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ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЙ ПОРТРЕТ РУССКОГО И ФРАНЦУЗСКОГО ГОРОДСКОГО ЛАНДШАФТА

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются особенности лексико-семантической организации топонимического пространства города на примере русских (г.Екатеринбург) и французских (г.Ренн) эргонимов. Методом сплошной выборки были проанализированы эргонимы (510 и 228 соответственно), которые впоследствии были классифицированы. Результаты опроса жителей городов показали, что респонденты описывали ассоциации, возникающие в связи с предлагаемыми объектами, и определяли функциональный профиль коммерческого объекта по его названию. На основе статистической обработки были выявлены наиболее продуктивные номинативные модели. Авторы считают, что целевая аудитория должна влиять на выбор названия коммерческого объекта, поскольку социальное самочувствие жителей города является ведущим фактором успешности развития городской территории.

Ключевые слова: эргоним, эргонимическое пространство, городской дискурсивный ландшафт, коммерческий объект.

LINGUISTIC PORTRAIT OF RUSSIAN AND FRENCH URBAN LANDSCAPES

Research article

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Abstract

The article discusses the features of lexical and semantic organization of the toponymic space of the city on the example of Russian (Ekaterinburg) and French (Rennes) ergonyms. Using the continuous sampling, ergonyms (510 and 228, respectively) were analyzed and classified. The results of a survey of city residents showed that respondents described associations that arise in relation to the proposed items, and determined the functional profile of the commercial enterprise by its name. The subsequent statistical analysis revealed the most productive nominative models. The authors believe that the target audience should influence the choice of the name of a commercial property, since the social well-being of city residents is a leading factor in the success of urban development.

Keywords: ergonym, ergonymic space, discursive urban landscape, commercial enterprise.

Introduction

One of the main strata that form the discursive landscape of the modern city is the proper names of various urban institutions. The authors believe that ergonyms included in the structure of the urban discursive space create, like urbanonyms, “a certain information space, and in it the image of the city is drawn in various semantic modalities” (1).

A distinctive feature of modern onomastics in Russia is the tendency toward active erratic creation of ergonyms, which is due to a number of reasons, including scientific and technological advancements and their penetration into various fields of society. Also, the appearance of new stores, firms and commercial enterprises, due to the construction of new residential buildings with embedded commercial facilities for various purposes, led to liquidation or restructuring of the existing enterprises as a result of the increased market competition. The transformed onomastic space necessitates the development of new terms and names.

The change of political paradigms at the end of the twentieth century led to changes in the life of society; extralinguistic factors contributing to the emergence of ergonyms of the late XX — early XXI centuries in the Russian ergonymic space in many respects determined the specifics of the nomination process (2). In times of planned economy, there was little diversity in ergonyms, and enterprises were mainly named according to the product that they offered (*Garments, Footwear, Sausages, Furniture, Vegetables*) or by supplier (*Armenia, Georgia, Belgrade*). The transition to a market economy has intensified the creation of businesses and joint ventures, and they required titles to promote their market niche.

Some organizations, for example, government agencies, retained their names: *Scientific and Production Complex Iskra, Automobile Plant Ural*. In the case of modern commercial enterprises, names are often randomly chosen without regard to the essence of the nomination. Despite this, ergonyms develop in accordance with linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

The ergonymic space of many modern cities as a whole is quite diverse, but stereotypical, repeating names are no exception. The ergonymic space of many cities reflects the national composition of the population, their attitude to the historical, cultural heritage of the city, as well as to geographical objects (“*Tatar Culinary House*”, “*Sabantuy*” *cafe*,

“Yashen” youth organization, “Tatishchev” cafe, “Ekaterina 2” hotel, souvenir and gift shop “Malachite Box”) and to Russian culture in general (club “Pushkin CentralClub”, “Onegin” hotel).

