

A Case Study on the Impact of Korean Drama on Russian-born Korean Language Learners

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Abstract

Objectives This study aims to explore the influence of Korean dramas on Russian learners. In order to achieve the purpose of this study, three research questions were established in this study. First, what are the positive and negative effects of Korean dramas on Russian learners? Second, what are the meanings of Korea and Korean culture to them? Third, how have the lives of Russian learners changed through Korean dramas?

Methods For this study 10 Russian-born Korean learners were selected as research participants. First, Korean learner is a person who is self-taught Korean language or is learning Korean language at an educational institution. Second, a person who can communicate in Korean was selected. Third, in this study, people who participated voluntarily and actively were selected.

Conclusions As a result of the in-depth interviews, the following three themes emerged. The first theme is the negative and positive effects of K-dramas. The second theme is Korean culture and perception of Korean people through Korean dramas. The third theme is Changes in the lives of Russian learners through Korean dramas. As a result, Watching dramas, a fun activity, helps Russian-born Korean language learners interest and passion for learning and helps them continue learning.

Keywords K-drama, Korean Language, Russia, Hallyu, K-storylines

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1. Introduction

In recent years Korean popular culture has aroused great interest from foreigners. As the global popularity of Korean culture continues along with the Korean Wave the number of foreigners who are interested in Korea and want to learn Korean through K-pop Korean movies and Korean entertainment programs continues to increase. Unlike existing media such as newspapers and TVs, new media refers to new media in which users can quickly communicate with each other using devices that can connect to the Internet. Recently, due to rapid scientific and technological innovation, new media communication is developing rapidly. Therefore, the influence of new media is growing and it has become an indispensable role in society. Thanks to advances in science and technology it is possible to access new information and culture whenever and

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wherever connected to the Internet. As a result, the Korean Wave, such as music drama, and games, is spreading not only in Korea but also around the world. Among them, the drama gained a lot of popularity in the markets of China, Japan, and Southeast Asia.

The drama “What is Love” was the first Korean drama to be exported to China in 1997 and screened on TV, making it a huge hit. Since then, many dramas such as “A Star in My Heart”, “All About Eve”, “Autumn Fairy Tale” and “Winter Sonata” have been exported, and Korean dramas acted as a catalyst for the Hallyu craze in China and other Asian countries. It is believed that the reason Korean dramas have created a huge craze in Asia, such as China and Japan, is that Asians have many similarities in thinking and indirectly express their dreams and hopes. With the development of video media and the Internet, the Korean Wave has now expanded beyond Asia to the world, and Korean dramas are popularly aired in many countries, and even remakes and screens of their own versions have been shown. The Korean Wave started in 1999 when Korean dramas were introduced to the CIS countries and it was especially popular among teenagers. Adolescents watch Korean dramas at a young age and fall in love with people they met in the media(Kalanova D, Kim Y, Azizova F, 2017).

In general, Hallyu(한류) is a phenomenon in which people like, admire, and enjoy Korean popular culture that is known to the world through the media. The new word “Hallyu” first appeared in late 1999 through the Beijing Youth Club in China. Hallyu is not just a cultural product, but has also had a significant impact on Korea's image and product image. Korean dramas and music were easily accepted by viewers from CIS countries, and the Korean Wave became very popular.

The Russian audience is attracted by the fact that the drama always has a rich plot. For example, love triangles, quadrangles, lost brothers, twin sisters, angry mothers who leave them, swapping bodies, destinies, extramarital affairs, and so on. The attraction of drama lies in the elaboration of nuances. Korean drama, through the representation of the body, seeks to convey to the viewer the Korean ideal of beauty, rooted in traditional Korean and, more broadly, Eastern culture, based on the harmony of the external and internal in a person.

“Winter Sonata”(2002) is a drama that caused a big sensation in the CIS countries. In particular, “Jewel in the Palace”(2003) was aired in 91 countries around the world, and subjects such as family, music, and fashion in the drama gained popularity in the countries where it was aired. It can be said that “Jewel in the Palace” was very successful in that it conveyed the cultural beauty of Korea to people around the world.

