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Comparative Analysis of the lexical Corpus of the Linguistic Landscape of Russian and Italian Cities

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Abstract

The paper studies the peculiarities of realization and functioning of linguistic landscape of two multilingual cities: Kazan, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan and the capital of Italy Rome. Comparative study of the landscape of Kazan and Rome becomes important in the course of growing cooperation between Russia, Tatarstan in particular, and Italy, as well as provides an opportunity to study the features of globalization, the implementation of language policy, the current position of languages in society and the adaptation of each city to a large flow of tourists. The aim of our work was to identify similar and different trends in the linguistic landscape of Kazan and Rome. To achieve it we have analyzed the current language policy of the two regions and conducted the analysis of the population living in them, as this is directly related to the visibility of certain languages in the city. The main results of the study reflect certain national peculiarities of the linguistic landscape of the Russian and Italian cities, in particular, the predominant position of the state languages, English as an international language and the presence of other languages of ethnic minorities, and determine the possible prospects for their further development. The practical and theoretical significance of the study lies in the possibility of using the results to optimize the processes of language planning and development in the Republic of Tatarstan and Italy.

Keywords: Linguistic landscape; Language policy; National.

1. Introduction

The shaping of the picture of reality and everyday perception of the world among the population is largely made through the linguistic picture of the city, i.e. linguistic landscape, which changes to capture the phenomena and supporting of various social institutions, so it reflects all social changes. The works of many Russian and foreign scientists are devoted to the study of the language picture of the cities, for example, in the context of general onomastic issues (Bondaletov, 1987), Superanskaya *et al.* (1986), (Kalegina and Seredina, 2017) sociolinguistics (Gutnov and Glazychev, 1990). This paper is based on the generally accepted definition proposed by Landry and Bourhis (1997), who treat the linguistic landscape as a representation of languages in public spaces of cities, i.e. ratio of languages in which signs, inscriptions on public buildings, street advertising, road signs and indicators and so forth are made out in the public sphere of the city environment. The results become more meaningful and revealing in a multilingual environment when it comes to conflict and contact between different languages. It is established that the contact of languages is influenced by proper internal and extra-linguistic (external) factors. Extralinguistic factors include geographical, ethno cultural, historical, aesthetic, political and ideological ties of the city, as well as economical and economic activities of the people. Because of this, the linguistic landscape of the two studied metropolitan cities is also very heterogeneous and multilingual, thus many works of scientists are already devoted to the research of the linguistic picture of Kazan and Rome. However, our study will be the first attempt to compare the linguistic landscapes of these two cities through a comprehensive analysis of the functioning of the state and other languages in them, as well as identifying semantic features of the vocabulary.

The linguistic landscape consists of various elements. The totality of the names of local objects is called urbanonyms, which, in turn, are divided into different groups. In connection with the constantly increasing number of shopping centers, restaurants, shops, pharmacies, etc., we can observe a dynamic increase in the largest group – ergonyms, which are the proper names of enterprises of various functional profiles, i.e. the names themselves and the corresponding signs. Our paper is based on the study of ergonyms to determine the degree of presence of languages other than the state ones, because the already existing information about the state languages is for the most part about hodonyms – the names of the linear objects of the city, i.e. streets, alleys, waterfront, which are regulated by local authorities. Ergonyms and hodonyms are a mirror of the national culture, contain a large amount of information about traditions, customs, mentality and the world perception peculiarities, specific to this or that linguistic community in a given period.

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2. Methodology

The solution of the tasks is provided by a set of methods. The main method of our research is descriptive, implemented in the methods of gathering, systematization, generalization and interpretation of the material. Statistical and comparative methods were used to establish the most typical semantic groups. The method of component analysis is aimed at describing the semantics of the landscape components. Linguistic and psychological method is used to determine the pragmatic significance of vocabulary. The material for the study of Kazan was a file cabinet, including the official names of streets, commercial enterprises, cultural facilities and catering, obtained by a continuous sampling of the language space of the city of Kazan. The source of language material on the city of Rome are electronic maps, travel guides and guidebooks, as well as a written record of names (Kotze, 2010).