Changes in society lead to the transformation of traditions and ways of naming urban objects, which affects the information space of the city, and the latter to one degree or another affects the social well-being of the person — a resident of a modern metropolis. The social well-being of city residents is a leading factor in the success of the development of the territory and, accordingly, the quality of life of the population, and probably should be the dominant factor in the formation of discursive landscape in any city. It should be noted that in relation to the assignment and change of the name of “territorial units” of urban space (streets, parks, etc.), Russia has norms enshrined in laws, both at the federal level and regional, while the names of commercial enterprises are not subject to regulation and depend on the intentions of the owner. Today, nominative strategies in the field of ergonymy are rather spontaneous, as a result of which there is an eclecticism of the nominative space of the city.

The impact of a particular ergonymic space on a person has not been studied enough. This article attempts to determine the attitude of city residents to ergonyms already included in the discursive space, because “... language accompanies and controls the activities of man in society” (3, 4).

Therefore, ergonyms, guiding city-dwellers within the framework of a verbalized space and suggesting the trajectory of its development and inclusion in various spheres of city life, have an impact on the residents’ well-being. The results of an express survey, conducted among residents of Ekaterinburg, will determine the most preferred methods of ergonyms formation from the point of view of their perception by the city-dwellers. The study will also reveal the features and the most productive models of nomination of commercial enterprises, taking into account their affiliation to different cultures.

Research Methods and Principles

A number of methods formed the basis of the study, for example, the continuous sampling in online directories of the names of shops, beauty salons, cafes, etc. In 2016, it was part of the French internship program of one of the authors. Then followed the comparative analysis of the findings, and they were given a linguocultural characteristic. Further, the data were classified in accordance with word formation models and the most productive nominative models (by frequency of use). In total, we analyzed 510 ergonyms of Ekaterinburg and 228 of Rennes. In order to determine how Russian and French urban dwellers perceive the names created in different ways, they were surveyed on 48 names of organizations located in Ekaterinburg and 40 names of enterprises located in Rennes. Respondents (99 and 46 respectively) were to describe their associations arising in relation to the proposed names and determine the functional profile of an institution.

Discussion

Being part of urban linguistic culture, ergonyms form the linguistic identity of the city and reflect many of the economic and cultural processes taking place in it. According to Snitko, “We define linguistic culture as a special type of interconnection between language and culture, which manifests itself both in the sphere of language and in the sphere of culture ...” (5).

Urban linguistic culture, or discursive urban landscape, has a great influence on the city dwellers, their social well-being and emotional-evaluative attitude to their external environment. In our study, the city acts as a linguistic object (6).

Today, the main goal of any enterprise or organization, seeking to take a strong position in the market, is to attract customers. The stylistic criterion plays an important role in the nomination, as it is both an aesthetic and cultural component: figurative shades of the meaning of the name, which “should involve the emotional mechanism of consumer behavior” (7). Ideally, the gradual effect of the name on the human psyche proceeds as follows: drawing attention to the text, the emergence of interest in the content of information, arousing the desire to have what is offered, prompting for action (bringing to purchase) (8). Based on this model, a number of requirements for the ergonym can be distinguished: it should be memorable, evoke positive emotions and be understandable to all segments of the urban population. According to Werkman, “a poorly chosen name will always be an obstacle, no matter how much money is invested in advertising ... It is necessary to study the impact of not only the word itself, but also its etymology and environment ...” (9).

Main findings

Seven ways for creating ergonyms were identified, and it was determined that they perform specific functions and differently influence the social well-being of addressees.

