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Коммуникационная стратегия китайской традиционной культуры на TASS.RU в соответствии с новой политикой Си Цзиньпина

В результате процесса мировой глобализации и политики открытости, проводимой председателем КНР Си Цзиньпином, особенно после его объявления о начале проекта «Новый Шёлковый путь», китайская традиционная культура привлекла внимание всего мира. Россия всегда интересовалась современным искусством Китая, традиционной культурой и архитектурой, а также сохранением культуры и наследия. Обширное поле информации о китайской культуре, российско-китайских отношениях и имидже Китая представлено в западных медиаагентствах. Российское информационное агентство ТАСС известно своей проработанной, целенаправленной и хорошо продуманной организацией новостных информационных потоков. Целью статьи является выявление стратегии, которую российское информационное агентство ТАСС использует в трансляции новостей о китайском весеннем фестивале после прихода к власти в Китае Председателя КНР Си Цзиньпина. Исследование основано на методе контент-анализа главного сайта ТАСС на русском языке ('tass.ru'). Результаты анализа позволяют сделать вывод о том, что количество новостей о китайском весеннем фестивале увеличилось под влиянием нескольких причин: стратегии ТАСС и новой политики председателя КНР Си Цзиньпина. 91 % новостного контента по этой же теме произвёл положительное впечатление на читателей.

Ключевые слова: TASS.RU, коммуникационная стратегия, Си Цзиньпин, китайский весенний фестиваль, китайский Новый год, трансляция культуры, культурный образ Китая

Introduction. Over the past few decades in the foreign humanities research, an interest in the study of the cultures of different countries and nations increased. The importance of research into the formation and perception of the country's culture, its traditions, people, and other aspects of their existence has been steadily increasing.

The study of traditional cultures of different nations has become particularly relevant in recent years due to the ever-accelerating process of globalization, which leads to the widespread universalization of various ethnic groups. Currently, there is almost no culture that develops in isolation, without the influence of other cultures.

It is well known that every nation seeks to preserve and maintain its traditional culture, which is necessary for the preservation of cultural integrity and appearance, as well as for the formation of national identity. Thus, despite the fact that at this point in the history of the world, cultures are actively interacting and deeply interpenetrating with each other, they retain their traditional features and characteristics. Moreover, although the world has become as small as a village, it has not lost its cultural and ethnic diversity, which is manifested in all spheres of life.

China takes the third place in the world in terms of territory and the first place in the world by population (1,388,232,693 people in 2017). Its territory is inhabited by 56 ethnic groups who speak more than 200 dialects. The titular nation of China, who calls themselves Han (汉族) is 92 % of the population, the remaining 8 % are officially recognized minorities.

In the modern world, Russian and Chinese cultures were once virtually isolated from each other. Nowadays they are closer in the strategic, economic, cultural and scientific-technical fields. The policy of cooperation undertaken by Russia and China after the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001 suggests that the relations between China and Russia in the near future will only expand. The growing global role of China in different aspects of our life has made it the subject of intense study of a number of leading scientists.

The topic of cross-cultural communication between Russia and China has become more intensive and multifaceted. Especially after the Chinese President's announcement about the New Silk Road (One Belt One Road) initiative in September 2013, the two countries started to expand their cooperation in technical, cultural and



economic fields. They know that to build a meaningful dialogue and an understandable view of the other side, it is necessary to consider the socio-cultural, mental and behavioral characteristics of the other party's culture. In particular, it is important to learn and to know about the other country's lifestyle, traditions, customs, history and literature.

In 1978, China launched the program of policy of reforms and openness, which has led not only to the growing economy of China but also to intense cultural exchange between the East and the outside world.

The young Chinese happily welcomed the European and American culture, holidays, music, food, even household habits. However, at the same time the conservative part of the Chinese society advocates for the preservation of traditions, in particular, urged not to forget their own traditional festivals, ancient Chinese literature and history. For example, Christmas, a purely European holiday, is now widely celebrated in China. However, first of all, it has lost its religious meaning and is perceived by the Chinese as just another excuse to relax and to have a good time. Secondly, in Europe, Christmas is a family celebration, but in modern China, Christmas is rather a social phenomenon, when streets are beautifully decorated, everyone has fun and people present apples to each other. Meanwhile, the main holiday of the year for China is the traditional Chinese New Year – the Spring Festival (春节Chun Jie), which is still perceived by the Chinese as the “real” New Year.

Traditional festivals are an important part of the traditional culture. They have their roots in the deep past and carry information about the history, features of national character formation and cultural code of the people, the tempo and rhythmic articulation of society. The participation of children and young people in traditional celebrations is instilling them with the interest and the respect to their roots, to the origins of the nation, awareness of the generations' continuity and responsibility to posterity.