3. Results

In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Tatarstan, which regulates the mandatory and equal use of two state languages, the linguistic landscape in the territory of the Republic is implemented in Russian and Tatar languages. This law is observed in all streets of Kazan, which is reflected in all signs of urban orientation, indicators, maps and directions, as well as bus stops and streets in public transport are announced in two languages. However, in preparation for the Universiade 2013 and other upcoming international events, the Executive Committee decided to add English to the two state languages for mandatory use in the city's toponymy. All the names of the streets and stops contain the English translation that is also announced in the public transport and affects nearly all city signs (especially in the city center close to sports facilities and other places of stay of tourists and foreign visitors). For the correct use of English, it was decided that the method of transliteration (establishing the closest correspondence between the graphic units of the receiving and the source languages) should be used. The presence of these three languages is also reflected in the ergonyms of the city of Kazan. On average, about 44% of modern ergonyms are names formed on the basis of the Russian language, (Умелые ручки, Букет столицы, Августина, Мечта, Солнышко, Атлант, Кардамон, Кофеин, Эдельвейс), about 38% - on the basis of the Tatar language (including translation and trace the variants of Russian names of state-funded organizations), (Арыш мае, Иске – Таш, Йолдыз, Саф, Алтын иген, Ильдан, Флера, Алия, Кояш, Сабантуй) and about 18% are ergonyms infiltrated from Western European languages, primarily English (Mango, Incity, Jewellery fashion, Смайл, Баттерфляй, KFC) (Smelkova and Ippolitova, 2008).

In Italy, according to the legislation and language policy, all visible information of the urban space is made in Italian. Numerous dialects within the Italian, functioning in the country, can differ significantly from each other, and often are also represented in the public urban space, but the central dialect in the region of Lazio and its capital Rome romanesco (romanesco) is very close to the classic Italian language, which facilitates the study of the linguistic landscape of the city. Thus, the designation of all streets, city and transport signs, official signs of public institutions and texts on billboards and posters in Rome is written in Italian. Being focused on foreign travelers, Italy also makes every effort to make the foreigner feel in its cities as comfortable as possible, so in Rome there are numerous orientation and information signs in English in places of public gathering of foreign tourists: airports, train stations, tourist information about attractions and some routes. However, the common translation of the names of streets, stops, intracity signs into English is not observed, almost all toponymic information is presented in Italian, and at the legislative level this problem is not yet considered. Despite this, the English language is undoubtedly present in the private sector and business names. On average, the vast majority of ergonyms (about 72 percent) are written in Italian (Benedetto, Nuovo Mercato, La casa del Caffe, Novecento, Gioia, Casamanco), about 20 percent of ergonyms are presented in English (Dream, Cornershop, Art studio) and the rest are signs in the third and other languages (about 7-8 percent) (Charati *et al.*, 2018; Gorter, 2006).

