenon of nominative density. The respondents demonstrate a confident command of the discourse of international relations and economics. This means that in their linguistic consciousness, Russia is firmly marked as a political and economic counterparty. The lexemes "cooperation", "relations", "economy" form the nuclear zone of the image. However, the cultural periphery turns out to be "lexically empty".

DISCUSSION

The conducted associative experiment with the participation of **270** respondents revealed not only the image of Russia in the Chinese consciousness of Chinese respondents, but also deep motivational factors that determine the actualization of certain associations. The data obtained indicate that the image of Russia is formed at the intersection of stable stereotypes, the current political agenda and classical cultural symbols, with the first two components playing a leading role.

Linguistic and cultural analysis shows that key associations function as precedent phenomena and cultural artifacts, while their current set is significantly updated under the influence of the media agenda and economic changes.

The method of content analysis was used to analyze the detailed responses of the respondents (the total volume of the corpus is **2050** word usage). The unit of analysis was a separate word form or stable phrase. The frequency calculation was carried out using the Voyant Tools tool. The interpretation of the results was based on the identification of semantic kernels (words with a frequency higher than 1% of the total volume of the corpus). The share of the author's interpretation in the conclusions does not exceed 15%, the rest is empirically confirmed data.

The most common words and phrases in the respondents' responses were identified (Table 3). We also studied the lexical units that were used in positive and negative contexts in Chinese responses. The content analysis method helped to identify the awareness of Russia and the general attitude of Chinese respondents towards the country.

Table 3: Most frequent word forms in respondents' answers

	Word form	Translation in Russian	Translation in English	Frequency, number of mentions	Share of the total corpus volume, %
1	伏特加 (fútèjiā)	водка	vodka	42	1,63
2	俄中 (ézhōng) 俄罗斯语 (éluósī yǔ)	российско-(как компонент словосочетания)	Russian-... (as a component of a phrase)	31	1,20
3	严峻的 (yánjùn de)	суровый	harsh	30	1,17
4	普京	Путин	Putin	28	1,09
5	红 广场 (Hóng guǎngchǎng)	Красная площадь	Red Square	27	1,05
6	冷 (lěng)	холодно	cold	26	1,01
7	人民 (rénmín)	народ	people	26	1,01
8	苏联 (sūlián)	СССР	USSR	24	0,93
9	芭蕾舞 (bālěiwǔ)	балет	ballet	18	0,70

First of all, the content analysis showed that the most frequently used lexical units in the respondents' answers are: vodka, Russian- (as a component of a phrase), harsh, Putin, Red Square, cold, people, USSR, ballet. Based on the results obtained, several conclusions can be drawn.

For example, the frequency of the word "vodka" in the respondents' answers may indicate that some national stereotypes about the Russian people have taken root in the Chinese consciousness. This word is in the leading position in the respondents' answers.

The component "Russian-" is in the second place in terms of frequency of use. It is clear that this is not an independent lexeme, but its frequency of use may be related to the fact that the Chinese see Russia in dialogue with other countries (Russian-Chinese relations, Russian-Chinese friendship).

The frequency of the adjective "severe" is due to the fact that it is not used on its own, but is mostly found in phrases such as "severe people," "severe climate," "severe winter," and "severe character." Respondents use this adjective to describe the climate and people of Russia. It is difficult to determine the connotation of this adjective and categorize it as a negative or positive word, as "severe" may be associated with the resilience of the Russian people, who face harsh weather conditions, but its use to describe the character of Russians may indicate that respondents perceive Russians as unsmiling, cold, and reserved.

The surname "Putin" ranks 4th on our list of words, which indicates the popularity of the Russian president among the Chinese. Respondents associate the surname of our president with the image of Russia, which may have been influenced by Chinese media and news outlets that actively cover news about Russia and the cooperation between the two countries. The surname "Putin" may also be associated with strong government and political power in the minds of the respondents. According to a study by A. A. Sorokina and M. S. Maksimenkova (2020), the surname "Putin" was mentioned by every third respondent (26 times), which is similar to the findings of our analysis.

One of our respondents wrote: *"Red Square in Moscow, the Kremlin."* The use of the phrase "Red Square" may be related to the fact that it is often used in the context of Russian-Chinese relations, meetings between the leaders of both countries, and tourist routes.

