

Взаимодействие языков и культур. Межкультурная коммуникация и сопоставительные исследования

УДК 81'27

COMMODIFICATION OF LANGUAGE: EVIDENCE FROM LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF HARBIN

О.В. Щербаков

*Научный руководитель: К.В. Мурашкина,
старший преподаватель (УрФУ)*

С развитием экономики и таких явлений, как, например, «экономика впечатлений», меняется и язык, который становится подвержен процессу коммерциализации или коммодификации. Авторы исследования рассматривают примеры использования английского и русского языков в лингвистическом ландшафте Харбина с целью выявления их функций и приходят к выводу, что иностранные языки активно используются в качестве инструментов создания коммерчески выгодной среды.

Ключевые слова: урбанистическая лингвистика; урбаноним; языковой ландшафт города; лингвистический ландшафт; коммодификация языка; Харбин.

Studying linguistic landscapes from different perspectives has recently become one of the most popular research topics in modern linguistics. “Linguistic Landscape: An international journal” (2015) defines linguistic landscape as “a field that attempts to understand the motives, uses, ideologies, language varieties and contestations of multiple forms of ‘languages’ as they are displayed in public spaces” [ref.: Gorter 2018: 81]. The definition itself poses the problem of linguistic landscapes as multilateral; it is associated with different sciences, inter alia, sociology, economics, politics, urbanistics, etc. The overwhelming tendency for language commodification within linguistic landscapes gives evidence to the statement.

Economics plays a pivotal role in societal development. It pervasively influences not only our lives, but also the urban world where most of the population is concentrated today. One such influence is the emerging phenomenon of “toponymy as commodity” [Light, Young 2015: 436], which stands for commercialisation in attributing place names. Since the end of the XXth century, cities have been engaged into inter-urban competition for national and international flows of state investment, for capital, businesses, consumers and tourists [Light, Young 2015: 438]. We believe that in this context studying language choices for attributing place names is essential too; when shaping the identity of a certain place entrepreneurs, sometimes unknowingly, contribute to the process of language commodification. Our paper aims to exemplify the statement and discuss the cases of foreign language usage (Russian and English in particular) in coining urbanonyms of Harbin as well as to identify the

motives for a particular language choice.

We have chosen Harbin and its linguistic landscape as the object of our research due to its diverse historical past and its former status of a Russian town (Harbin was founded by Russians as a railway settlement in 1898). Following the European-Russian urban model, the town sprawled and then became one of the centres for Russian emigrants [Мещеряков, Антропов 2018: 36]. However, the city has always been “at the intersection of different cultures” [ref.: Мещеряков, Антропов 2018: 38], namely Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and others. According to historical records, this cultural diversity also manifested itself in the following place names: “Лучшая мануфактура Цхомелидзе-Микатадзе” (“The Best Manufactory of Tskhomelidze-Mikatadze”), “Фабрика Ипсилан-ти” (“Ipsilan-ti’s Factory”), “Торговый дом Петрова” (“Petrov’s Trading House”), “Йокогама Спешти Банк” (“Yokogama Speshi Bank”), “Магазин Токива” (“Tokiva Store”) [Мещеряков, Антропов 2018: 38]. In the XXIth century Harbin is a second-tier Chinese city, and its linguistic landscape is predominately homogeneous with the absolute majority of signs rendered in Chinese; however, its linguistic landscape still abounds in interesting findings.

Data for our research were collected during a field trip to China in July 2019. We photographed multilingual signs and then used descriptive and comparative methods to identify cases of and motives for using Russian and English in Harbin’s linguistic landscape, as these are the most ubiquitous and obvious language choices. The original spelling of all practical examples remains intact.

Let us now turn to the discussion of findings. We have previously analysed multilingual rendering of Harbin’s place names [Shcherbakov, Bagirova 2020]; however, our research was restricted to one gentrified area only – Huarunkaixuanmen residential complex. In a broader context, we can identify the following cases of English urbanonyms used.