Therefore this study aims to explore the influence of Korean dramas on Russian learners and how their lives have changed through Korean dramas. In order to achieve the purpose of this study, three research questions were established in this study. First, what are the positive and negative effects of Korean dramas on Russian learners. Second, how do you perceive Korean culture and Korean people seen through Korean dramas, and what are the meanings of Korea and Korean culture to them. Third, how have the lives of Russian learners changed through Korean dramas?

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Characteristics and types of Korean dramas

As Korean popular culture spreads widely around the world due to the Korean Wave, the number of learners who want to learn Korean is also increasing significantly. The reason that Korean popular culture has had such a great influence on the people of Central Asia is probably because Korean culture accommodates their ideas well and indirectly realizes their dreams, hopes, and ideals. The reason dramas attract people's hearts is that they reflect people's thoughts and tell stories about the joys and sorrows of life through audiovisual themes such as love, friendship, and family love, and show various aspects of authentic life history.

South Korea is a producer of a highly liquid serial product, it is an important export item. K-drama series are bought by countries not only in the Asian region, but also in the USA, Latin America, India, and the CIS countries. Russian producers are interested in South Korean serials because they have ratings with more than a few billion views

(at the expense of the Chinese audience).

The Internet which creates a simulacrum of live communications gives rise to Russian forums for drama fan mainly for a youth audience, where they exchange links to view contents make amateur translations of the text. Some users, without waiting for subtitles watch TV shows in the original. Thinking out dialogues for their favorite characters the audience finds charm in the form of a beautiful picture on universal topics like loves, friendship, jealousy, betrayal, motherly love from a different angle.

Almost every K-drama has funny moments, there is a trickster character. The plot makes the audience smile and even laugh. The absence of vulgarity, the touchingness of funny scenes distinguish such series from other products. Viewers in the process of watching can both cry and laugh, it is easy and good to spend their free time, which is why the K-drama is such a success. In the K-drama, the main characters almost always have loyal friends - allies who do their best to help achieve the goal.

The K-drama attracts the audience with the absence of hackneyed Western clichés. However, no one can completely escape from the stamps. In the Korean dramas themselves, there are already Asian clichés, such as the hero carries a girlfriend on his back, squeezes his hand, rides a bicycle, everyone can die, but not lovers. Sometimes there is an open ending, but this is rather rare. The logical ending is more in demand. In dramas, Korean society is much more hierarchical than European society. People of different financial levels have huge differences in education, upbringing, culture. Misalliances are not welcomed by society, heroes in love have to go through a much more difficult path. The family will hinder their feelings more than in Europe, will not give blessings.

A distinctive feature of the K-dramas is the careful study of the picture, where each frame is like a poster, for example, flowering trees, rugged terrain, beautiful houses and furnishings, designer items, cars.

Unlike Western series, in Korean series the philosophical concepts of good-evil, friend-stranger, friendship-betrayal are shown differently. In Eastern psychology, there is nothing absolute, everything is not built on the opposition of white - black, truth - lies, but is drawn in halftones, there is no absolute evil, as well as absolute good.

The duality of life in all manifestations is emphasized. The boundary between one's own and another's is blurred. Contemplation is the main virtue, "sacrifice yourself for your beloved", all problems are transient, there are no simple solutions to complex issues, life priceless and endless. These oriental wisdoms are known to many thanks to interethnic communication. The viewer is interested in watching their embodiment on the TV screen. Also, the drama is distinguished by a drawn-out beginning of the story. But if the viewer has not switched, there is a high probability that he will watch this series to the end, falling under the spell of touching sentimentality. The drama, filmed in the popular style, is characterized by the expressive manner of the actors. Overacting, exaggeration of conveying the emotions of the characters are striking to the Russian audience, accustomed to a different style of acting.

3. Research method

3.1. Research participants

For this study 10 Russian-born Korean learners were selected as research participants. The criteria for selecting research participants are as follows. First, people included in the range of Korean learners were selected. A Korean learner is a person who is self-taught Korean language or is learning Korean language at an educational institution.

