
TECHNIQUES OF GEOSEMIOTIC ANALYSIS (ON THE BASIS OF MYKOLAYIV LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION)

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Chernytskiy V. B.

Національний університет кораблебудування імені адмірала Макарова

The work deals with urgent methodological issues of urban geosemiotic manifestation analysis from the applied linguistics viewpoint and possibilities of linguistic landscape study on the basis of the technique considered.

Key words: *geosemiotics, connotation, indexing and symbolizing functions, sovietisms, globalization.*

Geosemiotic study of urban environment from the viewpoint of applied linguistics, namely, cognitive and social linguistics that implies the analysis of interaction between society and language, the world and word is of great importance at present. The second, more frequently used term for it, is linguistic landscape (LL). Dozens of researches have been carried out in the field of geosemiotics since the end of the last millennium till now. But most of the indicated studies are focused upon geosemantics or linguistic landscape phenomena rather than on geosemiotic ones. Here we have to make a brief degression of explanatory character.

The first notion can comprise the analysis of signs in their multiple displays whereas the second one only deals with linguistic manifestations. If we try to analyse sacral centres in Mykolayiv [1] using geosemiotics as an instrument, we can differentiate the architecture of religious buildings from all the others. The relationship of sacral structure elements, heavenward direction of spears and domes, ogive, lancet windows of a catholic cathedral, eternal divinity of crosses on orthodox and catholic churches, both vertical and horizontal space arrangement of sacred places, – all these reflects constant ties between divine and secular world. They have become an integral part of our urban ethnic and cultural paradigm for centuries. In this article we, have restricted our research to linguistic display of a landscape, though as the digression on geosemiotics above showed its interpretation can be enlarged.

As is known there are special research institutions in the world that study all aspects of language and speech manifestations in various places. One of the many latest examples of the work is a collective study published in New York in 2009 [2]. Unfortunately, such studies are almost completely unknown in Ukraine with the rare exception of a report made last December in Kyiv by applied linguistics professor Liudmila Bordiuk from "Lvivska Polytechnika" at the XIII th annual conference of Fulbright professors' community concerning linguistic landscape of Lviv [3]. And it was this report that became an impetus for us to start a series of linguistic landscape studies of the city.

Local LL exists in space as signs, dynamic or static, visual or audible images, representing themselves in the places of constant presence of people: in shopping malls and street markets, transport terminals (railway and bus stations, marine terminals, airports), popular establishments of public catering, places and buildings of religious worship designation, educational and civil establishments, recreation areas etc.

On one hand, we all know that language and speech are closely connected with the people who produce them and who choose the means and ways of their presentation in various places: advertisers hang them in the form of signs and instructions, place them on bigboards, posters, lightboxes, stands and graffiti, distribute them on fliers and other handouts, copywriters invent slogans that can be encountered not only in real surrounding but also in virtual cyberspace as web-sites.

On the other, it is people who read, decode and interpret such displays of LL. Or they just ignore them. It often happens when the degree of contents availability remains a closed channel of communication for outsiders but is only perceived appropriately by representatives of sub-cultures. E.g. numerous familiar signs *WI-Fi*, or *Wi-Fi – безкоштовно* face us on office doors, entrances to public catering establishments, libraries etc. But they are only adequately understood by IT people or laptop ordinary users. The same concerns intrinsic names of national meals indicated on menus which also implies cosmopolitan lifestyle.

Geosemiotic objects focus our attention on signs, words and phrases, having either open or hidden meaning and distributed knowledge in the form of multi-coloured signs, sounds, stationary or dynamic images and similar infinite creative speech

manifestations. The latter form language ecology in the urban, national, transnational and global aspects. Fast propagation of internet and various form of cybercommunication implement a new dimension into these manifestations, open for everyone and everywhere, without the necessity of being represented physically in the real tangible world.

