

Using Digital Educational Technology in the Migrant Adaptation Process

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the role of digital education in the process of adaptation of migrants. Based on an analysis of existing Russian and European studies, the authors conclude that training is crucial for the successful adaptation and integration of migrants in the host environment. The Russian practices of digital education are analyzed. Based on the study, it was concluded that the existing digital educational resources are not enough for the process of training migrants to meet their needs. On the example of a portrait of a Russian migrant obtained empirically, recommendations are given on the development of personalized educational content. The authors recommend this content to be differentiated for different groups of migrants according to a number of signs. These include: the degree of language proficiency and the level of education of migrants, as well as the region of his new residence.

Keywords: *migrant adaptation, online education, educational content, electronic resources*

1. INTRODUCTION

Statistics show that the Russian labor market is becoming increasingly attractive to young people from Central Asian countries. They are characterized by a low level of education, poor knowledge of the Russian language and lack of professional training [1]. Most migrants come to Russia to earn money.

In conditions of increased migration flows, the processes of migrants' adaptation play a significant role. The strategy for their successful adaptation includes access to information, legal status, and infrastructure. One of the main conditions for the successful adaptation of a migrant in the host society is knowledge of the language of the host country. It makes it possible to obtain information on the rules of employment, reduces the chances of being involved in informal employment, expands opportunities for contacts with the local population, ensures the realization of the socio-economic rights of a migrant, etc. Since January 1, 2015, Russia has had an infrastructure for cultural and linguistic adaptation of citizens of the CIS states who have arrived for the purpose of employment - when applying for patents for work, this category of foreign workers should confirm their knowledge of the Russian language.

The question of how to provide access to knowledge, information and education, in order to integrate those who are arriving or already in Russia, is becoming a priority. It is worth emphasizing that most migrants are not aimed at formal education and often receive it informally. Note that this is not Russian specifics, but a global trend. For

example, according to a study by the international organization (Save the Children), migrant children remain in school for an average of 1.5 years after arriving in Greece, a country that accepts a large number of migrants. [2]

Various studies show that learning is critical to the adaptation of migrants [3,4,5]. The importance of providing education for migrants and refugees has been recognized by national and international organizations. The document revealing the main provisions of the New Skills Agenda for Europe program recognizes the need for adequate education for migrants and refugees [2]. This approach goes beyond formal access to education or recognition of prior learning, and also recognizes the importance of new forms of education.

In this context, the role of digital learning in expanding access to education is gaining new significance. The digitalization of education is considered by researchers as a cost-effective solution. For example, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is already considering e-learning as an opportunity to provide refugee education [2]. In Russia, there are also digital platforms for online training of migrants. However, despite the potential of digital learning, the use of massive open online courses has not found wide application [6,7]. This is due, first of all, to the lack of the required amount of free materials, courses and training opportunities for migrants [8].

Principles for developing open online courses for migrants.

A large number of studies are devoted to the massive introduction of online training for migrants. The main works in this area relate to the principles of development

and provision of digital educational content. These include: focus on digital skills and self-study [9,10,11]; personalized training focused on meeting the individual needs and preferences of students [12]; the use of social networks as valuable tools for searching and exchanging resources, migrant participation in society [13], finding a niche in the labor market [14] and education [15].

At the same time, the findings of a number of studies suggest that independent learning may be ineffective due to the fact that certain cultural traditions and learning skills may differ from those proposed [16]. Migrants and refugees prefer educational approaches that are tailored to their specific needs and characteristics and include support mechanisms [17].

Personalized training is hampered by the fact that migrants are a heterogeneous target group [18]. Educational resources should take into account a large number of factors when developing training programs: the number of migrants, their origin, previous education, their place of residence, literacy and language skills [16].

Despite the fact that online learning is an effective way of transferring knowledge, it is not entirely suitable for the development of contacts and personal connections [19]. At the same time, migrants need more personal contacts necessary for their adaptation [20]. Thus, studies show that modern digital resources cannot yet fully replace full-time education. Modern studies do not solve this problem, do not try to identify differences between types of digital learning for specific educational levels or for specific groups of students.

The subject and purpose of the study.