For this reason, many governments realize the importance of preservation of the traditional culture and holidays and support them at the state level.

The Chinese traditional culture is a vast topic. It is full of ancient cultural events, superstitions, colorful festivals and customs. An important part of Chinese culture is Chinese traditional festivals. They display the Chinese national spirit and spirituality of the Chinese people in the country and abroad. The chosen example of the festival for this paper is the traditional Chinese

New Year – the Spring Festival (春节Chun Jie). It is the state and the family main festival of the year.

“Every year the end of winter and the coming of spring herald the first traditional festival of the year. The Spring Festival (New Year of the lunar calendar) is a major celebration for the Chinese. It is a grand and the most exciting festival with a long history and rich cultural connotations. The Spring Festival is at the beginning of the lunar year, commonly called “过年 Guo Nian”. Over the course of two thousand years, Chinese New Year customs have emerged, developed and changed. Chinese New Year customs were formalized during the Han Dynasty. After the social tumult at the end of the warring States Period (475—221 BC) and the Qin Dynasty, the government of Western Han (206 BC-AD 25) attempted to restore social order. People were more optimistic and a series of festive customs resulted” [14, pp.14–16].

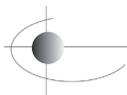
“Children particularly enjoy the Spring Festival because they can receive money, called “压岁钱Ya Sui Qian” money, on New Year's Eve. It is given to them by their elders with good wishes. It is presented in a red paper bag “红包 Hong Bao” and is distributed to children” [14, p.20].

This paper will concentrate on the coverage of the news regarding Chinese Spring Festival (Chinese New Year) in Russia under the new Chinese new policy, which was announced by the Chinese President Xi Jinping.

This paper has two limitations. First, there are a lot of news agencies in the Russian Federation but the oldest, the most reliable, state-owned and official source to all of them is TASS. In addition to its old ties and relations with the Chinese Xinhua news agency – the main and official news source in China – that lasts for more than 60 years. Therefore, the chosen news source to collect data from Russian media is TASS.

Second, the research is limited by the Chinese President Xi's first presidential term (November 15, 2012 – October 25, 2017), because Russia was the first foreign country which the Chinese President visited and that gave a sign that the Sino-Russian relations are getting stronger than ever under his role, and also because the estimated news amount regarding China in TASS is around 1500–2000 news topics a year, which is a very large number. That is why we would take only the Chinese New Year as a small example of the Chinese traditional culture.

It is important to understand how Russia, a strategic ally, a neighbor country and one of the closest friends, reported the news regarding



the Chinese traditional culture since President Xi started his days as the Chairman of China. It would also be interesting and useful to know how the Russian media main source of news, TASS News Agency, is broadcasting the news regarding Chinese culture. This paper also aims to find out in which category would the news regarding the Spring Festival fall in, positive, negative or neutral.

The study will help to create a new knowledge because there were not many works done on the President Xi's first presidential term that is because it has recently finished (October 25, 2017), there also were not many works done on how TASS News Agency covered the news stories about the Chinese traditional culture.

There are many works available about the Sino-Russian relations and the image in the Western media agencies, but they were political and economical in nature. This work covers the Russian media main news source's perspective of the news regarding the Chinese traditional culture, taking the Chinese New Year as an example in the period of time mentioned above.

Methodology. We use the content analysis method. Content analysis has been defined as a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.

This method is usually used in the research of foreign news coverage, because it can help the researchers to learn about news reports underlying attitude, biases and or repeat themes.

The content analysis would be a suitable method for this study, as this study would mainly focus on evaluating and analyzing the news regarding the Chinese Spring Festival inside the Russian News Agency TASS, which would be prevailing to the broadcasting strategy of the news regarding the Chinese traditional culture.

The sampling and data collection from Russian News Agency TASS website would be only from the Russian language website and not the English language website. The reason for this choice is that when the Russian people would like to read any news topics about China from a reliable source, their choice would be News Agency TASS, and their preferred language of search would be their mother tongue. So, if we aim to analyze how the Russian media broadcasts Chinese culture to their audience – the Russians – we would need to analyze only the Russian language news.

The population was generated by the keyword search in tass.ru website in Russian, there were three different methods. Method number one was to search by date of the Chinese New

Year adding the keywords (Китай, КНР), which means in English (China, PRC), for example in 2013 the Chinese New Year was on February 10, so we searched the news stories and articles published on the festival's day, the day before and the day after for any news about the Chinese Spring Festival.