On the break of two millenniums we live in a multi-language world. Globalisation with its migration processes, highspeed communication and relative political openness on the international arena has resulted in new displays of cultural mixture in the sphere of economic activity and social existence: i.e. in mass-media, business, music, nutrition, clothes sales, hi-tech and hi-end products. Similarly, the situations of language contacts are resulted in high saturation of bilingual or multi-lingual manifestations in urban LL.

Our project is divided into two stages of study. The first one deals with total data collection of signs representing LL in all the streets located in the historical centre of Mykolayiv, as well as along the most important thoroughfares, in trading and recreation centres of our city, inside and outside public places, educational establishments including the relevant info found in cyberspace concerning our city for documenting and further analysis. The second one comprises interpretation of Mykolayiv LL on the basis of both existing procedures and those developed by us.

Thus, the first stage was realized in collecting characteristics of external means of visual or audible rows along the following perspective: sign, script (sound or outline), script or type body (size, modern or old-fashioned, stylized or inventive, monochrome or poly-chrome, orientation in space, arrangement, colour, intonation), language (or combination of languages), function (indexing or symbolizing), degree of creativity, all this being preferably preceded by a brief historical description of the place or urban environment (if applicable). The results of this preparatory work have been reported at the all-Ukrainian scientific conference of students and young scholars [see 4]. It is still under development as a inter-university project by the students of the three universities of our city: Shipbuilding, Chernimorsky and Vasyl Soukhomlynsky universities.

For example, name: */Artiuok/*, script: */Bookman Old Style, bold, big size, modern, combination of Latin and Cyrillic fonts/*, colour: */Green/*, language:

/Combination of English and Ukrainian/, degree of creativity: /high as it evokes certain emotional response due to the meaning of the English word "art" and that of the international "шок", function: /The name is not indexing as it does not reflect the goods groups sold in the shop (inexpensive female and male clothes), but it is compensated by photo illustrations on shopwindows and the brand itself which is widely known/.

The second stage of research comprised the study and interpretation of the following objects and phenomena:

1) Functional characteristics of external means of visual or audible rows (scripts, intonation and musical arrangement of commercials, etc). E.g.: the inscription "Ломбардъ" in Zhovtneviy avenue or restaurant "Старгородъ" in central yacht club, "Печатный дворъ" in Admiralskaya street, where old Cyrillic font has been used with the letter "ъ", that was abolished in the second decade of the last century, performs a symbolizing function and obviously attracts our attention to the established quality standards of old times. Another example is café name "Kaktus" in the premises of "Pioneer" cinema, which is executed in volumetric green letters which is essentially a transcription of the word pronounced in Russian: stylized letters in the form of green cactuses produces bright impression of something unexpected and specific. Shop's names can be very creative and sophisticated. For example supermarket "ProStor. Магазины краси та подарунків" Ukrainian or Russian word transliterated in Latin performs several functions simultaneously: firstly, it invokes associations with vast spaces of Ukrainian meaning of the word pronounced as a single word, – "Простор", secondly, the last part of the name makes an allusion to the functional type of sales place, – stor(e) and it has a complete coincidence when pronouncing the word, – department store where You can buy "beauty" and many other things.

2) Indexing or symbolizing functions of LL manifestations (which is in line with traditional LL studies), frequently a combination of both. Thus, if we see an inscription or announcement in English, it can appeal to members of an English-speaking community or indicate its constant presence. But in Mykolayiv LL elements in foreign languages cannot execute indexing functions, they can be only symbolizing or implying something different. E.g. the inscription "Beauty Salon" on the hairdressers' located in Faleyivska street, according to owners' idea, could symbolize foreign taste

and manners, style or West European quality. The language of LL can, therefore, either indicate the presence of appropriate language community, or symbolize something about the product or service, that has nothing in common with the sign location.

English or French, German or Italian elements of any city's LL often create an allusion of cosmopolitan lifestyle in many advanced countries, high property status, education level or relevance to modern fashion. In this sense we interpret numerous inscriptions on shop windows of boutique trade networks. They are the manifestations of LL in the form of the so-called Shop window English or Voughlish.

