

## The Image of French, Italian, Romanian and Spanish Cuisines in Russia

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### Abstract

*The article focuses on the image of a number of cuisines of Romance speaking European countries in Russia. The aim of the investigation is to identify the key factors in the collective norms and values, as well as in individual practices, which create a certain image to the investigated cuisines. This article describes the basic principles of critical analysis of discourse as a methodological basis of research. Depending on the material, research includes both quantitative and qualitative methods and their combinations. The corpus consists of material from various strata of public and private discourse – external corporate communications of companies manufacturing and selling foodstuff and the consumers, culinary literature, blogs, and electronic conferences on culinary websites, as well as consumer surveys and interviews with representatives of manufacturers, supermarkets, restaurants and other catering establishments across Russia. The article presents two strata of material: a) survey of consumers about their attitudes to the countries under study and their cuisines, and b) culinary literature about these cuisines. The analysis is limited to examples of the French, Italian, Spanish and Romanian cuisines. Mutual verification of results by strata and cuisines and the subsequent critical interpretation and explanation shows a diverse image of the cuisines under study. French cuisine, being “Imperial” has the best image: It is in all respects a prototype of a real authentic foreign cuisine. Italian cuisine is famous for its “affordable” main dishes, which have long been part of Russian cuisine, but it is less familiar as a single national cuisine. Spanish cuisine enjoys a less definite image; it is characterized only in comparison with French and Italian cuisines, from which it lags behind in popularity. Romanian cuisine has a neutral image, being seen as part of “Balkan” cuisine in the collective memory of Russian citizens and is not seen as a separate cuisine. It is worth noting that in all the investigated cuisines, except for Italian, the collective norms and values and individual practices do not coincide. Further studies should provide more concrete results and help to answer all the unresolved questions.*

**Keywords:** Food discourse, Russia, country image, foreign cuisine, France, Italy, Spain, Romania

### 1. Context of the study

The “Food” theme in linguistic-cultural studies has become increasingly relevant and frequently discussed over the past 10-15 years. This takes into account the supposition that eating behavior, according to Irina Sandomirskaja (1996:18), is one of the most enduring features of ethnicity. It is the key aspect of cultural identity of ethnic and/or national communities (Hijiya-Kirschnerreit, 2008:56). Research into the “Food” theme concentrates on certain fields: text linguistics (e.g. culinary types of text), semantics, phraseology and study of metaphors (e.g. food metaphors), onomastics (e.g. names of restaurants), sociolinguistics, and pragmatics (e.g. conversations during meals) and the role of food in culture (e.g. food in literature) (Lavric, 2009: 16-18). However, relatively little attention is paid to the discursive processes, and the cross-cultural significance of food and drink cultures is still not a priority for linguists. The scant attention currently being paid to the food discourse is one of the main motivational factors of the study. Another reason for undertaking this research is because its author is involved in the INTAS Foundation’s “Foodstuff information. Reality and Illusions” project, devoted to a number of aspects of the eating behavior of Russian people. The results of the project will create a collective monograph<sup>1</sup>. The book will reflect the important aspects of food discourse in Russia, at the same time it will point out the current gaps in knowledge, as for example concerning the image of domestic and foreign foodstuffs and certain national cuisines<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> “Food and eating the Russian way. Modern Russian food discourse: information, manipulation, stereotypes” (Vais et al. 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Used in the original Russian sense of a national style, as although there is no direct single counterpart in English for a national cooking style/identity apart from the French cuisine, the Russian word *kukhnia* is used in the original research as an associative concept.

The third reason for the study is the results obtained from research work by linguists at the Vienna University of Economics and Business focused on corporate communications and business discourse. Food and drink cultures and food discourse are integral parts of corporate culture, along with such topics as “Clothing” and its accompanying discourse. In intercultural communication, food discourse is of particular importance. The choice of a particular cuisine is important, not only for major international companies, but also for any company that has direct contacts with foreign partners, such as meetings in restaurants or when selecting a catering theme for corporate events, etc. German business handbooks, focusing on doing business in Russia, attach great importance to this theme – they are full of all sorts of rules and guidelines for the culinary etiquette that needs to be followed while doing business with Russian partners (Štefunko, 2008).