The reason Korean language learners were selected as research participants is because they have different images and perceptions of Korea and the influence they receive through dramas. While most ordinary people know about Korea through the Seoul Olympic Games or through the media, Korean learners mostly get to know Korea through Korean dramas. This is because the learner who learns the Korean language learns not only the language but also the culture and society of the country. Second, a person who can communicate in Korean was selected. This is because if you do not communicate in Korean, you cannot fully understand the meaning of K-dramas. Third, in this study, people who participated voluntarily and actively were selected.

The characteristics of the research participants are as follows <Table 1>.

Looking at the characteristics of the research participants, there were a total of 10 study participants. Of these, 7 were female and 3 were male. The age of the study participants ranged from 18 to 24 years old. The majors of the study participants were the Department of Korean Language, 6 students, and the Department of Interpretation and Translation, 4 students. Two of the study participants got to know Korea for the first time through dramas such as “City Hunter, 2011” 2 people, in “You from another star, 2013” 3 people, in “Boys Over Flowers, 2009” and 3 people in “The Heirs, 2013” 2 people. Their favorite Korean dramas are “Boys Over Flowers” 3 people, “Secret garden”, 2 people, “You are beautiful, 2009” 2 people, “My Princess 2011” 2 people and “Personal taste, 2010” 1 person.

K-dramas offer a unique window into Korean culture, traditions, and societal norms. Russian-born Korean language learners may be fascinated by the cultural aspects depicted in these dramas, such as family dynamics, traditional values, and Korean etiquette.

The reasons why the study participants watched K-dramas were “Drama genre”, “Characters who appeared in dramas”, “Hobby”, “For learning Korean language”, and “Relieving stress”.

Drama genre. Korean dramas are known for their compelling and emotionally engaging storylines. They often feature a mix of romance, comedy, drama, and suspense, which appeals to a wide range of viewers. Russian-born Korean language learners may appreciate the captivating narratives and find it easier to stay motivated to learn Korean while following these stories.

Characters who appeared in dramas. Korean dramas are renowned for their high production values, including cinematography, acting, and music. The visually appealing and well-executed nature of Korean dramas can capture the attention and interest of viewers, including Russian-born learners.

Hobby. Korean dramas are known for their captivating storylines, well-developed characters, and emotional depth. Many people enjoy watching them simply for the entertainment value they provide. It's a way to relax, unwind, and escape into a

different world for a while. For Russian-born Korean language learners watching K-dramas is a multifaceted hobby that encompasses entertainment, cultural exploration, language learning, and community engagement. It offers a unique and immersive experience that appeals to a wide range of people with diverse interests.

For learning Korean language. Korean dramas provide an immersive language learning experience. By watching dramas, learners can familiarize themselves with the spoken language, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Dramas often use everyday conversational language, making it easier for learners to pick up and practice Korean expressions.

Relieving stress. Many Russian-born Korean language learners find watching K-dramas to be a great way to relieve stress. K-dramas often transport viewers to a different world, allowing them to temporarily forget about their own worries and immerse themselves in the lives and stories of the characters. This escapism can provide a much-needed break from the stresses of daily life. Also K-dramas are known for their ability to evoke a wide range of emotions. Laughing, crying, and experiencing heartfelt moments while watching K-dramas can be a cathartic release for many people, helping them to process their own emotions and alleviate stress.

K-dramas have gained immense popularity globally, and they are widely accessible through various streaming platforms. Russian-born Korean language learners may be influenced by the widespread popularity of K-dramas among their peers or on social media, leading them to explore and develop an appreciation for this form of entertainment.

It's important to note that these reasons can vary from individual to individual, and not all Russian-born Korean language learners may necessarily share the same level of enthusiasm for Korean dramas.