Table 1. English urbanonyms usage in Harbin’s linguistic landscape

English urbanonyms usage	Examples
brand and place names	‘Shop Trolley’, ‘Lotus Spa’, ‘KEME COFFEE’, ‘Pet Hospital’, ‘Oriental Mansion’, ‘Parent-Child Swimming Club’, ‘Honey Cup’, ‘Meters bonwe’, ‘YISHION’, etc.
commercial slogans	‘Nature beauty’, ‘Eat · Dessert · Snack /// Lifestyle’, ‘Welcome to Triumphal Arch’, ‘Fragrance Floating Around Your Life’, ‘Welcome, it’s great to see you!’, ‘Take it home today’, ‘It’s OK to change your mind’, ‘It’s show tome. Serviced apartment with hotel-style decoration’, ‘Welcome to HARRINGTON. The hub of Delaware’, etc.

navigational elements, including road signs, informational messages in public transport facilities, English rendering of street names, etc.	‘Access to Store Entrance’, ‘Grocery’, ‘Cashier’, ‘Perishable’, ‘Good care environment, No Littering’, ‘Architectural Arts Museum of Central Avenue’, ‘Visiting Hours’, ‘Comprehensive Information at Tieluju Station’, ‘Children’s Park Tour Map’, ‘video surveillance area’, ‘First / Last Train From This Station’, ‘No stampede’, etc.
--	--

While the role of the English language is generally considered as global, it is natural that it is used throughout the city to facilitate navigation; still, as mentioned above, we can also identify its commercialisation and usage as a distinction-making tool in attracting English-speaking visitors.

As for the Russian language, the situation requires a closer examination. As we have already stated, in the XXth century Russian predominated in the linguistic landscape of Harbin. When the city became part of China, Russian signs were gradually substituted by those in Chinese. Let us turn to several cases of Russian language use in modern Harbin, where its status has slightly changed.

The absolute majority of Russian signage is concentrated on a pedestrian street of Harbin called Zhongyang (its unofficial name is Arbat, as a tribute to the eponymous pedestrian street in Moscow, a reputed hectic area with masses of tourists and vendors). This street is famous for the architecture of XIXth and XXth centuries, which bears resemblance to a historic quarter of a typical Russian city. Additionally, Zhongyang Street hosts a number of shops selling commodities from Russia or those decorated in the Russian style. As a consequence, the street is frequented by local dwellers and tourists from other parts of China, who constitute the targeted audience for local entrepreneurs. In an attempt to create the required place identity and corresponding zeitgeist, the businessmen in this very street mostly resort to the Russian language: “Магазин Андреевича”, “Лилия хлеб фан”, “Китайско-русский товарный город”, “Торговый центр по продаже золота и ювелирных изделий”, “Россия магазин”, “ТЦ ТВЕРЬ Российские сувениры”, “Сувенирный магазин Иван”, “ТОВАРОВ РОССИИ”, etc. The use of such cultural elements as proper names (Ivan), patronymics (Andreevich), and toponyms (Tver) is particularly noteworthy. Local entrepreneurs use the Russian language as a means to attract visitors, who become genuinely interested in legendary Russian chocolate and colourful souvenirs, which adds to language commodification.

Another example is the usage of Russian in navigational elements. As opposed to English, we managed to find navigational signs with Russian variants only within the abovementioned area, Zhongyang Street, and further on, in one of the most famous parks of Harbin Sun Island. All signs in Zhongyang Street are designed in a historic style, which can also serve as a tool

to create proper ambience; all the signs contain Chinese, English and Russian renderings of urbanonyms. The following are examples of Russian signage: “Улица Сишисыдаоцзе”, “Харбинский центр туристических консультационно-информационных услуг”, “Улица Чжунъяндацзе”, etc. Due to limited use of the Russian language for navigation, we also view this phenomenon as a manifestation of growing language commodification. As opposed to the English language use, we believe that the Russian language is primarily used to attribute a Russian-like atmosphere to a Chinese place, but not to facilitate navigation inside it. Adding authentic elements contributes to the commercial attractiveness of the street, and they also enable visitors to craft the experience of strolling along a Russian-like street. This statement may be also supported by the fact that plaques with brief historical records on every remarkable building within Zhongyang Street do not contain any Russian translation.

