

Investigating the effect of Learning Russian Language on the Adaptation of International Students

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Abstract:- The present research examines the role of self-directed learning of Russian language on the adaptation of international students in Russia. Learning the host country language is one of the most important factors in the adaptation of international students. The self-directed method in language learning allows students to learn the language with their personal motivation and interest, and as a result, their adaptation to the new environment is facilitated in all dimensions. In this study, the role of self-directed learning of the Russian language on the adaptation of international students in Russia has been investigated using qualitative and quantitative research methods. The results show that the students who learn the Russian language in a self-directed way, compared to other students, have a better adaptation to the new environment and this adaptation brings positive effects on the quality of education and life of international students, which in this research Strategies to promote and strengthen self-directed learning of the Russian language among international students are provided.

Keywords:- *Adaptation of Students, Learning Russian Language, Russia, International Students.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Entering a new educational and social environment for international students can be challenging. In addition to the process of adapting to the new culture and environment, learning the host country language is also one of the main obstacles that these students face. Meanwhile, the Russian language, as one of the most important languages in the world, is especially important for international students studying in Russia or educational programs with a strong Russian language component. Learning Russian in a self-directed manner, where students take an active role in managing their learning process can have a profound effect on the academic, social, and emotional adoption of international students. This approach allows learners to adapt their learning strategies to their needs, learning styles, and available resources, thereby fostering a sense of independence and ownership of the language acquisition process.

This article examines how self-directed learning of the Russian language affects different dimensions of international students' adaptation. Academically, the ability to communicate effectively in Russian can enhance students' understanding of course material, facilitate interactions with professors and classmates, and improve their overall academic performance. From a social perspective, this language skill can facilitate the integration of students into the university community and the development of interpersonal relationships. In addition, emotional aspects such as increased self-confidence and sense of belonging are also affected. In sum, this article examines how self-directed learning of the Russian language can help improve the multidimensional adaptation of international students.

II. ADAPTATION AND ITS TYPES

➤ Social Adaptation

Socialization is a two-way process of communication between the individual and the society, that's why it is considered a complex process that has various dimensions, acquisition of social skills, how to communicate with other people and social adaptation are among these dimensions. There are many definitions of social adaptation. Slaby and Cora (1988), citing Abedini (2011), consider social adaptation to be synonymous with social skill. According to them, social skill is the ability to establish mutual relations with others in a specific social context in a specific way that is acceptable and valuable in society's norms. While Slomowski and Dunn (1996) consider adaptation and social skill as a process that enables people to understand and predict the behavior of others. control their own behavior and regulate their own social interactions.

➤ Factors Influencing Social Adaptation

Several factors play a role in the personal and social adaptation of people, which have been emphasized by various psychological and sociological educational theories and perspectives.

In a comprehensive review, Iwata et al. (2000) divide the effective factors in social adaptation into six major categories, that each of them are divided into smaller factors. These factors include:

- Physical deprivations caused by organ defects, improper and bad nutrition, sleep deprivation and mental fatigue, traumatic emotional processes and brain injuries.
- Psychological-social-environmental factors such as rapid and important social changes such as war, natural disasters, family breakdown, poverty and addiction
- Educational factors such as incorrect family models, lack of parent-child relationship, rejection of children, extreme support, emotional deprivation, excessive autonomy of the child, unrealistic expectations and demands of parents, and lack of communication.
- Incompatible family structure in incompetent, disintegrated, anti-social families and primary psychological damage and lack of emotional and psychological stability of parents especially the mother.
- The pressures caused by the new industrial life, such as unhealthy competition, job and educational demands, and the complications of the new life
- Genetic and hereditary factors such as hereditary physical, mental and emotional disorders that provide the basis for delinquent behaviors and social inadaptation.

➤ *The Role of Social Adaptation on the Quality of Students' Education:*

Although many theoretical and experimental efforts have been made to identify the factors related to social adaptation. But these efforts have focused less on identifying the role of the belief system, values, traditions and customs and attitudes of people in their personal and social adaptation, and they have focused more on the general population than on certain sections of society, especially students. Meanwhile, numerous researches and observations of counseling centers have shown that unfavorable factors such as anxiety, tension, anxiety and lack of self-confidence, personal-social adoption, threaten the academic progress of students. This not only cause some of them to not being able to complete their academic course on time, but it has caused a change in their mood and a kind of worry, emotional instability and even some neuropsychological problems for them, and severely endangers their psychological and social adaptation (Roshan, 1990, Ghahari, 2002).