Social science research was another motivator for this article, for example, Quan/Wang (2004: 301) and Scarpato (2002), paid special attention to the relationship between the food and tourism themes. They proceed from the fact that food consumption not only fulfils basic human needs, but also serves many other social functions. The authors cite the example of tourism, where they show that any person finding himself in a new environment manifests a contrast, an expansion, or intensification of daily eating behaviors. Since tourism and business situations have several features in common when it comes to the use of food, and in some cases they even intersect – as for example in “business-tourism”, we can say that a similar situation exists in international business.

The objectives of the work are defined by the above-mentioned contextual factors. They include an analysis of the image that cuisines from Romance speaking countries enjoy in Russia, through the examination of all contextual factors. The image of the cuisine, originating from those countries under study, is also a reflection of the image that people have about these very countries. However, the extensive discursive analysis is not limited to just one approach; it takes into account all the most important points in the socio-economic “production – selling – consumption” (PSC) triangle of foodstuffs. The analysis should answer the question of which national cuisines are important in intercultural business and to what extent.

## **2. Sample material**

Since we are analyzing complex processes in the PSC triangle, the material should reflect the most important areas of public discursive contained within this triangle. It is important for us to proceed from the fact that the choice of material depends not only on the research objectives but also on the methodological basis, and that methodology and the selection of the material are mutually interdependent. The material takes into account not only food discourse, but also the norms and values on which it is based, as well as the rules and practices through which it is expressed, and according to which it develops.

The sample material thus includes data from four main areas associated with the PSC triangle, which in its turn is associated with the attitudes of the discourse participants. First, the material contains information about the external corporate communications of foodstuffs manufacturers (advertising, public relations, websites, and interviews with leading managers). Second, it includes various types of culinary literature – cookbooks with information about national cuisines (e.g. Klykovskaia, 2005)<sup>3</sup>, publications on national cuisines (e.g. Naberezhnaia, 2005), publications on the history of national cuisines (e.g. Vail/Genis, 2001) and culinary reference books and encyclopedias (e.g. Obraztsov, 2008), as well as articles from the business and lifestyle press. Public discourse material on national cuisines is presented in this group, including material from blogs and electronic discussion forums on the seven most visited<sup>4</sup> culinary sites dedicated to the investigated national cuisines, (www.cook-talk.ru, cookbook.rin.ru, www.cooking.ru, www.kulina.ru, www.kuking.net, www.sky-woman.ru, www.gotovim.ru). Despite the heterogeneity of these websites, the material presented there also belongs to the public discourse, and it also displays the personal attitudes and beliefs of the site users. Third, the material includes interviews with the directors of supermarkets and other points of sale and/or food consumption, including restaurants serving foreign cuisine. Finally, and this is a group of no small importance, the material includes a survey of consumers, being the last group in the PSC triangle.

In answer to the question – “why did we choose material from the European Romance cultural area?” – we can say two things. First, the cuisines of the Romance cultural area, in a geographic sense, is something that ordinary Russians perceive as a group in their understanding of foreign countries.

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<sup>3</sup> For each group we provide one example.

<sup>4</sup> According to the rating of the women's search engine «wwwomen» (<http://wwwomen.ru/top/17/>, 19.02.2010).

Second, the cuisines of this area make up the most important section of foreign cuisines. These are more or less familiar to Russian people, and enjoy a certain popularity. To demonstrate the importance of the cuisines, we collected recipes of foreign dishes on the above-mentioned culinary websites. The information thus gathered was then filtered in several stages, and in the final analysis the cuisines of the Romance cultural area accounted for 43.91% of all recipes (2,378 out of 5,415 recipes). To clarify things, we must say that the recipes themselves were not the subject of our research. They were used only to determine the significance of the cuisines of the Romance cultural area in the eating behavior of Russian people.

### **3. Basic concepts**

The material, which consists of very different types of texts and belongs to different domains of public discourse, is united only by its thematic frame – the cuisines of the Romance cultural area. In all other aspects, including the linguistic criteria, it is extremely heterogeneous. It requires a study which would allow for an understanding of its individual components.