<Table1> Characteristics of research participants

Participants	Gender	Age	Major	Drama through which learned about Korea	Favorite drama	Reasons to watch Korean dramas
Participant A	Female	18	Korean Language Department	“City Hunter, 2011”	“You are beautiful”	Hobby
Participant B	Female	19	Korean Language Department	“You from another star, 2013”	“My Princess “	Drama genre
Participant C	Female	20	Korean Language Department	“You from another star, 2013”	“My Princess”	Hobby
Participant D	Female	20	Department of Interpretation and Translation	“Boys Over Flowers, 2009”	“Personal taste”	Drama genre
Participant E	Male	21	Korean Language Department	“The Heirs, 2013”	“You are beautiful”	Hobby
Participant F	Male	21	Korean Language Department	“City Hunter, 2011”	“Boys Over Flowers”	For learning korean language
Participant G	Male	22	Korean Language Department	“The Heirs, 2013”	“Secret garden”	Characters who appeared in dramas
Participant H	Female	22	Korean Language Department	“Boys Over Flowers, 2009”	“Boys Over Flowers”	Characters who appeared in dramas
Participant I	Female	23	Korean Language Department	“You from another star, 2013”	“Secret garden”	For learning korean language
Participant J	Female	24	Department of Interpretation and Translation	“Boys Over Flowers, 2009”	“Boys Over Flowers”	Relieving stress

3.2. Data collection and analysis

In this study, data were collected through literature study and in-depth interviews. For this study, 10 Korean language learners from Russia were selected as research participants and in-depth interviews were conducted with them. The in-depth interview

was conducted using Zoom from August 1 to August 31, 2022. Before starting the interview, explain to the research participants that the contents of the study and that they will be recorded during the interview. And informed consent was obtained. The interview was conducted from 90 to 120 minutes in Russian and Korean, the preferred languages of the research participants. The time was taken with the utmost consideration for the research participants. The interview method was semi-structured based on a questionnaire prepared in advance and conducted openly. The questionnaire consisted of two main questions. First, we explored positive and negative effects of Korean dramas on Russian learners. Second, we asked how they perceive Korean culture and Korean people seen through the Korean drama and what are the meanings of Korea and Korean culture to them. Third, how have the lives of Russian learners changed through Korean dramas

4. Results and Conclusion

This study was composed of case-to-case (by theme) analysis using the qualitative case study method. This study was composed of case-to-case (by theme) analysis using the qualitative case study method. Case-to-case analysis seeks important issues that appear between cases and compares cases to find and analyze commonalities or differences. The details of the analysis are shown in <Table 2>.

<Table2> Case-to-case analysis

Meaning Classification Content	Contents
1. Positive and Negative Effects of Korean Dramas on Russian Learners	Success is possible with hard work.
	Love is possible between the rich and the poor.
	Respect and value for parents.
	Too much attention to the appearance of people.
	Idealization of life and people.
2. Korean culture and perception of Korean people through Korean dramas	The sea and mountains, a paradise of k-pop with many beauties and handsome men.

3. Changes in the lives of Russian learners through Korean dramas	A lot of effort for a good life in Korea
	Buying a house in Korea Picking stars in the sky.
	A diligent lifestyle.
	Only Korean style clothes.
	Dream to live and study in Korea.

To analyze the in-depth interview content, it was first divided into three main themes. The first major theme is the negative and positive effects of Korean dramas on Russian-born learners who are fans of Korean dramas, and it includes three sub-themes. The first sub-theme is “Success is possible with hard work”, and we will to explore the positive influence of Korean dramas. The second sub-theme is named “Love is possible between the rich and the poor”, and we will examine and analyze the perceptions that Russian learners had about the existence of love between the rich and the poor through the positive influence of Korean dramas. The third sub-theme is “Respect and value for parents”, and as a positive influence, we will to examine the perception of parents that the research participants had through Korean dramas. The fourth sub-theme is “Too much attention to the appearance of people”, and we will to explore the negative effects of Korean dramas. And the last sub-theme is “Idealization of life and peopl”, and we try to examine what the research participants started to idealize people after they started watching Korean dramas.

The second major theme is “Korean culture and perception of Korean people through Korean dramas” and consists of three sub-themes. The first sub-theme is titled “The sea and mountains, a paradise of k-pop with many beauties and handsome men”, and in this sub-theme we will explore the perceptions that Russian learners have when they say Korea. The second sub-theme is called “A lot of effort for a good life in Korea”, we will explore the Korean life that Korean dramas show. The third sub-theme is “Buying a house in Korea Picking stars in the sky”, and it is intended to examine the perception of floating commercial in Korea. The third main theme is “Changes in the lives of Russian learners through Korean dramas” and consists of three sub-themes. The first sub-theme is named “A diligent lifestyle”, and we will to find out how Korean dramas have affected the lifestyles of Russian-born learners. The second sub-theme is

called “Only Korean style clothes.” This is an attempt to explore how Korean dramas have influenced the clothes styles of Russian learners. The third sub-theme is called “Dream to live and study in Korea” and it is intended to investigate how Korean dramas influenced Russian-born learners’ intentions to immigrate to Korea.