Some of the respondents wrote: *"Russia is a very cold but beautiful country."* This may indicate that many Chinese people believe that Russia is always very cold. This stereotype may have been influenced by social media, where tourists often share videos of themselves in warm clothing in snowy Russia. It may also be related to the fact that Russia is often mentioned as one of the coldest countries with harsh climates in global rankings.

The lexeme "people" is often used by the respondents in the following context: *"Russians are a harsh people."*, *"Russians are friendly people."* Despite the fact that the Chinese often describe

Russians as "harsh and resilient," they also perceive our country as inhabited by friendly people. According to the respondents, these two characteristics do not contradict each other, and the "harshness" of the Russian people is merely an indication, and upon closer contact with them, the Chinese conclude that *"Russians are harsh on the outside but kind and friendly on the inside."*

In their responses, the respondents often mentioned "USSR" along with the words "Lenin," "Stalin," and "Soviet." This is due to the fact that our respondents include individuals from an older generation who associate the history of modern Russia with this historical period.

Finally, the lexeme "ballet" is more frequently mentioned in the respondents' responses than other forms of art and sports that Russia is known for. One of the respondents wrote, *"Russian ballet is a gem of world art."* The Russian ballet school is recognized worldwide as one of the best, and the mention of "ballet" in the phrase "Russian ballet" directly indicates this.

A content analysis of the respondents' detailed responses also revealed the use of positively (Table 4) and negatively (Table 5) colored vocabulary in relation to the image of Russia.

Table 4: Positively colored lexical units

Positively colored vocabulary	Translation in Russian	Translation in English	Frequency, number of mentions	Share of the total corpus volume, %
丰富 (fēngfù)	Красивый	Beautiful	12	0,466
友好 (yǒuhǎo)	Дружественный	Friendly	6	0,233
强硬 (qiángyìng)	Сильный	Strong	3	0,117
强国 (qiángguó)	Могущественный	Mighty	2	0,078
厉害 (lìhai)	Впечатляющий	Spectacular	2	0,078

Table 5: Negatively colored lexical units

Negatively colored vocabulary	Translation in Russian	Translation in English	Frequency, number of mentions	Share of the total corpus volume, %
冷 (lěng)	Холодно	Cold	26	1,011
解体 (jiětǐ)	Распад	Decay	5	0,194
困难 (kùnnán)	Сложный	Hard	2	0,078

In the table with positively colored lexical units (Table 4), we can see the lexeme "beautiful", which is in the leading position. One of the respondents writes: *"There are many beautiful girls and boys in Russia."* Indeed, the Chinese respondents noted the beauty of Russian landscapes, architecture, and especially people. The words "impressive" and "powerful" are used in the context of the scale of the Russian territory. Indeed, many of the respondents noted the vast territory of Russia: *"The largest country in the world by area."*, and the Chinese respondents use the adjectives "strong" and "friendly" in relation to our country.

Studying the table with negatively colored lexical units (Table 5), it becomes clear that the use of such lexical units is not related to national characteristics and does not criticize the image of Russia, but mainly refers to weather conditions (cold winter), historical events (the collapse of the Soviet Union), and the Russian language (difficult Russian language). Some of our respondents noted in their answers: *"The Russian language is very difficult to learn."* Thus, we can conclude that the attitude of the Chinese respondents is predominantly positive towards Russia and its people.

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING RUSSIAN AND SOVIET EDUCATION IN CHINA

According to the results of our research, it becomes clear that it is necessary to develop practical proposals for promoting the Russian language and Russian education in China, using social networks for this purpose. A survey conducted among Chinese students studying in Russia revealed that 78.8% of them consider using social networks to be an effective way of promoting a foreign language (Sun, Razdorskaya, 2024).