Method number two in collecting data was the use of this set of keywords: (Китайский Новый Год, Праздник Весны, Китайский Фестиваль, Китайский Праздник, Китайский Праздник Весны), which means in English (Chinese New Year, Spring Festival, Chinese Festival, Chinese Holiday, Chinese Spring Festival), while using these keywords – one on a time, the author made the search time limit as we mentioned above (November 15, 2012 – October 25, 2017).

Method number three was finding the articles that appeared in the 'Read Also' section, those articles could not be found by any other search methods, and they are connected to our subject, so we called these articles 'Read Also' news.

Results. After searching the TASS News Agency main website for news regarding the Chinese New Year in 5 years, we found thirty-four news and articles relevant to the search topic. As we can see in Table No.1, the year of 2016 had more news published about the Chinese New Year than any other year, while the year of 2013 had only one news article published about the topic, the rest of the years' results are shown in the Table below.

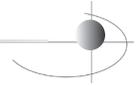
Table 1

News about Spring Festival on tass.ru (2013–2017)

YEAR	Number of the News Found
2013	1
2014	4
2015	6
2016	16
2017	7
Total	34

The data collection methods were different so that the author could be sure not to miss any news related to the search topic.

As mentioned above, there were three different methods to search for the news on tass.ru. During the data collection process, when using methods number one and number two, there was some news that duplicated in the search results for both methods. While some others appeared only when using some of the keywords of the second method, and did not appear when other methods were used.



At the same time, when some of the news articles found with the help of the first two methods also appeared in the 'Read Also' section, only two news articles were found

in the 'Read Also' section but yet couldn't be found by the first two methods. The results for each method on each year are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Results of the Three Data Collecting Methods

YEAR	TOTAL	Method 1 Keywords "China, PRC"	Method 2 Keywords about "Spring Festival"	Method 3 "Read Also" Section	Duplicated News Topics Amount
2013	1	-	1	-	1 (Method 3)
2014	4	1	2	1	2 (Method 3) 1 (Method 2)
2015	6	-	6	-	2 (Method 1) 3 (Method 3)
2016	16	7	9	-	7 (Method 2) 7 (Method 3)
2017	7	5	1	1	5 (Method 2)
Total	34	13	19	2	-

Using the first method in searching for news in 2013, there were no news in the search results, when the second method's keywords were used, there was only one news topic appeared in the search result. The same topic duplicated in the 'Read Also' section.

There were more searching results for news topics in 2014 than the year before. There were four news topics in the total search results: only one news topic appeared while using Method 1, while two appeared when using Method 2; and one news topic in the 'Read Also' section that could not be found by other methods. Two of these news topics were duplicated in the 'Read Also' section, and one commonly appeared in Method 1 results.

In the year 2015, the searching results continued to increase, six news topics were the total result for the search for that year. All of the news topics mainly appeared when using Method 2. Two of these news topics were duplicated when using Method 1, while three commonly appeared in the 'Read Also' section.

2016 had the highest results for all 5 years with the sixteen news topics. Seven news topics appeared using Method 1; when we used Method 2, we had nine news topics in the search results; while there was none in the 'Read Also' section. Seven news topics were duplicated using Method 2; while seven news topics commonly appeared in the 'Read Also' section.

In 2017, there were less search results than in 2016, but still there were more of them than in 2015. The results came with seven news topics that year, five appeared using Method 1; one news topic appeared using Method 2 and

one news topic appeared in the 'Read Also' section that could not be found by another method. There were five news topics that duplicated when using Method 2.

The results of sampling after using all of the three collecting methods mentioned above were categorized in three different categories according to their content:

1. The news that tell about the Spring Festival's culture, and it is called Festival's Culture;
2. The news that explain how modern Chinese are celebrating the Spring Festival and it is called Chinese Celebrations;
3. The news that show how the international community is celebrating the Chinese New Year and it is called International Celebrations.

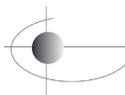
Table 3 shows the news topics amount after categorizing them according to their content.

Table 3

Categories according to News Content

Year	Festival's Culture	Chinese Celebration	International Celebration	TOTAL
2013	0	1	0	1
2014	3	1	0	4
2015	2	1	3	6
2016	1	6	9	16
2017	1	2	4	7
Total	7	11	16	34

Seven news topics, which categorized under 'Festival's Culture' were the news that ex-



plained the details and interesting facts about the Chinese traditional culture when celebrating the Spring Festival. For example, the news showed what are the Chinese Horoscopes, Chinese lunar calendar, the history of the celebrations, people's beliefs and rituals, reasons for celebrations, presents, customs, food, etc.