The subject of our work was Russian online resources with educational content for migrants

The purpose of the study is to identify the problems of online education on existing online resources, taking into account the portrait of a Russian migrant obtained on the basis of analysis of sociological data, considering this form of education as an element of the process of adaptation of migrants.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

A combination of methods was during the work: a literature review, an analysis of existing practices of free digital education for migrants and refugees, an analysis of statistical data, and empirical methods. The article presents an analysis of the results of a sociological study "Integration of second-generation migrants in returning 18-30 years in Russia". This large-scale research project, combining quantitative and qualitative methods, designed to describe and explain the characteristics of the integration of second-generation migrants in Russia, was carried out in 2017 by the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration. The study was based on the methodology of mixed methods and included a quantitative survey of the second generation of migrants (N = 302) and a series of qualitative interviews (164 interviews). The survey was conducted on the Internet with targeting in social

networks, and its results were compared with the results of all-Russian surveys of the corresponding age group. Qualitative interviews were conducted in Moscow, Sverdlovsk and Tver regions, as well as in the Krasnodar Territory. In addition, the methodology of in-depth regional research was tested in the Krasnodar Territory, which allows us to study the context of integration of the second generation [21].

The level of education received was analyzed separately for students (education is in the process) and separately for the age group of 24-30 years (education received). The results of the survey, as well as data on socio-demographic characteristics describing the wealth and income of informants aged 18-30 years and their families, as well as the characteristics of their education or training, were placed in a special data array [21].

The empirical basis for analyzing data on the level of education and qualifications of migrants was the results of a study conducted by the Center for Ethnic and Regional Studies commissioned by the Higher School of Economics. Nearly 8,500 migrants were interviewed in eight large regions of the Russian Federation. Most of the respondents (72%) came to Russia from Central Asian countries. Of these, 41.4% of respondents came from Uzbekistan, 20% from Tajikistan and 10.6% from Kyrgyzstan [22].

3. RESEARCH RESULTS

An analysis of empirical data showed that three quarters of Russian migrants (76.1%) are people of active working age (up to 40 years). The youngest workers come to Russia from Central Asia - half of them (51.8%) are younger than 30 years old. Among those who arrived from the countries of the Caucasus, 40% are such, among representatives of the peoples of the European part of the CIS - 35.8%.

Level of education of respondents: A quarter of the surveyed migrants (26.2%) have secondary specialized or secondary vocational education. Every sixth (16.5%) has a higher or incomplete higher education. The lowest level of education was noted among respondents from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Among immigrants from these states, the proportion of people with secondary education and below is 63.3%. Every eighth migrant representing the peoples of Central Asia does not even have a secondary education. The later foreigners arrived in Russia, the more people among them were without professional education. So, among those who arrived in Russia at the end of the 20th century, every fifth migrant (21.3%) had a higher education. In 2011, only 12%. Among those who entered the Russian Federation in the early 2000s, people with secondary general education - 39.5%, with secondary special (vocational) - 31.4%. In 2011, there were already half of people with secondary education (50.4%), with secondary specialized - only 24.1%. The proportion of people without education over the specified period arose from 7.9% to 13.6%.

The analysis of available online educational resources for migrants showed that there are practically no federal or

regional online resources and applications with free access in Russia with which migrants can learn a language, receive additional education or qualification. We have reviewed the Russian online practices - the organization of information and educational activities. The most successful of them are:

"Ugolki migranta". Information points for migrants based on the library network of St. Petersburg. In the library, a migrant can get information about the migration and labor legislation of the Russian Federation, the procedure for preparing the necessary documents, the possibilities of adaptation and receiving free help - both in print and in electronic form. Information about the activities of non-profit organizations, about passing tests on knowledge of the Russian language, history and legislation of the Russian Federation and materials for preparing for it is also distributed in the "Ugolki migranta".

Official electronic resources of regional authorities. They inform migrants about the norms of migration, labor and housing legislation, the possibility of obtaining state support, in rare cases they contain materials on history, culture, useful tips, contacts of public and state organizations. Interregional information portals belong to the same group.

Mobile apps for migrant workers and their families. The applications allow the migrant to obtain the necessary information about the rules of staying in the Russian Federation, preparing the necessary documents and the possibilities of adaptation and naturalization in Russia.

Online - quest about the rules of behavior of a migrant in Moscow. An online quest in a playful way allows getting acquainted with the procedure for obtaining patents for work in the city of Moscow, and also contains useful information about the city, its attractions and the transport system. At the same time, the reference book "On the rules of conduct in Moscow" attached to the quest aroused negative reviews from experts due to poor design.

Information portal for Tajik labor migrants. The site provides useful information about the stay in Russia, including the forms of necessary documents, important news about migration processes in Russia and Tajikistan, an extensive archive of life stories of Tajik migrants, a regular consultation on appeals from Tajik citizens.