The strategies proposed below are based on three aspects: the dominance of stereotypical behavioral and political-historical clusters in the image of Russia, the low awareness of Chinese

youth about Russian education programs, and the high demand for online learning formats. The promotion of Russian culture can be based on the use of established stereotypes and their use to reveal the cultural specificity of Russia. In the associative field of Chinese youth, there are characteristics of the Russian people as "fighting," "enduring," and "brave," and it would be reasonable to use these simplified representations to transition to more complex images and concepts that are reflected in Russian literature and history. It is possible to launch short educational videos on Chinese platforms (such as Douyin) about Russia that reveal national stereotypes and ideas about the "fighting people." For example, by introducing Chinese youth to literary characters such as Andrei Sokolov (M. A. Sholokhov, "The Fate of a Man"), Yegor Dremov (A. N. Tolstoy, "The Russian Character"), and Vasily Terkin (A. T. Tvardovsky, "Vasily Terkin"), it is possible to reveal the characteristics of a resilient, courageous, and fighting people who are ready to withstand any difficult situations. This approach can significantly increase interest in Russian literature and history. According to our survey, Chinese people associate Russia with a number of political and historical figures. Given this, it is advisable to include lectures and video materials in educational programs that discuss the contributions of famous individuals such as Vladimir Putin, Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin), Joseph Stalin, or Yuri Gagarin to the history of Russia, using key vocabulary and grammar. It is possible to post videos on the well-known Chinese media platform "Xiahongshu" that feature famous Russian individuals from various fields. To achieve this, it is necessary to create an attractive page on this social network and regularly release educational videos, taking into account the preferences of modern youth for such video materials, which should be limited in time (1-2 minutes) and include vivid images and interesting facts. This approach can expand knowledge about Russian realities. The study showed that Chinese youth receives information about Russian education programs primarily through Chinese social networks, but the overall awareness of education programs remains relatively low, indicating that more efforts need to be made to promote them and switch to Chinese media platforms to attract students to study in Russia. Given this, Russian educational centers should post posts and motivational videos about studying in Russia on Chinese social media platforms such as Xiahongshu, WeChat, or Douyin. They can also launch a series of interview-style videos where Chinese students who have studied in Russia share their experiences and talk about their journey to achieving this goal. Additionally, involving popular Chinese media personalities who create educational videos can help increase the interest of young people in learning Russian and inspire them to study the language. It is worth noting that according to our survey, Chinese people consider learning Russian useful for tourism purposes. It makes sense to motivate Chinese students by emphasizing that learning Russian will allow them to travel freely in Russia without any language barriers. They can create a free guide that will be promoted through travel communities on WeChat, providing phrases and basic sentences in Russian that can help individuals feel more confident and at ease while traveling in Russia. This guide can attract a new wave of Chinese tourists and make their stay in Russia more enjoyable, leading to positive feedback from Chinese people about Russia. As part of educational programs for Chinese students, it is important to create short conversational language courses for trips to scenic locations in Russia. This approach can improve students' language skills and enhance their positive emotional connection with Russia.

The conducted research made it possible to establish the role of the associative experiment in the effective promotion of the Russian language in the digital space of China, to describe the associative field "Russia" in the minds of Chinese youth, to identify the value dominants that determine the perception of Russia and the motivation to learn the Russian language, to conduct a content analysis, and to analyze the representation of Russia in Chinese social media.

The results of the study showed that the image of Russia in the mass consciousness of Chinese youth is formed mainly around three semantic cores: stereotypical-behavioral, political-historical, and natural-geographical, while cultural markers occupy a stable but not dominant position. It was established that the main channel for obtaining information about Russia is Chinese social media (Douyin, WeChat, Xiahongshu), which influence the transmission and consolidation of simplified ideas about the Russian people. As part of our research, a content analysis was conducted, which

helped to identify the most frequently used word forms in the respondents' answers regarding Russia and its image in general, which helped to determine the general positive attitude of the Chinese towards our country. We also studied the positively and negatively colored lexical units used in the respondents' answers to describe Russia. This allowed us to establish that the use of negatively colored vocabulary in relation to Russia is much less common than positively colored vocabulary. Our research has allowed us to develop strategies for promoting the Russian language and Russian education in China, which can be applied in creating educational content on Chinese media platforms, developing conversational courses and guides, and informing about quota and scholarship programs for studying in Russia.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

N.V. – conceptualization and methodology. I.I. Kl – supervision and project administration. I.I. Ka – writing – review and editing. Y.A. – data curation and analysis of the results. Zh.A. – writing – original draft.

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