For the analysis of such a large heterogeneous strata of texts “Critical Discourse Analysis” (CDA) was chosen as the basic method from among all the traditional text analysis approaches (cf. Titscher/Meyer/Wodak/Vetter, 2000; Wodak/Meyer, 2001). This is not a single method in the narrow sense of the word, nor a real methodological approach, but is primarily a linguistic philosophy which gives the desired potential for integration of a variety of materials for analysis. Primarily, it is interesting due to its purely interdisciplinary character. Van Dijk writes that CDA “aims to offer a different ‘mode’ or ‘perspective’ of theorizing, analysis, and application throughout an entire field. We may find a more or less critical perspective in such diverse areas as pragmatics, conversational analysis, narrative analysis, rhetoric, stylistics, sociolinguistics, ethnography, or media analysis, among others” (van Dijk, 2001: 352). Critical analysis underlies the researcher’s interest in uncovering hidden processes that occur in the ineffable and implicit areas. All CDA approaches are united by “... its view of (a) the relationship between language and society, and (b) the relationship between analysis and the practices analyzed.” (Fairclough/Wodak, 1997: 258). It does not stop at analysis of data or discursive events, but also includes the interpretation and explanation of the analysis (Fairclough/Wodak 1997; surveys from Titscher/Meyer/Wodak/Vetter, 1998: 178-203; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak/Meyer, 2001). In culinary linguistics, CDA is something that is rarely used today (e.g. Van den Berghe, 2009).

The basis of CDA is the notion of discourse in two directions (van Dijk, 1997): The first direction is structural; it designates the components of the discourse: the text itself in its broadest sense and context. Context, in its turn, consists of situational and cultural parts. In the process of eating, the situational context may be, for example, the occasion and the place of eating, the participating individuals and their status, while the cultural context consists of their values and norms and the conventional rules and practices. The second direction is interactive. Discourse takes into account the scope of social interaction in communication and projects it onto culture. In discourse, values and norms on one hand, and social practices and rules on the other, are in a constant process of mutual updating and dynamism; both sets of social and institutional conventions define the discourse practices. Discourse, according to Fairclough, is “language use ... in social relations and processes which systematically determine variations in its properties, including the linguistic forms which appear in texts” (Fairclough, 1995: 73).

### **4. Consequences affecting the design of the study**

Proceeding from the definition of discourse in the previous section, we will consider the material for analysis solely based on its function in the process of social interaction. At the same time, the material and methods are interdependent. The methods must be flexible to respond to the diversity of the material strata, a variety of methods being consequently applied. A large corpus of texts, with information on the various national cuisines presents material of diverse origins; it requires a different approach to that of the consumer surveys. Accordingly, the interviews with representatives of the food producing organizations should in their turn be subjected to a different type of analysis.

