

V. Dranich, 11th Form

Scientific Supervisors – O.A. Pavlyukovich

Lyceum Polessky State University

Belarus is a stable and growing country, opened for the whole world. However, for most foreign nationals our country still remains a mystery and legendary country. Picture of the country, i.e. its image is a complex symbiosis, the sum of a large number of variables. The image of Belarus consists of many components of historical heritage, sport achievements, export components, political actions, mentality of the nation. In the on-line survey which was carried out in November 2015 Belarusians said that the country's image includes:

nature (27% of 9529 respondents think so);

the outside world's opinion (19%);

the views of the citizens (9%).

Belarusians, for the most part, believe that Belarus is a transit country (51% of 4538 respondents), intellectual (33%) and tourist (10%) country [1]. But this, as the inhabitants of the country sees themselves today, but it is difficult to say how it is perceived outside the borders.

To answer this question we examined what variants of the name Belarus (Belarusian) occur in the English language, through the context of use, the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations tried to see the views of the British about Belarus, Belarusians and Belarussian, reflected in the texts of the British National Corpus (BNC) [2]. BNC is a 100 million word collection of samples of written and spoken language from a wide range of sources, designed to represent a wide cross-section of British English from the later part of the 20th century, both spoken and written.

The written part of the BNC (90%) includes, for example, extracts from regional and national newspapers, specialist periodicals and journals for all ages and interests, academic books and popular fiction, published and unpublished letters and memoranda, school and university essays, among many other kinds of text. The spoken part (10%) consists of orthographic transcriptions of unscripted informal conversations (recorded by volunteers selected from different age, region and social classes in a demographically balanced way) and spoken language collected in different contexts, ranging from formal business or government meetings to radio shows and phone-ins. BNC includes many different styles and varieties, and is not limited to any particular subject field, genre or register. It deals with modern British English, not other languages used in Britain.

In our study, we examined which variants of the names of the Republic of Belarus are found in the English language, what is their frequency and compatibility. Contexts for *Belarusian*, *Byelorussians*, *Belarusian* were also considered. To achieve these goals, we used a simple search in the BNC (search for a fixed word). Changing of search parameters would not lead to a change in the number of results; the units selected by us cannot be verbs, and the contexts with the possessive forms of these units are not revealed by us.

In the English language of the research period, the British call our country as *Byelarus*, *Byelorus*, *Belorussia*, *Byelorussia*, *Belarus*, moreover the names *Byelarus*, *Belorussia* and *Byelorussia* are prioritized. The name *the republic of Belarus* met only once. Based on the analysis of the BNC contexts, Belarus is:

- 1) the country on the territory of which there is a nuclear arsenal;
- 2) the arena of several wars, the country that suffered from wars;
- 3) the country affected by the Chernobyl disaster;
- 4) the country with a conservative ruling that strictly adheres to its legislation;
- 5) one of the former Soviet republics, which became an independent state.

The British associate Belarus with the Chernobyl disaster and as the country that suffered from several wars, but in the minds of the British, Belarus does not act like a guerrilla country. At the same time, the presence of a nuclear arsenal on the territory of our country and the political situation inside the country is essential for the British.

The presence of a large number of different names indicates that the Republic of Belarus is a young state, it's relatively recently become independent.

As the results of the research showed, the representation inside the country differs from the ideas about the republic among foreign citizens. For example, the Belarusians see themselves as tolerant and calm people, however, we have not found any contexts confirming that the British think so.

As in the era of globalization, not only transnational corporations, but also countries have joined to the competition to create and effectively maintain their own image, the realization of how foreign citizens see us is simply necessary. The formation of a positive image of Belarus has become in recent years one of the most important tasks of foreign policy. Bearing in mind our historical experience, it is necessary to position Belarus as a powerful and modern, dynamically developing state.

References

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