K-dramas offer unique and captivating storylines that differ from traditional Russian television shows. They often combine various genres, such as romance, comedy, drama, and fantasy, which appeal to a wide range of viewers. The storytelling style, character development, and plot twists in K-dramas make them intriguing and entertaining for Russian audiences.

K-dramas are known for their ability to evoke strong emotions in viewers. The intense emotional moments, heartfelt relationships, and well-crafted characters make it easy for Russian viewers to become emotionally invested in the dramas. The emotional connection helps create a memorable viewing experience and keeps audiences coming back for more.

K-dramas have a dedicated fan base in Russia, with active online fan communities and social media groups. These communities provide platforms for Russian viewers to discuss and share their love for K-dramas, exchange recommendations, and engage in conversations about their favorite shows. The sense of belonging and community fostered by these fan groups further fuels the popularity of K-dramas in Russia.

Overall, the unique storytelling, emotional engagement, cultural curiosity, high production quality, romantic themes, availability, and active fan communities have contributed to the popularity of K-dramas in Russia. The appeal of K-dramas lies in their ability to offer captivating and relatable content that resonates with Russian viewers.

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러시아 출신 한국어 학습자에게 한국 드라마가 미치는 영향에 관한 사례 연구

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한국어 요약

연구 목적 본 연구는 한국 드라마가 러시아 출신 한국어 학습자에게 미치는 영향과 삶의 변화에 대한 탐구를 목적으로 한다. 이 연구를 위해서, 첫째, 한국 드라마가 러시아 출신 한국어 학습자에게 미치는 긍정적인 영향과 부정적인 영향은 무엇인가. 둘째, 한국 드라마를 통해 본 한국 문화와 한국인을 어떻게 인식하고, 그들에게 한국과 한국 문화의 의미는 무엇인가. 셋째, 한국 드라마를 통해 러시아권 한국어 학습자들의 삶은 어떻게 변화했는가를 살펴보았다.

연구 방법 본 연구는 한국 드라마가 사례 방법을 통해서 연구를 진행하였다. 러시아 출신 한국어 학습자 10명을 연구자로 선정하여 심층 면담을 실시하였다. 연구 대상자 선정 기준은 첫째, 한국어 학습자는 한국어를 독학하거나 교육 기관에서 한국어를 배우는 사람으로 한정했다. 둘째, 한국어로 의사소통이 가능한 사람을 선정했다. 셋째, 본 연구에 자발적인 참여가 가능한 사람을 선정했다.

결론 심층 면담을 통해서 연구 결과로서 다음과 같은 결과를 확인했다. 첫째, 러시아 출신 한국어 학습자에게 한국 드라마가 미치는 긍정적/부정적 영향을 3개의 결과로 제시했다. 둘째, 한국 드라마를 통해 한국 문화와 한국인에 대한 인식을 3개의 결과로 제시했다. 셋째, 한국 드라마를 통한 러시아 출신 한국어 학습자의 삶의 변화를 3개의 결과로 제시했다. 러시아 출신 한국어 학습자는 한국 드라마를 시청하면서 한국어 실력을 향상시킬 수 있다. 특히 한국 드라마에서 사용된 일상의 회화 표현은 표현과 억양을 익히는 것은 물론 실제 대화 상황에서도 큰 도움이 되는 것을 확인했다. 한국 드라마는 한국 사회와 문화를 보여주는 중요한 창구이다. 한국 드라마는 이러한 다양한 활용도를 생각할 때 훌륭한 한국어 학습 교재라 할 수 있다.

핵심어 러시아, 한국 드라마, 한국어 학습자, 한류, K-스토리라인

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