Eleven news topics that were categorized under the second category 'Chinese Celebrations' explained the modern Chinese people and government preparations and celebrations of the Chinese Spring Festival. For example, under the anti-corruption campaign led by the Chinese President Xi Jinping, the government officials forbid the employees to use the government funds for buying gifts for the New Year. Another example is the following: Chinese people who work or study in a place far from home (another country or another province in China) will start to come back home for celebrating the Chinese Spring Festival with their family, cleaning house, buy gifts, paint doors and windows, put calligraphy of good wishes on doors, make the New Year dinner for all the family members, visit relatives and friends to congratulate each other with gifts and wishes.

The last sixteen news topics which fell under the 'International Celebrations' category were the news explaining how the international community in our recent times is celebrating the Chinese New Year. For example, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg published a video with his wife and daughter to congratulate Chinese people with their New Year. Another example, Pope Francis for the first time in history congratulated the Chinese people on this holiday. He said, "The Western, Eastern world and China have every opportunity to maintain peace and balance".

Another example of this category was an article that contained a photo gallery that showed the Chinese New Year celebrated in other countries of Asia. There was also a news topic that explained how St. Petersburg – for the first time – will give the chance for its residents and guests to celebrate the Chinese New Year for three weeks, the city will organize Chinese traditional temple fair, performances of Opera, Wushu, Chinese chess, shadow theatre and many others events.

When the author analyzed the impression made by the news topics, whether it was positive, negative or neutral, it was discovered that sometimes the news headlines had a different impression from the content. For example, one of the news topics was headlined 'New Year on the Lunar Calendar', which is neutral. However, the same news topic content made a different impression, as it showed the Chinese Horoscopes,

Chinese lunar calendar and the Spring Festival's culture in a very positive frame. Table 4 shows the results according to the impression made by the news topics in both headlines and content.

Table 4

Impression made by the Spring Festival News

Year	Headline			Content			TOTAL
	+	∅	-	+	∅	-	
2013		1		1			1
2014	3	1		4			4
2015	4	2		6			6
2016	9	5	2	14	1	1	16
2017	5	2		6	1		7
Total	21	11	2	31	2	1	34

As shown in Table 4, the (+) sign stands for positive impression, the (∅) sign stands for neutral impression and the (-) sign stands for negative impressions. For example, 2015 had six news topics in the search results; all of the news topics content that year gave positive impressions, but only four headlines of these news topics gave a positive impression, while the headlines of the other two were neutral for the reader.

Discussion. As we can see from the results of the first year, there was only one news topic about the Chinese celebrations of the New Year. But we should remember that Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the idea of the New Silk Road Initiative (OBOR) in September 2013, which was after the celebration of the Chinese New Year, this could be the reason why the attraction to the Chinese traditional culture had not started yet.

During the next three years, the amount of the news regarding the Chinese New Year started to increase gradually. Russian and Chinese governments issued a cultural cooperation plan "2014–2016 Cooperation Plan between the Ministry of Culture in China and Russia" to introduce the two allies' cultures to their people.

In 2014, after the Chinese President's plans to choose Russia as his country's closest friend and ally, and after putting the openness plan in motion, the news topics regarding the Chinese New Year increased from only one to four news topics. In 2014, there was a direction from TASS News Agency to introduce more details about the Chinese traditional culture to the Russian audience, as three of the four published news topics were categorized under 'Festival's Culture', and only one news topic was explaining the modern Chinese way of celebrating it.

In 2015, the increase of the news amount continued and there were six news topics. As the



Chinese part in the world globalization has grown, the international attention – including Russia – to the Chinese traditional culture has grown, as we can see that 50 % of the news topics regarding Chinese New Year in 2015 were under the ‘International Celebrations’ category. While TASS kept on going in their direction and introduced more details about the Festival’s culture with two news topics and one news topic to explain how the Chinese prepare and celebrate their main festival.

The year 2016 was a very important year in the topic of cross-culture communications between China and Russia, as we noticed in the results table, there were sixteen news topics regarding the Chinese New Year, the big difference between this year and the others is: according to the “2014–2016 Cooperation Plan of the Ministry of Culture in China and Russia” and the “2016 Chinese Culture Festival / 中国文化节” in Russia, special performances were held in different areas of Russia, thirty events such as Chinese local culture week, music, dance, drama, martial arts, dialogues between Chinese and Russian stage arts, etc. The events extended to December of the same year and covered a vast area of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Irkutsk, Sakha (Yakutia) Republic, Samara, Omsk and other regions. The invitation attracted visitors from Chinese art groups in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Henan, Chongqing, Shaanxi and Xinjiang provinces and autonomous regions actively participated in introducing the latest achievements of the contemporary Chinese stage art development to the Russian audience.