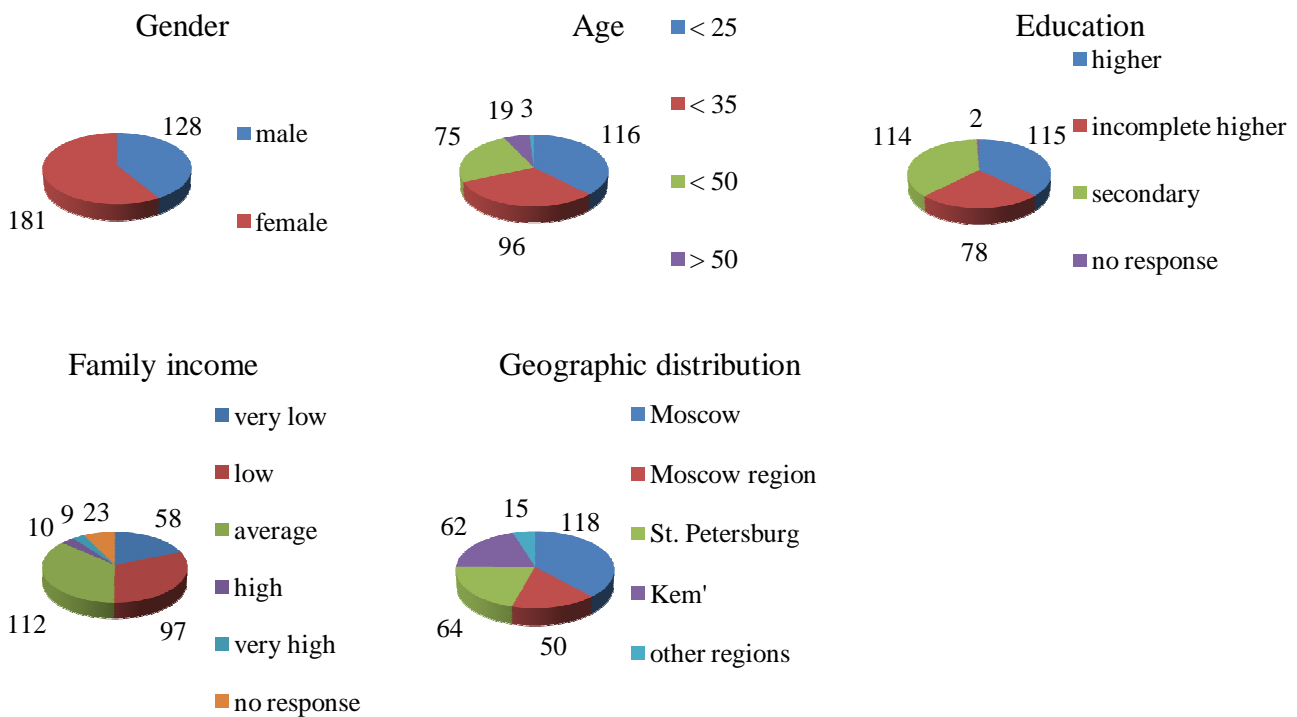
As a result, the methodological basis includes both the qualitative and quantitative methods of text analysis, as well as combinations of these, such as C-DOC (“Critical Discourse Oriented Corpus Analysis”), described by Mautner (2000:46-51). The main tool of research is a qualitative content analysis according to the Mayring model (2011), and the main technical tools are Atlas.ti for the qualitative parts and WordSmith Tools for the quantitative parts of the analysis.

The analysis itself is structured as follows: all the strata of the corpus are investigated in succession, independently of each other. The results from individual strata are summarized at the end of each part, and at the end of the work a mutual verification of the results according to strata and countries is carried out. The verified results are supplemented with the above-mentioned critical interpretation and explanation. We then demonstrate how to conduct studies through the example of two strata of material: a) personal details in relation to individual cuisines from Romance speaking European countries, and b) culinary literature on the same cuisines.

**5. Consumer Surveys in respect to national cuisines**

Consumer surveys aim to determine the collective norms and values and to contrast them with individual attitudes and practices regarding the investigated cuisines and the concerned countries. Surveys were conducted from the end of 2008 to early 2010. A total of 309 people were surveyed using questionnaires. Particular attention was paid to the representative’s age, education, income, gender, and geographic origin. Figure 1 shows the social composition of the respondents.

**Figure 1. Social composition of the respondents (n=309)**



The questionnaire includes eight questions regarding the associations with the studied countries, knowledge of dishes, foodstuffs, and beverages of personal (family) consumption and cooking, as well as the characteristics of the national dishes and their own visits to the studied countries. Some of the questions are mutually complementary, others, such as the last one about the visits are “control questions”. There is thus an opportunity to show the dependence of individual and collective factors as well as the dependence of ratings of the cuisines and countries on the actual contact with these cuisines and countries. In order to save space we will focus on four countries (France, Italy, Spain, and Romania) and on two questions: the question of association with the countries and evaluation of their cuisines.

The question of the most frequent associations with the countries gives the following results; they are shown in Table 1. The right column shows data from the Russian associative dictionary (Karaulov, 2002), which represents the associations of a substantially greater sample.