3) It has been proved very fruitful to analyze social-historic and political background of nomination processes connected with the names of streets, shops, signs, monuments etc. Of utmost importance are the studies of their ethnographic "survival" in case of further renaming. Original names of many streets, squares and places "have been surviving" and exist till now despite their official renaming in Soviet times confirmed by city council decrees. The names that have not been re-turned but still exist in aural linguistic environment are the streets: Rybna, Catolitska, Glazenapovska, Khersonska, Chernihivska, 3rd, 6th, 9th and 11th Slobidska, the monument to war heroes of 1812 (which was renamed in the first years of Soviet power into the monument to the heroes of Sivash division)¹. Moreover, in case of Slobidska streets renaming the order of their sequence was confused when the 3rd, 6th, 9th and 11th Slobidska streets disappeared on the city plan.

4) Sovietisms preserved in the names of LL of our city are another object of study. There are quite enough displays of former practice of renaming LL elements in favour of Soviet power ideals as Radyanska street, Lenin square and avenue, shipyard, park and monument to 61 communards, public house in Oktyabrski avenue named after 40th anniversary of October, Russian drama theater names after famous pilot V.P. Chkalov (who has never been in Mykolayiv), Petrovskiy park, Krasnykh Mayovshchikov street in Nnamyv make a ridiculous marriage with the adjacent street market named Strasse, etc, etc. Here we have to make a note: while interpreting sovietisms or the phenomenon of "radyanskist" in the LL of a city, we always have to separate the names that commemorate people or events of our his-toric past, like streets named after Liagin,

¹ Presently the restoration of original monument has been announced

Sidodrov, Victory square, Geroyev Stalingrada avenue, from those connected with ideological preferences of the time.

5) It would be interesting and, at any rate, instructive for legislation observation bodies of our city to assess investigation of relationship of Ukrainian, Russian and other languages in Mykolayiv LL. Having analysed LL types represented in the main street of our city on stickers (42%), stands (23%), signboards and city-lights (14%), we can state the following priority of languages: 1) Russian, 2) Uk-rainian, 3) Mixture of English-Russian, 4) mixture of Russian-Ukrainian. Quite simple statistical analysis of this ratio has brought us to the following results of language manifestations depicted in the pie charts 1 and 2 below:

A number of other aspects of an urban LL can be rather interesting in many ways of their existence and interaction.

Geosemantic self-identification can be analysed through the study of branded objects surrounding us in our homes: preliminary study gave the following quantitative results concerning the origin of household devices, electrical and electronic appliances in our apartments, i.e. which make our people render their preferences to buying and making use of electric irons, washing machines, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, air conditioning units, gas stoves and boilers, window frames, floors, ceiling and walls finish, etc. Our initial analysis vividly demonstrates European (44%) and global vector (84%) versus 16% of Ukraine and former CIS countries' products (see Fig. 3).