Within nine out of sixteen news topics showing the international attention to the Chinese New Year, there was a noticed increase in the news topics that explained how the modern Chinese people and the Chinese government were preparing and celebrating their main festival of the whole year, six out of sixteen news topics came under the ‘Chinese celebrations’ category, and only one news topic under the ‘Festival’s Culture’ category.

Even though the year 2017 results were not as high as the year before, but it is still more than in each of the first three years. As the search results came up with seven news topics regarding the Chinese New Year, four out of seven news topics came to explain the international attention that is still growing. While two news topics covered the Chinese celebrations and one news topic covered the cultural side of the festival.

The majority of the news topics about the Spring Festival headlines had positive impressions, as twenty-one out of the total news found made a positive impression on the reader. The

news content had even more positive impressions than the headlines, with thirty-one positive news content out of thirty-four, which is around 91 %. While there were only two headlines with a neutral impression and one content that had a negative impression from the total of thirty-four.

An example for the news topic, which gave a negative impression by the headline and the content, was the news topic published in 2016. The news headline was ‘New Year’s fireworks in Beijing led to the formation of poison smog’. The content spoke about the fireworks and breaks of firecrackers in honor of the New Year on the lunar calendar – the year of the Monkey – led to the formation of toxic smog in Beijing.

The report continued, “As reported on Monday, the Center for Environmental Monitoring of the capital, the content of hazardous particulate matter PM 2.5 in some areas of the city was 750 micrograms per cubic meter, which is 30 times higher than the recommended by the World Health Organization.”

As we can see, when TASS reported such a negative topic, they just published the report from the Chinese Center for Environmental Monitoring in Beijing without any negative comment from the journalist or the News Agency.

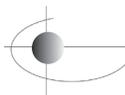
Conclusion. In this paper, the Chinese traditional culture’s most famous and main festival the Chinese Spring Festival (Chinese New Year) was considered in a journalistic context.

From what we mentioned above, it was obvious that the year 2016 had more news than any other year, as the effect of the Sino-Russian Cultural project in that year was obvious on the way TASS covered the Chinese New Year.

Results showed how the new policy that China followed since the Chinese President Xi Jinping came to power in the end of 2012 is affecting the cross-cultural communication strategy between Russia and China, as the broadcasted news topics regarding China’s most important traditional culture event – The Spring Festival – in TASS has grown since then.

The image of China and Chinese culture in TASS is absolutely positive. As we saw in the results above, there was a direction from TASS to give a positive impression to the readers who seek to know more about the Chinese New Year, even when covered a negative topic, there was no comment from the reporter or the Agency to the covered topic, only the facts.

Under the leadership of two friends, Xi and Putin, who have emphasized the great mutual relations between the two countries and under such positive journalistic background we could only conclude that the Sino-Russian relations are yet to be more prosperous and strong.



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Эльшеннави М. В. Коммуникационная стратегия китайской традиционной культуры на TASS.RU в соответствии с новой политикой Си Цзиньпина // Гуманитарный вектор. 2018. Т. 13, № 2. С. 60–66. DOI: 10.21209/1996-7853-2018-13-2-60-66.

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The Communication Strategy of Chinese Traditional Culture in TASS.RU under Xi's New Policy

As a result of the process of world globalization and the policy of openness pursued by the Chinese president Xi Jinping, especially after his announcement of the OBOR initiative, Chinese traditional culture has attracted the attention of the entire world. Russia has always been interested in China's modern arts, traditional culture and architecture, as well as cultural preservation and heritage. There are many works available about the Chinese culture, the Sino-Russ relations and the image of China in the Western media agencies etc. Russian inform agency TASS is known with its elaborated, focused and well-thought-out organization of news information flows. This paper objective is discovering the communication strategy used by TASS in broadcasting the news regarding Chinese Spring Festival after President Xi came to power in China. The study is based on the methodology of content analysis. The analyzed data were collected from TASS main web-site 'tass.ru' in Russian language. It's concluded that the amount of news about Chinese Spring Festival has been increasing gradually under the effect of both reasons: TASS strategy and president Xi's new policy. It was also concluded that 91 % of the news content regarding the same topic made a positive impression on the readers.

Keywords: TASS.RU, Communication Strategy, Xi Jinping, Chinese Spring Festival, Chinese New Year, Culture Broadcasting, Cultural Image of China

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