**Table 1. The most frequent single associations with the countries**

	Russia	Karaulov 2002
France	Eiffel Tower, Paris, perfume/cosmetics	Paris, perfume, Eiffel Tower
Italy	Pasta, pizza, Rome	Rome, Venice, boots
Spain	Corrida, the Inquisition, the sea	no data
Romania	Ceausescu, the mountains, (Count) Dracula	no data

Since the total number of associations of Italy and France exceeds 500 and there are many associations that denote one and the same or similar things, in the next step associations were grouped into thematic groups respectively semantic fields according to Shushkov (2003: 50). For further consideration, the group “cuisine” is the central of the 15 groups, uniting all the culinary associations. As shown in Table 2, it is represented in France and Italy, but in Spain and Romania, it occupies only the sixth and seventh places.

**Table 2. The most frequent associations with the countries (by thematic groups)**

	Russia	Karaulov 2002
France	Geography 27% <sup>5</sup> , cuisine 25%, fashion/cosmetics 24%	Geography 56%, history/tradition 9%, literature 5%
Italy	Geography 30%, cuisine 22%, art 12%	Geography 64%, history/tradition 8%, love/sex 6%
Spain	History/tradition 31%, geography 19%, art 12%	No data
Romania	History/tradition 42%, geography 18%, personalities 17%	No data

Table 3 gives basic information on the characteristics of the cuisines of these countries. A high percentage of questionnaires with no response indicate the ignorance of a certain cuisine.

**Table 3. Characteristics of national cuisines**

France (48% no response)	Sophisticated: 30%, varied: 14%, light: 13%
Italy (24% no response)	Many pasta products, pizza: 23%, a lot of seafood, fish: 22%, substantial: 18%
Spain (68% no response)	Many vegetables and fruits: 12%, seafood: 6%, spicy: 4%
Romania (87% no response)	Many vegetables: 5%, ordinary: 4%, simple: 1%

We can draw the following conclusions given the answers to other questions and exploring different combinations of the dependence of the responses on social data:

Knowledge of other cuisines primarily depends on age and education, family income and visits to these countries have a less important influence on knowledge. Knowledge of French and Italian cuisine is the best and most accurate; knowledge of other cuisines is poorly developed, with many misconceptions.

There is a strong relationship between the associations with the countries and the characteristics of their cuisines. Stereotypes about the country refer to its cuisine as well. The “Russian Imperial” way of borrowing French cuisine and the culinary vocabulary has created the prerequisites for the high prestige of this cuisine. Italian cuisine, being nutritious and affordable, is known best of all by Russians. Other cuisines are less familiar and Romanian cuisine has the lowest ranking of all the cuisines.

<sup>5</sup> Percentage of all respondents.

Home preparation of these cuisines is weakly developed, with the exception of Italian cuisine. French cuisine is not actually practiced at home. This is connected with the refined nature of the cuisine and the high culinary requirements for its preparation, which scare off the respondents. As for shopping and eating in restaurants and other catering establishments, a small list quickly emerges including wine, champagne, spirits, cured ham (jamón) – as for the catering, there is the “Il Patio” chain of restaurants. There is thus a contradiction between the values and the practice – what is highly valued and what is not however practiced.

The semantic (sensory) field of taste and the accompanying fields of smell and flavor are attributed a secondary role. This is surprising, especially since the Russian language provides rich material to refer to the real taste, flavor, or smell. Kornilova (2001, 42-48), Shushkov (2003, 50-51) and Pavlova (2008) cite numerous lexical-semantic groups that expand and modify in a purely sensory way the limited possibilities to characterize dishes and cuisines.

Overall, the results of the survey confirm the relevant research results in the aforementioned project of the INTAS Foundation (Zanadvorova, 2003). Additional confirmation of the results can be found in Milcheva(2010), who conducted a representative survey among Muscovites on the preferences of Russian cuisine and the considered national cuisines. According to the survey, 73% of the questioned Muscovites favored Russian cuisine, while among foreign cuisine, Italian cuisine (43%) occupies a leading place, and French cuisine (13%) ranks fifth. Slightly different is the case with homemade dishes of these cuisines: 35% of Muscovites never prepare foreign dishes. Others (65% of all the respondents) prepare Italian dishes and only 3% of all the respondents prepare dishes from French cuisine. In numerous ratings on Russian culinary sites devoted to foreign cuisines (e.g. Pokazateliprioritetnostikukhon', 2010) one can observe a similar situation. Italian cuisine is the leader among all the foreign cuisines, French is in fifth to eighth place, while Spanish and Romanian cuisines are either absent or not represented in the top ten.