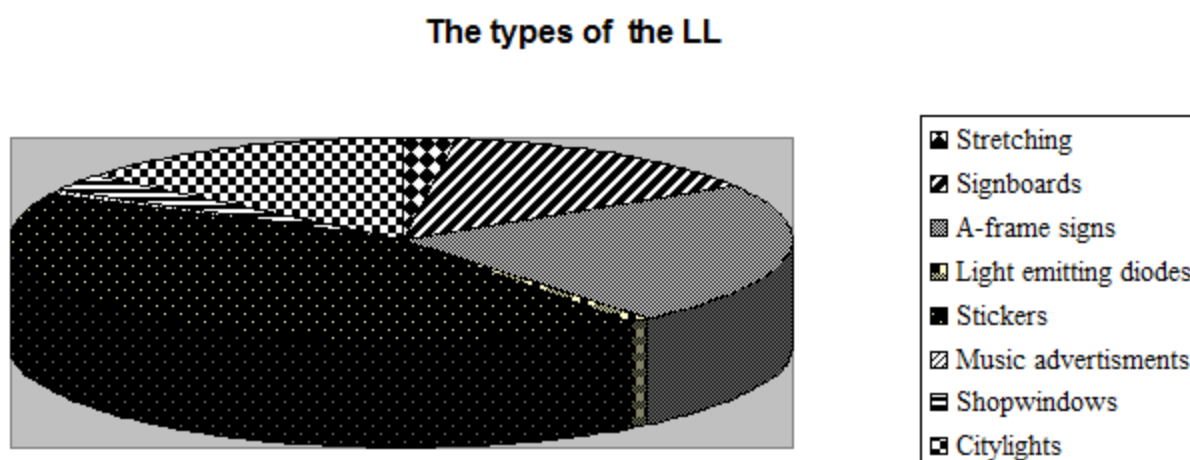


Fig. 1

The language of the LL

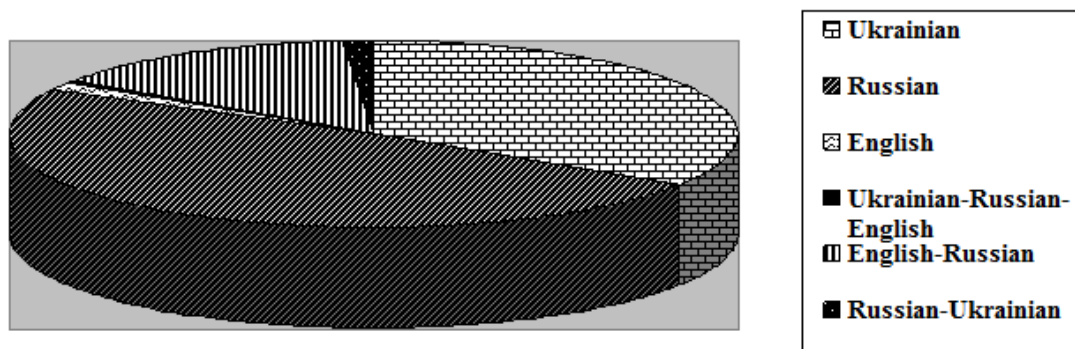


Fig. 2

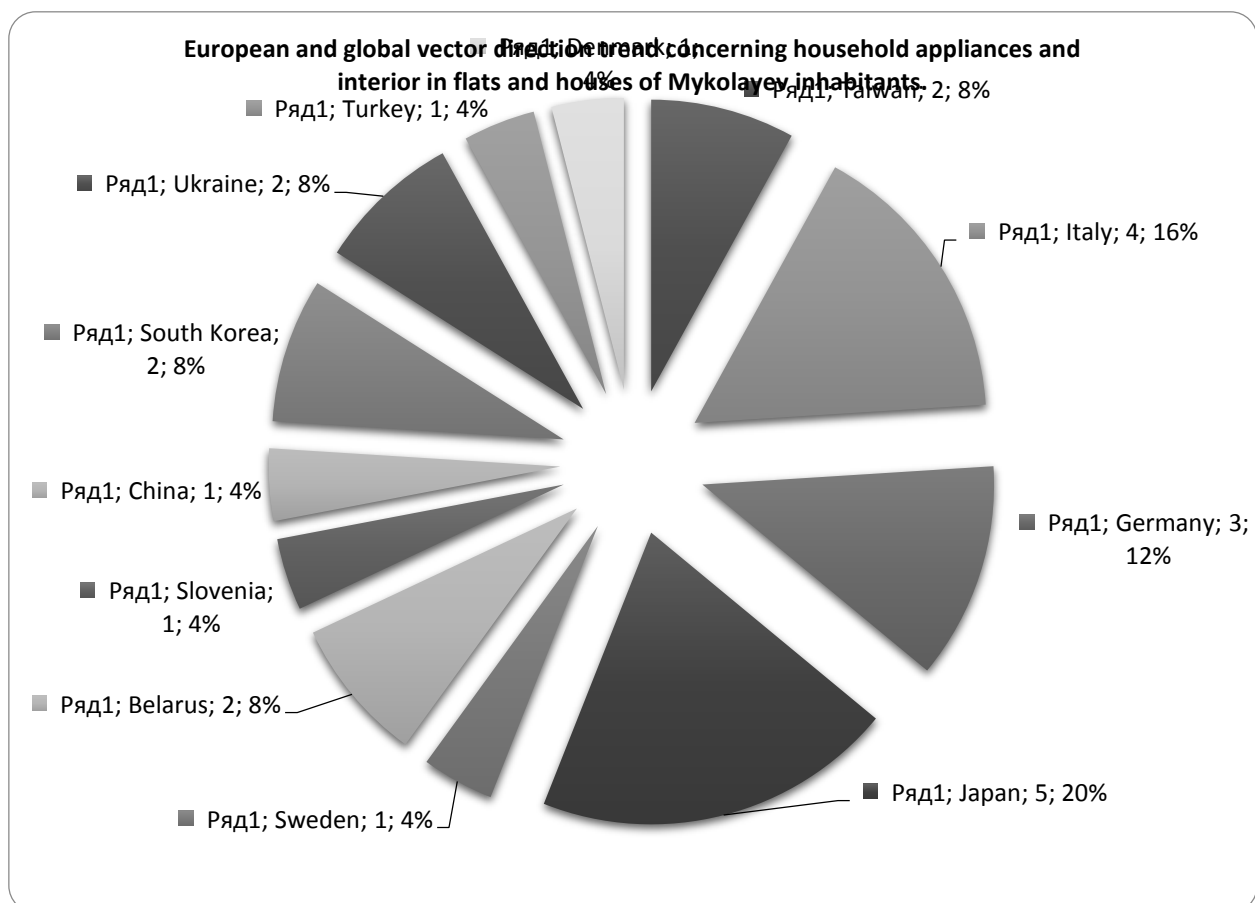


Fig. 3

The same can be said about dynamic manifestations of LL in our streets such as make of cars, brands of T-shirts, shoes and sportswear, casual clothes etc. Skipping through the results of quantitative analysis results in a conclusion that obviously proves the European and global vector choice made by our people without any political plebiscite polling.

There are lots more other fields of LL research that can prove fruitful for various analysis applications. We'll refer to the most prominent:

- Language functioning in theatres, educational institutions (universities, schools, kindergartens – Ukrainian, Russian, English), churches of various confessions in Mykolayiv (sermons in Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Latin, German, Hiebru and English languages), of publishing house products;

- Language and speech display in restaurants, cafes, other national catering places together with specific names of food stuff, meals, drinks, processing and dressing technologies that we are getting accustomed to, such as, shaurma, pizza, pasta, various burgers, sushi, tamera, roll-ins, roll-outs, with their garnishes and accessories, world-famous coffee and tea brands, tea flavours brands, names for technologies of preparation and serving (Americano, espresso, cappuccino), drinks (cocktails, alcohol, smoothies, soft and stiff);

- Manifestations of both globalization and pseudo-globalization in nomination of LL urban objects, such as: "Планета дітей" (Lenin av.), "Вселенная халатов" (3rd Slobidska st.), "Мегаспорт" (Radyanska st.), "Globallogic" (Navarinska st.), lots of tiny "Супер-мега" shops and markets etc., etc.

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Черницький В. Б. Методика геосеміотичного аналізу (на основі описання лінгвістичного пейзажу м. Миколаєва)

У роботі розглядаються актуальні методологічні питання аналізу геосемантичних проявів у місті з точки зору прикладної лінгвістики та можливості вивчення лінгвістичного пейзажу на основі розглянутої методики.

Ключові слова: *геосеміотика, конотація, вказуюча та символізуюча функції, радянськість, глобалізація.*