

**Asmik A. Avagyan**

**Russian State University of Tourism and Service,  
Peoples' Friendship University of Russia  
Moscow, Russian Federation  
avagyanasmik@gmail.com**

**Magomed G. Gazilov, Marina R. Gozalova**

**Russian State University of Tourism and Service  
Moscow, Russian Federation  
mag.wizard@yandex.ru, mgozalova@mail.ru**

## **Language as a form of expressing the national identity: A Russian national character in proverbs**

### **Abstract**

The present article contains the results of an analysis of Russian proverbs reflecting some of the most popular traits of character stereotypically attributed to Russian people. The research methodology includes several stages: a selection of 400 Russian proverbs and sayings illustrating different aspects of a Russian national character, a quantitative analysis of data collected, and thematic grouping of 30 proverbs most explicitly pointing to popular stereotypes about Russian people. The theoretical part of the article comprises the definitions of such key concepts as 'nation', 'nationality', 'ethnicity', 'national, civil and ethnic identity', which have been analyzed with reference to other researchers working in this field. The research results have shown that the most popular human qualities of Russian people are religiousness, patience and firmness, diligence and talent, a love for freedom, a will-power and courage, hospitality, generosity and breadth of soul.

**Keywords:** national identity, nation, the Russian language, national character, proverbs, sayings.

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