## **6. Culinary literature on national cuisines**

### **6.1. The corpus**

This section of culinary literature, as well as the previous section, aims at exploring the collective norms and values of the studied cuisines and the concerned countries. However, contrasting their individual purposes and practices is only possible in a limited scope, due to the structure of the corpus. The investigated corpus consists of 23 cookbooks of various types (without considering the actual recipes), of 25 introductory articles on foreign cuisines from culinary websites that are listed in the second section (duplicates of book publications on home pages were not taken into account), and 123 articles from business and lifestyle press. In addition, it includes 88 discussions about other cuisines in blogs and electronic conferences, located on the same culinary sites. The last part of the corpus is on the border of public and private discourse. The material from electronic editions is limited to 2008-2011. The total volume of material is 280,302 words.

The fastest way to analyze this medium-sized corpus is through quantitative analysis, using the WordSmith Tools program, and if necessary, a further content analysis according to the criteria, which depend on the quantity of results and on the analysis of the goals themselves. In this case, the search results for the characteristics of the four cuisines are analyzed. To do this, concordances are made in the first stage and collocations were searched for on the first left position of the lexeme *cuisine* (*kukhnia*) (L1-collocations according to the terminology of the authors of the WordSmith Tools). In the second stage, the results were grouped according to their content, thematic statements, and the type of context. Figure 1 shows a sample analysis of collocations based on concordances in the first stage.

**Figure2. Concordance and L1-collocations sample**

70	для мяса и бульонов для отваривания рыбы. Во французской кухне используются только сухие
71	из нескольких стадий. Из пряных растений во французской кухне широко используют сельдерей
72	суп этот печеный. Это странно, как и многое во французской кухне, но факт остается фактом.
73	национальной кухни. Отличительная черта всей французской кухни – использование алкогольных
74	являются оригинальными рецептами национальной французской кухни. О возвышенном отношении
75	или лимонный сок и яйца. Особое достоинство французской кухни – заправка «винегрет». Эт
76	Именно тогда закладывались основы великой французской кухни и нового кулинарного стил
77	дополнения к любому рецепту. Особенностью французской кухни является многообразие соу
78	Ательм Брилат Саварен – столпы классической французской кухни «гранквизин». Это и спос
79	только устроившись в святая святых короля французской кухни, он уже получил предложен
80	рыбу и устриц. Но при всем многообразии французской кухни она обладает целым рядом
81	в то время маэстро, автор книги «Искусство французской кухни». В беседе Багратиону ста
82	морю с другой также наложила свой отпечаток на французскую кухню. Одним из самых знамени
83	нельзя спутать «чрезвычайно изысканную французскую кухню». Ее корни в придворной
84	света считают вершиной кулинарного искусства французскую кухню, однако ее основы во мног
85	Знатоками кулинарии принято разделять французскую кухню на три части: региональна

Next, we present a summary of the four studied cuisines based on the collocations with descriptive adjectives and other forms of evaluation.

### 6.2. French cuisine

A total of 24 different collocations in L1-positions can be found in French cuisine. Of the total 155 tokens, 55 are associated with the characteristics of this cuisine. The most common ones are the following: sophisticated, subtle, great, diverse, rich, fresh, and elegant and gourmet (cuisine).

To characterize the extremely positive image of French cuisine in culinary publications we cite the following examples:

- “Extremely refined French cuisine cannot be confused with anything. Its roots go back to the royal court. ... It (...) has reached such heights of sophistication and richness of tastes and aromas "it is more than words can describe”.
- “It is not by chance that most culinary words (...) are of French origin. This is because French cuisine gave the world a myriad of culinary innovations (...). Thus, cooks all over the world borrowed these culinary discoveries, together with their French names.”
- “The fact that the French have a reputation for being gourmets is known to many people. In France, people's interest in good food is considered quite natural, and is perhaps even ahead of the interest in love, in which, according to worldwide opinion, the French have no equals.”
- “The fact that the French name their salads after operas shows their sublime attitude to food. (...) Many dishes here have poetic names.”