The most productive way to form ergonyms in the Russian city is lexical-semantic onymization (39.56%), i.e. metaphorical comparisons or metonymic transfers to create a name for a commercial enterprise are most common; this is also the most productive for the French city (31.54%). For example, the use of metaphorical models indicates the difference between an enterprise and other similar ones, belonging to an elitist quality of service (hairdresser “Lutshy” (best); fitness center “Pervy” (first class); travel agency “Royal Deluxe”, bedding shop “Barkhatny son” (velvet dream); hotel-restaurant “Le Privilège”; clothing store “Ateliers Auguste” (a majestic, royal workshop). The metonymic transfer ensures the information content of the ergonym, accurately pointing to the profile (accessory store “Nitki-Igolki” (threads and needles), cafe “Bolshiy tarelki” (Big Plates), “Vilka Lozhka” (Fork Spoon); restaurant “Le Bocal”, shop of lamps “Soléa”, cafe “La Chope” (beer mug). Analysis of the results of the survey showed that ergonyms formed in this way (45% — Ekaterinburg, 48% — Rennes) are positively perceived by respondents and, with a few exceptions, correctly point to the profile of the nomination object (*Dynasty, MagicSun, Positive, Masters of Smiles, Jasmine, Joy Time, Old Man Hottabych; Le Royal, Miel et Nature, 7 Jours, Impression, CleanFIL, Or et Argent, La Coiffure à Petits Prix, All Nails*).

Another productive way to form ergonyms is lexical-syntactic (21.84% — Ekaterinburg, 33.08% — Rennes), and as a rule, ergonyms are presented in the form of phrases and sentences (10).

The main advantage of such ergonyms is self-descriptiveness and semantic deployment; the disadvantage is that they are inferior in compactness to single-word ergonyms: (dental center “Belaya Ladya”, café “Svoya Kompaniya”, alcoholic beverage store “Staraya Krepost”, beauty parlour “Golden Mask”, goods store “Homemade trifles”, restaurant “Russky Dvor”, café “French Baker”, organic food store “La vie Claire” (bright / clear life), home furnishings store “Formes Nouvelles” (new forms), orthopedic shoe store “Pieds sensible” (sensitive legs). Frequently, Russian and French ergonyms are based on phrases

with the genitive case (café “*Melody of Taste*”, shop of lighting fixtures “*Magic of Light*”. In the French language, the genitive case is transmitted by adding the preposition *de*: café “*La robe de la Girafe*” (giraffe dress), candy store “*La Maison du Bonbon*” (candy house), tea shop “*Rêves de Théés*” (tea dreams). Using numbers for nomination is more productive in Russian than in French (3.75% and 1.53%, respectively): clothing store “*12 months*”, dental clinic “*32 pearls*”, mini-garden for children “*Tenth Kingdom*”). However, using prepositional constructions is more frequent when naming French commercial objects (1.02% — 5.38%): the store for cribs “*At the Baby*”, the store for goods for hunting and fishing “*Fishing with hunting*”, car wash “*At Uncle Vanya*”. The most productive names for French ergonyms are those that are formed using the word *chez* + name, and this design is typical of the French language and is used quite often to say “at someone’s house”. It is rooted in the history of the early commercial enterprises in France, and more often is used to name cafés and restaurants: “*chez Paul*”, “*Chez Meh*”, “*Chez Dédé*”. Other examples of prepositional cases of French ergonyms are: shoe stores “*Outre mesure*” (over the limit), shop goods for girls “*Comme une fée*” (like a fairy). The structures most often used in this group of Russian-speaking ergonyms are in the form of sentences (wedding salon is “*Let's Get Married!*”, travel agency “*Travelling in summer*”; cooking courses “*Cook and Go*”, optics salon “*Venez Voir*” (come to see).

The survey showed that ergonyms formed in a lexical-syntactic way evoke positive associations at the addressee, and a profile of the enterprise is easily determined.

An appeal to the addressee as a way of creating Russian ergonyms is used quite often (13.31%). This way of naming is relatively new, unusual, but the results of the study show that it can be considered quite effective (*Take Barashka, Assemble yourself, Be Fashion, Lady Charm*). In Rennes, an appeal to the addressee as a way of creating powerful ergonyms is used less often (6.92%), compared to the Russian discursive space: *Le Patron* (owner), *La Diva* (prima donna), *Osez* (dare). The survey revealed that all these names evoke positive emotions in the majority of respondents, and the profiles of organizations are correctly identified.

