

## Chinese student Lee Zingchen: 'Hard work and motivation are the key to your success!'

We asked the second year Master's student from China about the growing popularity of SPbPU in China and the contribution of the Representative office in Shanghai to it, overcoming language and adaptation problems and ways of moving to the doctorate.



### **- Lee, tell us why you chose Polytech for your Master's studies?**

- I first came to SPbPU for a semester abroad in 2012. I took a course in Russian as a foreign language at the Center of Russian as a foreign language of the High school of international education programs where I studied with Irina Ivanovna Baranova. I was able to improve my Russian in just six months, and the time spent at Polytech will always be remembered fondly. After I finished my Bachelor's at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, I applied for a Master's degree at Polytech. I opted for International Relations, a program offered by the Institute of Humanities.

### **- What is the language of instruction?**

- I am doing Master's in "Regional Studies: the Russian Federation" «[Regional Studies: the Russian Federation](#)» in English.

**- What helped you adapt to the new way of life?**

- Students of our group come from different places – Kazakhstan, Syria, China. The fact that the course is conducted in English is rather an advantage: speaking one language made it easier for us to get accustomed to living in Russia.

**- Lee, besides being fluent in English you speak very good Russian. Tell us, why you decided to learn Russian? Did you have to face any difficulties while learning it?**

- I started learning Russian in 2009. I had to choose between Russian and Korean and I figured that while Korean is spoken by 78 million of Korea's population, Russian is spoken far beyond the Russian borders, thus the Russian-speaking population is a lot larger. So I chose Russian. When it comes to learning a foreign language, perseverance is essential. I spent two hours a day on my language studies and practiced Russian as often as I could, working as an interpreter and Chinese teacher for Russian students. I was invited to take a course in teaching practices for Master's students as native speaker of Chinese. It was a valuable experience.



**- Have you had an opportunity to demonstrate your interpreter's skills at Polytech?**

- Several times I interpreted negotiations with the representatives of Chinese companies, once in March of 2017 when SPbPU hosted the delegation of Dade Tech and Inner Mongolia Carbon Valley Technology Co. The other time I was engaged as interpreter for the representatives of Pudong administration, I took them on a tour of the International campus and the Main Building. Besides this, I contributed to the making of brochures in Chinese for the SPbPU [Representative office in Shanghai](#).

**- The Representative office opened last year, have you had an opportunity to visit it? What role do you think the office plays in lives of Chinese students?**

- I haven't had the chance to visit it yet. But next time I am in Shanghai, I will certainly go there. I have seen printed materials that were published there, and I know the office has its own website. I am glad Polytech has become the first Russian university to open a representative office in China. It is important to me that my family and friends have the reliable and credible source of information about our university. Since the opening of the Representative office people in China have had an access to the information on academic and scientific activities carried out by the university and an advice regarding the program options and career choice.





**- You are about to finish your Master's program at SPbPU. Do you intend to carry on with the studies?**

- Yes, I will apply for a PhD in Political and Regions Science with the Institute of Humanities. I have always taken great interest in global politics and international relations. Upon the graduation I will return to China where the demand for specialists in cultural exchange and education is high due to fast economic growth. I am certain I will be able to have a job related to Russian-Chinese relations.

**- If you have set your heart on doing a PhD, you probably know the application requirements. Where can international students obtain this information?**

- Your first step should be checking out the university website where you must look up the 'Degree Programs' section. There you will find a detailed description of the available programs and the application requirements. For those who don't speak Russian they have versions in [Chinese](#) and [English](#). If you happen to be in St. Petersburg during the application period, you can drop by the International campus which is located at 28, Grazhdansky prospect. The information on application and enrollment is available in the International student office (office 228).

**- Lee, you said you have lived in Russia for three years now. Do you help newcomers from China adapt to living in Russia?**

- This is a serious issue. Applicants coming to take a Bachelor's course or a prep course are usually very young people of 16-17 years of age. They desperately need guidance, so they turn to me for help. I inform them of program specifications, help them navigate the website for a certain program or institute, get in touch with international student advisors and teachers whenever a student has a question regarding his studies. We often visit each other in the dormitory to have a chat. I also give them Russian learning tips.

**- The last question is what advice would you give prospective students who come to Polytech from other countries?**

- Remember that it's never late to learn! Seek to enhance your knowledge, dedicate your time to self-education as well. I am interested in learning foreign languages, so I spend a large amount of my free time on language studies and I have already become fluent in Russian, English and Korean. Systematical approach and persistence are essential in language learning as well as hard work and perseverance. If you have these qualities, your success is guaranteed!

**- Lee, thank you for your time! We wish you good luck with your studies!**

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