French cuisine is thus characterized in culinary publications as a prototype of the national cuisine. It is in all respects unique and beyond criticism.

### 6.3. Italian cuisine

A total of 16 different collocations in L1-position can be found in Italian cuisine. Of 101 tokens, 36 are associated with the characteristics of this cuisine. The most common ones are the following: sophisticated, subtle, simple, rich, diverse, spicy, and popular (in Russia).

To characterize the positive image of Italian cuisine in culinary publications we cite the following examples:

- “Experts and gourmets around the world consider French cuisine to be the apex of the culinary art, but in many respects, its foundations were laid in Italy ...”
- “Italian cuisine is recognized as not only one of the best in the world, but also as one of the most fashionable ... it is distinguished by a large variety of products and ingredients ...”
- “Taking a closer look at Italian recipes, we find out that Italy does not have a national cuisine as such, since Italy itself as a unified state, has existed little more than a century in its present borders.”
- “One of the key merits of Italian cuisine is the fact that they cook substantial meals.”

- “Italian cuisine is rather folksy, and in cooking they try not to suppress the natural taste of the product. (...) As a rule, the simplicity in cooking is a distinctive feature of Italian cuisine.”

Italian cuisine is thus characterized in culinary publications not only as being a national cuisine, but also through its individual ingredients and dishes. They are easy to cook, they are substantial, and due to these properties, this cuisine enjoys great popularity in Russia.

#### **6.4. Spanish cuisine**

A total of 13 different collocations in L1-position can be found in Spanish cuisine. Out of 74 tokens, 30 are associated with the characteristics of this cuisine. The most common ones are the following: colorful, diverse, sophisticated, rich, saturated and similar to French (cuisine).

To characterize the neutral and positive image of Spanish cuisine in the culinary publications we cite the following examples:

- “The main feature of Spanish cuisine is its extraordinary diversity of colors, mixing of different components and culinary techniques.”
- “Rich and saturated, in each province, it has its own peculiarities.”
- “Spanish cuisine is very similar to Italian and French, like all the Mediterranean cuisines, with the composition of products, and the typical way of cooking. But Spanish cuisine has neither the French delicacy, nor the Italian piquancy.”
- “Spanish cuisine, in general, is characterized by roughness, peculiar to the nations that later recognized cookery as a high art.”

Spanish cuisine is thus characterized primarily through the prism of more familiar, and in Russia popular, cuisines. This prevents it from having an unambiguously positive image.

#### **6.5. Romanian cuisine**

A total of 19 different collocations in L1-position can be found in Romanian cuisine. Out of 33 tokens, 15 are associated with the characteristics of this cuisine. The most common ones are the following: vegetable(s), corn, Balkan, similar to its neighbors and simple (cuisine).

In order to characterize the neutral image of Romanian cuisine in culinary publications we cite the following examples:

- “Hungarian and Romanian cuisines are impossible to imagine without pepper, spices, and spicy seasonings. Green bell peppers are used in salads, chili is used in seasonings.”
- “Vegetables play a major role in Hungarian and Romanian cuisines; green beans, beetroot, tomatoes, cucumbers, aubergines, carrots, potatoes, etc.”
- “Romanian cuisine, just like Moldavian, is characterized by an abundance of dishes with feta (sheep milk) cheese and corn flour.”
- “... the land of Romania turned out to be on the trade route ‘from the Varangians to the Greeks’. That is why it is not surprising that in Romanian cuisine, there are Greek and Turkish dishes, besides the traditional ones from corn flour, while the cuisines of their neighbors, Moldavian, Yugoslav, and Bulgarian, have a great number of dishes with similar names.”

Romanian cuisine is thus characterized in the context of other cuisines of the Balkans. Its independence is questionable. It is seen as part of the Balkan cuisine/Balkan cuisines.