For Russian nominators it seems productive to use borrowed words and phrases in the names of commercial organizations. Among the ergonyms of Ekaterinburg, 13.31% were created using borrowings: beauty parlours — *Beauty, Beauty style, Healthy Jo*; cafés and restaurants — *Fire Side, Shine, Rosy Jane*; clubs — *Tele-Club, Gold, Bar-Club CITY*). This group is comprised of transliterated and non-transliterated ergonyms (7.85% and 5.46%), as well as ergonyms with mixed graphic design (3.41% — club “*Nirvana life bar*”). In Rennes, 10.76% of borrowings were identified: café “*Cook & Go*”, cell phone store “*The Phone House*”, tobacco shop “*Feeling Smoke*”, fashion accessories boutique “*A piece of chic*”, camera shop “*Yellow Korner*”, including with mixed design (2.30%). First of all, this is due to the different attitude to the use of foreign words in speech in general. In the French ergonomic space, especially in the small cities, such as Rennes, the English names usually belong to the American brand stores and organizations. We can assume that the abundant use of the English words in the French commercial nominations can negatively affect the city-dwellers’ well-being.

Native French institutions are usually referred to using the French lexis. When Russian ergonyms are created using mixed graphic design, there is a combination of styles — Cyrillic and Latin; in the French language, there is a combination of English and French words (fitness club “*Life is Fitness*”, hairdresser “*La Family Coiffure*” (family hairdresser), pawnshop “*Or en cash*”). The relative potency of the use of mixed type ergonyms in the Russian language is due, first of all, to the fact that the language uses the Cyrillic alphabet, and so the use of words or morphemes from European or other languages with a different writing system allows nominators to diversify the external design in Latin. The French language does not provide such an opportunity unless the nominators use the Cyrillic alphabet, hieroglyphs, etc. The language policy of France affects the limitation of graphic design, as well as the potency of borrowings.

In the modern discursive landscape of Ekaterinburg, there are a lot of names of mixed graphic design, but they are not always perceived positively by the urban residents, especially the older generation. However, determining the profile of the organization by mixing the styles and providing that recipients can translate the names of ergonyms, is 90% correct. In this context, we can talk about the prospects of research on ergonyms based on borrowings, on the perception of them and their impact on the well-being of city-dwellers.

In addition, the nominators in Ekaterinburg and Rennes use language game techniques (8.87% and 6.92%) when repeating a part of the word or the whole word (tea “*Nonrandom tea*”, shopping and entertainment center “*FanFan*”; shoe store “*MellowYellow*”, café “*Bagel Bagels*”), a rhyme (bedding store “*Belle Bedel*”, door salon “*Baron Dveron*”), contamination overlay (computer shop “*Computerra*” (“*computer*” and “*terra*” (land)), offering travel to Asian countries “*NostalAsie*” (nostalgie), French hairdresser “*PierRick*” (addition of the names of the founders Pier and Rick (“*perruque*” — wig), spa area “*Terrabienetre*” (land of spa treatments), and others. According to Shatalova, “replacement of one of the components in the word prototype by a new one leads to revitalization of the inner form of the word, updating all sorts of associations and creating the effect of newness” (11, 120).

Other ways of ergonym formation, such as substantivation from adverbs, verbs, interjections, etc., occurs as isolated events in the discursive space of Ekaterinburg and Rennes. Lexical-stylistic onymization (historicisms, jargonisms, colloquial vocabulary) is not used in Rennes’s discursive space: restaurants “*Russky Dvor*” and “*Boyarin*”, club “*Glue Place*”, holiday agency “*Seigneur Prikol*”, grocery stores “*Vkusnyashka*” and “*Obzhorka*”, children’s clothing store “*Balamuf*”. The attitude of respondents to such names is ambiguous. Recognition of the organization profile for each ergonym ranges from 40 to 60%.