Forum of immigrants "Back2Russia". It is a large platform for discussing the problems of immigrants and compatriots traveling to different regions of Russia.

Website for migrants "Welcome to the Leningrad region!". The site of the subject of the Russian Federation to help migrant workers. The site contains information on migration legislation, the rules of entry into the Russian Federation, registration of permits, obtaining a temporary residence permit, residence permit and citizenship of the Russian Federation in the Leningrad Region, useful tips on employment and life in the Russian Federation, information on the Leningrad Region and contacts of state and public organizations in the areas of the Leningrad region.

"We are Migrants" is a thematic group on Facebook. The group discusses the problems of migrants who applied for help to public organizations, post news on labor migration

in Russia and abroad, materials from public organizations, job search proposals, etc.

Videos to help migrants. Actual advice on social and legal adaptation in an accessible form can be found on YouTube channels of public and state organizations.

As for the directly educational online resources for migrants, all of them work on a paid basis and are aimed at preparing for the exam in the Russian language.

4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results of the study allowed us to come to a number of conclusions. The development of online education in the Russian Federation is hindered by a number of barriers. Firstly, migrants do not always have a stable Internet connection. This condition is a priority for participation in online education. It is possible to solve this problem by developing offline and m-learning mechanisms, as well as using applications that can work with low Internet bandwidth. This problem is also noted by European researchers. Their work emphasizes that an important condition for expanding the use of online learning resources is that they can be accessed and used anywhere [23].

The second problem is related to the fact that migrants and refugees lack general information about what is offered in the field of online education. This is due to ignorance of digital educational resources or the fact that the proposals are not presented in their native language. Migrants, as a rule, are not familiar with online resources that directly target them as a group. The most understandable and well-known channel for obtaining information for migrants is social networks, especially various groups that target migrants. But such resources do not use their potential for online education. They provide a platform for communication and distribution of reference information. However, social networks can be targeted at educating people who cannot access other types of education due to the lack of documents on prior education, the high cost of education or legal barriers.

Most of the Internet resources for migrants have a variety of purposes. There is not a single free resource aimed only at the provision of educational services. Thus, language learning resources often contain employment-related content and provide recommendations for overcoming administrative and legal obstacles.

We propose allocating online resources for learning a language in a special group. Such resources should have free access, mobile applications and many functions for translation, as well as training videos. Universities can provide free access to their educational resources to provide free digital language learning for migrants.

The next group of online resources needed by migrants should be aimed at improving civic integration. These resources serve as informational guides. The knowledge provided through these initiatives typically covers civil rights, housing, health insurance, and education. There may also be information on how to get to know the locals, how to apply for employment, and what different sectors

of employment require workers. On the same resources, you can post information about the history and culture of the host country, as well as use them as part of adaptation courses. Various technologies can use these resources: platforms, applications, YouTube, video, mobile applications and online courses. A clear strategy for bringing educational initiatives to the attention of students, sponsors, partners and the general public is of decisive importance in promoting such educational online resources. In this process, the use of social networks can be a good tool, both for promoting offers and for studying the needs of studying migrants [24].

Note that our findings are confirmed in the results of European studies. Using a personalized approach to learning is one of the main success factors for a variety of digital migrant education programs in the EU. Such programs, as educational material for the training of migrants, become an adequate tool if a contextual and culturally sensitive approach is used. Migrant students are seen as a special target group with needs that go beyond simply providing educational content and information [16].

5. CONCLUSION

Online educational resources for migrants have some specific characteristics. Firstly, we found that it is very important to evaluate the previous language and academic knowledge of students. This is necessary for the development of personalized educational content. Secondly, the study of language should be a cross-cutting component of all educational resources. This can be an independent goal of an educational resource and a secondary goal of a resource for employment or the study of culture. Finally, online education should be promoted by employers, authorities, non-profit organizations. This is a key issue and may affect the employability of migrants. In our opinion, the use of online resources, which are supported by employers and ideally developed in partnership with them, can be a valuable solution and help migrants learn social norms.

Despite this, it is worth emphasizing that digital learning alone cannot effectively provide social adaptation. For migrants, face-to-face contacts with the host environment (with local residents, employers, officials or other refugees and migrants) are required. Thus, online education should be part of a comprehensive effort to adapt migrants. Integrated training technologies are aimed at adapting the content and training paths of migrants and can contribute to improving learning outcomes.

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