We can draw the following conclusions from the material on culinary websites: The cuisines of the surveyed countries have different images, and their images are constructed in a different way. French cuisine is the prototype of foreign cuisines. One cannot find the slightest hint of criticism in the culinary literature. Nevertheless, Italian cuisine in Russia is more popular. It is not always perceived as a single cuisine. It is represented by its most familiar dishes in Russia – pizza and pasta. Both dishes have become home-prepared dishes in Russia; the dishes have become part of Russian cuisine. Spanish cuisine lags behind French and Italian cuisines. It lacks the necessary differentiating power to identify its specificity.



It is, like Romanian cuisine, less familiar, as evidenced by a smaller number of associations and the need to compare it with the more familiar cuisines. Romanian cuisine as such, does not have its own specifics; authors of culinary literature pay less attention to it, as noted in this article.

### **7. Interpretation and explanation of the results**

This section compares, interprets, and explains the results of the fifth and the sixth sections. We also discuss the prospects for further studies. This is necessary because, on the one hand, CDA in principle requires rethinking of the results, and on the other hand, the analysis results of questionnaires and the analysis results of culinary literature do not fully coincide.

First, it is striking that the division into “own/foreign” which is typical of Russian culture (Hoffmann, 2000), is also applied in the culinary field. Only when a foreign nation's cuisine or the cuisine's essential elements are adopted into the local cuisine, is there a chance for this foreign cuisine to enhance its prestige. This holds true for the French and Italian cuisines, though for different reasons. French and Russian cuisines have been connected for more than two centuries through the influence of French royal court cuisine and its creative interpretation in Russia (Pokhlebkin, 2002: 224-225). Italian and modern Russian cuisines are connected by their pragmatic aspects – it is easy to cook and substantial, an aspect which is still significant in the daily life of Russian families.

Second, we must take into account the fact that all foreign cuisines are opposed to Russian cuisine. This opposition of “own/foreign”, has a strong impact not only on the culinary values and norms, but also on individual preferences. Russian cuisine has not been the subject of study; as a result it was not possible to systematically examine the role of Russian people's ethnocentrism. Several interviews with consumers and directors give grounds for paying more attention to ethnocentrism. Replies like the one from a 37-year-old woman in Moscow should be taken into consideration: “Well, I try to take our quality/our products // I somehow have more confidence in our producers// I mean that the foreign// Well, I do not want to use them// (...) I simply don't know anything about them// Well, I do not know // I cannot even answer this question because// Foreign is as we say foreign, not produced in our environment.”

Third, it is interesting that visits to these countries had little influence on the knowledge of foodstuffs and dishes. Although every year many Russians spend their holidays in Spain, Spanish cuisine remains little known. No doubt, this is due to the fact that tourists are often fed with unified nameless dishes, offered in the form of a buffet, which in all major tourist hotels on the Mediterranean are very similar. In addition, we should note that restaurants in big Russian cities offer broadly named “Mediterranean” and “European” cuisine, and in this way deny the national specifics.

Fourth, the high prestige of the small number of restaurants offering French cuisine and the low consumption of French foodstuffs and dishes by Russians is not surprising. This contradiction can be explained by the very high opinion of France and French cuisine, which prevents it from being implemented in home cooking. It came to Russia as the cuisine of aristocracy, and consequently, in the eyes of ordinary consumers it is so refined that they do not even try to cook it themselves. There are no ingredients available and the prices in restaurants are high. The fact that there are more “affordable” dishes in French cuisine is something Russian people are not aware of. It is a completely different story with Italy; this cuisine came to Russia as the cuisine of the common person. It enjoyed not only prestige, but also popularity among all strata of the population (see also Zanadvorova, 2003: 63-64). Judging by the research carried out in the fifth and sixth sections, the fact that there are refined dishes in Italian cuisine that require a great number of expensive ingredients is little known in Russian society.

Thus, there is a plurality of images that people have for cuisines of the Romancecultural area, which are largely determined by the culinary literature, collective values, and social criteria, such as education and age. This is a preliminary picture; we await the results of the research from other strata of the corpus. The question of the relevance of the investigated cuisines in international business is currently impossible to answer, neither definitively nor exhaustively. In addition to analysis it is necessary to examine the role of ethnocentrism in Russian consumer behavior during further research.

## 8. References

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