However, the visibility of languages in the ergonyms of both cities varies depending on the area of the city; its recency and proximity to the center (see charts). On the central streets of Kazan, Russian and Tatar ergonyms are presented in approximately the same proportion in order to immediately acknowledge the guests with the national flavor of the city and the peaceful coexistence of two cultures. However, in the Old Tatar Settlement, the first settlement of Tatars and the historic heart of the city, the Tatar language prevails in ergonyms. This district of Kazan can be correlated to Rome's Trastevere, which is also one of the oldest districts of the city, whose inhabitants call themselves real Romans, where we also see the greatest prevalence of the Italian language. The state languages in Kazan and Rome, as well as in any other city of the world, are followed by ergonyms in English, which is the result of globalization, a large tourist flow and developed economic ties. It should be noted that in the Novo-Savinovsky district of Kazan, which is considered a new and elite district of the city, there are more English names in comparison with other areas, which is associated with the prestige of English. In Rome, English ergonyms in large numbers are presented in the area of Termini, which is the main transport hub for all public transport, where most tourists arrive and begin to explore the city. However, in general, the prevalence of ergonyms in English is not as high as in Kazan, as the Italian authorities are in favor of the preservation of Italian and try to limit the penetration of English. In Rome's Esquilino district we also see ergonyms in other languages, as it is the most multicultural area of Rome, with the population of different language groups, including migrants and residents of other European cities. Another feature of Rome is the prevalence of ergonyms in Spanish, which occupy the third place in terms of prevalence, which is associated with the similarity of languages, long stay of the country under the rule of the Spaniards in the 18th century and a large influx of Spanish-speaking migrants at the moment (Iskakova *et al.*, 2018; Yulia and Shuly, 2014)
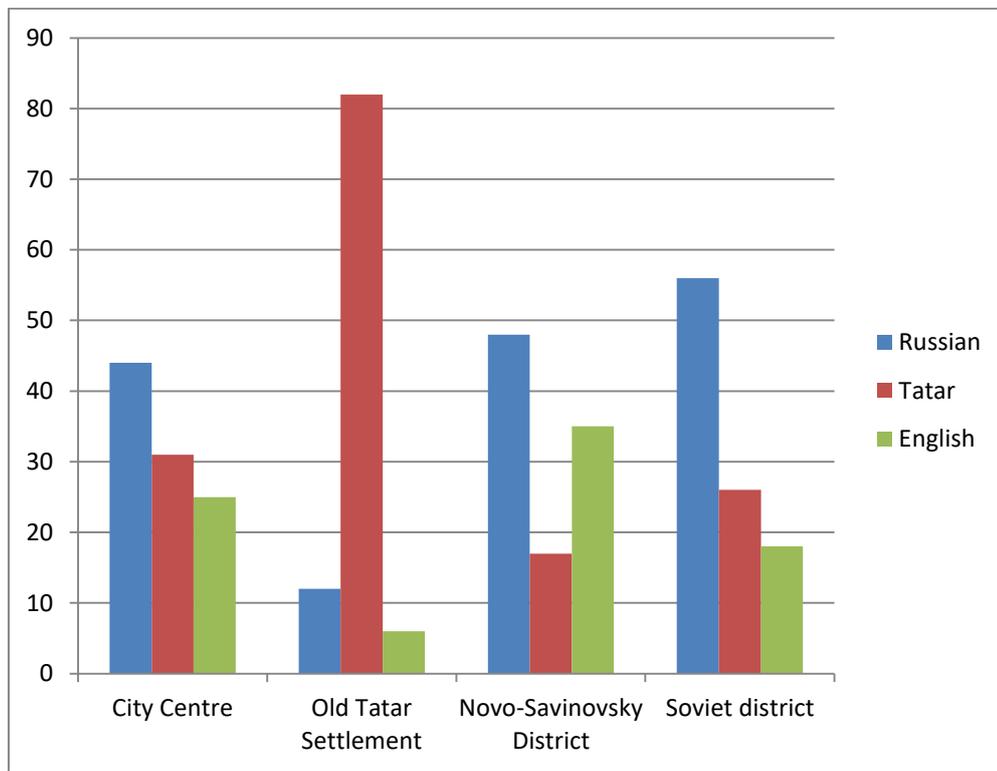
Ergonyms of Kazan
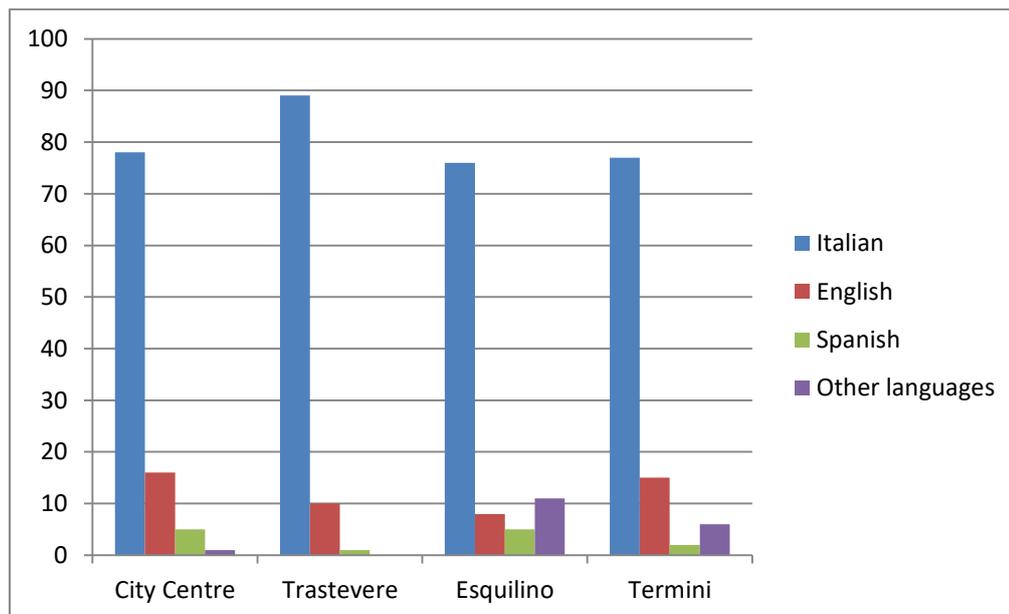
Ergonyms of Rome