The results of the survey are shown in Figure 1.

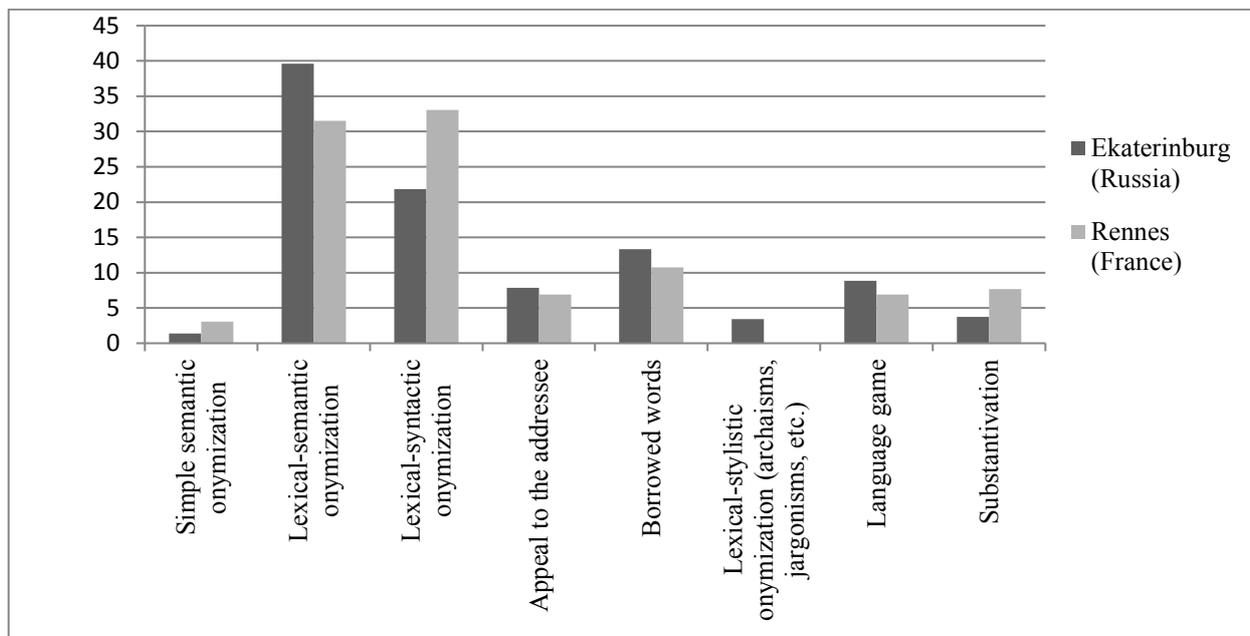


Figure 1 – Ways of ergonym formation in Ekaterinburg and Rennes

Conclusion

Therefore, we can assume that the discursive landscapes of Ekaterinburg and Rennes are heterogeneous and diverse. In such a variety of names and signs, for a commercial enterprise it is very difficult to stand out and show its unique character, and city-dwellers find it difficult to spot landmarks in the information flow and maintain an emotional status, since some names of commercial institutions can have a negative effect, cause irritation and give an erroneous idea of the purpose of the object. The identified differences in nomination are due to the structural features of languages and partly to the peculiarity of language policy.

At the same time, the productivity of the lexical-semantic and lexical-syntactic models of onymization is clearly traced, and ergonyms obtained as a result of using these ways of formation are most favorably received by respondents and almost unmistakably indicate the profile of a commercial object. However, it should be noted, that the variety of ways of onymization increases the likelihood of a variety and originality of names, and, possibly, more accurate guidance on the profile, taking into account social status, material status, age, and gender. For example, names formed by using foreign words are more appealing to young people. In addition, the presence in the name of any unusual words may indicate a certain elitism of the commercial enterprise. To attract the older generation, nominators try to specify a profile of services or products. In this regard, we believe that a thorough study of how the target audience can influence the choice of name is required.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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