As for Sun Island Park, we believe that the function of the Russian language is purely informational, as the notices serve to indicate directions to its parts (e.g. “большой деревянный дом экологической зоны отдыха”, “Цветочный парк”, “Пристань паромов на Сунгари”, “Пристань яхты”, “Парк-скульптура имени Юй Цин Чэн”, “Искусственный парк снеговых скульптур”, etc.) without pursuing the goal of creating a certain atmosphere for commercial purposes, as the park is popular among tourists and students from Russia and does not host any shops selling Russian goods.

Turning to conclusions, we would like to mention that both English and Russian languages within the linguistic landscape of Harbin are susceptible to the process of commodification; however, English is also being used to facilitate navigation throughout the city more ubiquitously, whereas Russian has turned into a means of shaping a proper place identity, with the informational function being secondary and less pervasive. We believe that with economy of experience rising, languages will be more and more powerful in delivering ‘authentic’ experiences to tourists or local dwellers alike. This is especially topical when considering globalization: demand for authenticity will be rising, and languages will be more often used as an identity-creating, commercially-oriented tool.

Список литературы

Мещеряков А., Антропов О. Сунгарийский город вне границы: культурная гибридность в условиях трансграничного пространства Харбина // Каспийский регион: политика, экономика, культура. – 2018. – Т. 57. – № 4. – С. 35–41.

Gorter D. Linguistic landscapes and trends in the study of schoolsapes // Linguistics and Education. – 2018. – Vol. 44. – P. 80–85.

Light D., Young C. Toponymy as Commodity: Exploring the Economic Dimensions of Urban Place Names // International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. – 2015. – Vol. 39. – N. 3. – P. 435–450.

Shcherbakov O., Bagirova A. Linguistic Landscapes of Gentrified Localities: A Case Study of China // 2020 the 5th International Conference on Education Science and Development. – 2020. – In print.

COMMODIFICATION OF LANGUAGE: EVIDENCE FROM LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF HARBIN

The language reflects the current growth of economy and its different manifestations such as economy of experience; it is developing and becoming susceptible to the process of commercialisation or commodification. The authors consider practical examples of using English and Russian languages in the linguistic landscape of Harbin to identify their functions and to arrive at the conclusion that foreign languages are being actively used as a tool to create identity and proper, commercially-oriented ambience.

Key words: urban linguistics; urbanonyms; linguistic landscape; translation; commodification of language; Harbin.

УДК 81'255

ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКИЙ ПОТЕНЦИАЛ КУЛЬТУРОСПЕЦИФИЧНОЙ ЛЕКСИКИ В НАУЧНО-ПОПУЛЯРНОМ ТЕКСТЕ: К ВОПРОСУ О ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИИ КУЛЬТУР

Д.А. Лаврик

*Научный руководитель: Т.В. Марченко,
кандидат филологических наук, доцент (СКФУ)*

Необходимость выявления прагматического потенциала культуроспецифичной лексики, содержащейся в текстах научно-популярного дискурса, в число которых входит музейный текст, диктуется современной тенденцией обеспечения максимальной доступности городской среды, в том числе для иностранцев. Музей, как одно из мест проведения досуга, должен соответствовать международным стандартам и быть доступным абсолютно для всех посетителей. Автор статьи рассматривает прагматическую специфику культуронимов, так как они отражают культурные особенности социума. Проведенный анализ коммуникативных особенностей культуроспецифичной лексики и прагматики воспроизведения музейных текстов позволяет сделать вывод о невозможности осуществления полностью тождественного перевода по ряду причин: наличие специфических онимов, отсутствие эквивалентов в переводящем языке, а также имманентные особенности музейных текстов.

Ключевые слова: прагматика; прагматический потенциал; культуроспецифичная лексика; культурная реалья; научно-популярный стиль.

В эпоху глобализации человечество оказалось в мире, где любая информация становится легкодоступной, что само по себе не может не привести к многократному увеличению информационного обмена. Поскольку обмен мнениями о последних достижениях науки и техники становится вполне естественным и необходимым процессом, растет и интенсивность межкультурной коммуникации в научной сфере. Как