English in both cities is not only present independently in foreign names, but also provokes mistakes in use, changes in spelling and communicative strategies of local languages. Most often, a contamination of the words occurs, i.e. the mixing of English words in Kazan with Russian words and forms: Xoposhow, Rock'n'roллы, BEERлога, Золотая Fishка, LoWELLAs, Goodвинов и Компания; in Rome with the Italian words: Nightzona, Un Mister, Eatalia (word play). A group of ergonyms in other languages after the state and English in Kazan are ergonyms in Italian, French, Japanese and Chinese, transcribed in Cyrillic, and other languages. However, their total number is much smaller than the number of English ergonyms, and such names are isolated cases (Ling and Minghisuan, 2012). In Rome, ergonyms were found in Romanian, French, Chinese, Albanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Hindi, African languages and many others. This linguistic picture is directly proportional to the groups of migrants from different countries of the world and reflects the historically developed multiculturalism of Rome, which is considered the most populous city in Europe. The languages of migrants perform several functions in the linguistic landscape of Rome, including the separation of their living space, and reflect current political and social attitudes towards the languages of ethnic minorities. Now, they have sufficient freedom to name their enterprises, but recently the Italian authorities began to think about limiting the languages of migrants in the linguistic landscape to improve

the visual atmosphere of the city and create a public environment that is understandable and accessible to the entire population (Avrorin, 1975; Villalobos, 2015).

4. Discussion

The material presented in the paper on urban multilingualism, globalization, minority languages and language policy can be useful for the development of new areas of linguistics, such as comparative semasiology and onomasiology. The results can be applied in the practice of University teaching such disciplines as lexicology, translation theory, during special courses and seminars on onomastics, sociolinguistics, linguistic and cultural studies and intercultural communication.

5. Summary

The results of our study confirm once again that the linguistic landscape in the presented cities is formed on the basis of the language policy of the region, reflecting a certain ideology of the socio-cultural group (nation), as well as taking into account global trends and the role of the country at the international level. The extent and density of the presence of specific language in ergonyms and hodonyms as an important part of the linguistic landscape show the importance and the power of language in society. It was found out that in both cities the urban landscape is based on the state languages. After state languages English is represented, which is an inevitable change in any linguistic landscape of the world and then there are languages of other ethnic minorities or other world languages. In Kazan their presence is conditioned only by advertising goals, and in Rome the diversity of languages in the linguistic landscape reflects the diversity of the population, which is due to internal (multinational) and external factors (neighborhood with other European countries).

6. Conclusions

The linguistic landscape of the city is important to form a picture of the world of its citizens and to reflect its peculiarities. Our study shows the predominant position of the state languages according to the language policy, English as an international language and the presence of other languages of ethnic minorities in the cities of Kazan and Rome.

Acknowledgements

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