➤ *Emotional Adaptation*

Emotional adaptation means good mental health and resistance to complications caused by mental stress, positive mood and satisfaction with personal life, proper coordination between emotions, activities and thoughts (Sappington, 2005; quoted by Salibi and Ahmadi, 2014) and the ability to maintain emotional balance in the face of internal and external stressors, such as maintaining emotional control and coping behavior in the face of a crisis.

• *Emotional Adoption of International Students*

International students in Russia struggle with many emotional and psychological issues that are rooted in being away from their family and familiar environment. These challenges can adversely affect their adoption and psychological well-being.

The first problem is the feeling of loneliness and isolation. Separation from family and friends and being in an unfamiliar environment may lead to feelings of social isolation in international students. This can lead to a decrease in their motivation and academic performance.

In addition, another challenge these students face is adapting to the new Russian culture and traditions. This may cause negative feelings such as stress, anxiety and depression in them.

Financial and economic problems caused by the cost of living in Russia can also affect the mental health of international students. Financial concerns and livelihood problems may hinder their ability to focus on their studies and drop in their academic performance.

Also, being away from family and familiar environment may lead to feelings of longing and nostalgia in international students. This can reduce their motivation and academic performance.

Finally, communication problems insufficient command of the Russian language can also lead to emotional and psychological challenges for these students. This may cause them to feel isolated, stressed and depressed.

In general, being away from family and familiar environment, familiarity with Russian culture and traditions onment, adapting to a new culture, financial and communication problems can create many emotional and psychological challenges for international students in Russia and adversely affect their adaptation and psychological well-being.

➤ *Academic Adaptation*

One of the most important factors that play a role in the academic progress of students is adaptability. Researchers believe that high environmental pressures and educational demands may be involved in behavioral and emotional problems and reduce students' abilities (Slobodskaya and Akhmetova, 2010). In this regard, Abdullah Elias and Mahyuddin (2009) found that academic achievement is significantly predicted by social-emotional academic adaptability.

It can be acknowledged that one of the most important areas in the field of adaptation is the concept of academic adaptation (Ardalan and Chari, 2009). Academic adaptability expresses the degree of adaptability with the educational environment, teachers, classmates and the content of the courses (Michaelimane et al., 2014). Also, academic adaptation refers to the amount of adaptation of the individual to the environmental conditions, expectations of requests and social structures governing the school environment (Samani and Chari, 1392). In another definition, academic adaptation is related to the student's perception of the quality of his academic performance. Satisfaction with coursework and the way they are done, satisfaction with exercises and quality of teaching are related to this adaptation (Lefkowitz, 2003). In short, it can be said that one of the goals of higher education

is to produce good graduates with a healthy and compatible personality.

➤ *Examining the Relationship between Adaptation and Mental Health:*

Studies show that adapting to a new environment and a different culture plays an important role in the mental health of international students. Students who are more successful in the process of adapting to the new environment usually have better mental health. Therefore, the factors affecting the adaptation of international students in Russia, which will affect their mental health, can be listed as follows:

- Level of Russian language proficiency
- Familiarity with Russian culture and traditions
- Social support from family, friends and university
- Skills to deal with stress and new challenges
- Economic and living conditions

Students who are more successful in these areas usually have a higher level of adaption and are less likely to suffer from psychological problems such as depression, anxiety and stress. On the other hand, students who face more challenges in the process of adapting to the new environment are more exposed to psychological harm. Therefore, promoting the adaptation of international students in Russia through teaching the Russian language, familiarizing them with the culture, providing social and economic support, and strengthening stress coping skills can help improve their mental health.

➤ *Examining the Problems and Inadaptation of International Students in Russia:*

- International students in Russia face several challenges, which are rooted in insufficient command of the Russian language and the use of incorrect learning methods. These problems can negatively affect their adaptation and academic progress.
- Poor communication with professors, classmates and other people in the academic environment. Lack of proficiency in the Russian language and the use of incorrect learning methods prevent effective communication and understanding of the materials presented in classes. This may lead to the social isolation of international students and reduce their participation in educational activities.
- Lack of proficiency in the Russian language and the use of incorrect learning methods limit international students' access to educational resources and needed information. This issue can lead to a decrease in academic progress and a drop in their grades.
- Inadequate familiarity with Russian culture and traditions due to lack of mastery of the language and use of incorrect learning methods may lead to misunderstandings and cultural challenges for international students. This can lead to a decrease in their adaptation to the living and studying environment in Russia.

- Restrictions in communicating with the local community and the impossibility of using city services and facilities due to the lack of mastery of the Russian language and the use of incorrect learning methods may lead to an increase in the feeling of isolation and loneliness in international students.
- In general, the lack of sufficient learning of the Russian language and the use of incorrect learning methods can create many challenges in the educational, social and cultural fields for international students in Russia and lead to a decrease in their adaptation and academic achievement.

➤ *The Role of Russian Language Teaching Models on the Adaptation of International Students:*

For more motivated, deeper, and more lasting learning, students should learn learning skills based on specific patterns that suit them, which also these skills help students acquire knowledge, skills, and unique attitudes in their personal and professional development. Therefore, empowering students to acquire the necessary skills for learning should be one of the ultimate goals of educational programs, especially Russian language education, because it is in this way that students can increase their social and academic skills. Therefore, transformation of "teaching" into "learning" becomes necessary. This requires that international students first learn how to learn (Williamson, 2007).

- *Current Patterns of Russian Language Learning that can affect the Academic Adaptation of International Students:*

✓ *Learning a Language before Entering University:*

- Students who learn Russian before entering university are usually more successful in their academic adoption.
- This helps them to be able to effectively participate in classes and communicate with professors from the beginning.

✓ *Learning a Language while Studying:*

- Students who learn Russian while studying need more support.
- Providing Russian language training courses at the university and educational assistance can help these students.

✓ *Active Learning Methods:*

- Using active learning methods such as conversation, drama, language games, etc. can help students learn the language.
- This helps them to learn the language in a practical way.

✓ *Educational Support:*

- Providing educational support such as remedial classes, counseling and guidance can help students learn the language.
- This helps them identify and fix their problems.

✓ *Interaction with the Linguistic Environment:*

- Encouraging students to interact with the Russian language environment, such as participating in social and cultural activities, can contribute to language learning.
- This helps them to use the language in real situations.

• *Self-Directed Method in Learning Russian Language:*

The self-directed method in language learning means the ability of learners to plan, implement and evaluate their own learning process. This approach is based on the principle that learners should take responsibility for their own learning and be actively involved in it.

➤ *The Basics of Self-Management in Learning Russian Language:*• *Determination of Learning Objectives*

Students should be able to define their short-term, medium-term and long-term goals in learning Russian.

- ✓ These goals must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

• *Using effective Learning Strategies*

- ✓ Students should be familiar with various learning strategies such as memorizing, repeating, taking notes, summarizing, using multimedia tools, etc. and apply them in the learning process.
- ✓ These strategies help them understand, store and retrieve content more effectively.

• *Monitoring their Own Progress*

- ✓ Students should constantly monitor their progress in language learning. This can include recording progress in a notebook, analyzing strengths and weaknesses, and setting up corrective plans.
- ✓ This monitoring helps them to be aware of their progress and to change their plans if needed.

• *Evaluate your Performance*

Students should continuously evaluate their performance in language learning. This evaluation can include performing self-assessment tests, receiving feedback from professors and classmates, and comparing one's performance with the set goals.

- ✓ This assessment helps them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and improve their learning plans.

• *Interaction with the Linguistic Environment*

Students should actively participate in the Russian language environment. This can include communicating with native Russians, watching Russian movies and TV shows, reading Russian books and newspapers, etc.

III. CONCLUSION

Learning the Russian language in a self-directed way can have significant positive effects on the adaptation of international students in Russia. First, increasing students' motivation and active participation in the process of learning Russian will help them to learn this language more effectively. This will not only improve their communication skills in educational settings but also increase their self-confidence and independence in public settings.

In addition, developing international students' self-regulation skills in planning, monitoring and evaluating Russian language learning will help them learn the language more independently and effectively. This can lead to the improvement of their academic performance in the relevant fields.

In addition, students' better adaptation to the Russian linguistic and cultural environment will help them to interact more effectively with others, colleagues and other members of educational and scientific teams. This can lead to improving the quality of their education and life.

In sum, adopting a self-directed approach to learning Russian language can have significant positive effects on international students in Russia and lead to the improvement of their academic and clinical performance, increasing self-confidence and independence, and improving the quality of education.

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