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## Features of language communication in a multicultural community: Russian texts of advertising signboards in the border cities of China

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### Abstract

The article explores outdoor advertising in Russian in Heihe and Hunchun, which are located in north-eastern China that borders Russia. The article examines Chinese advertising signboards and advertisements made in the Russian language by the native Chinese, and their compliance with the Russian language standards of graphics and spelling. The purpose of the article is to analyze errors in the graphical form of Russian words and non-compliance with Russian spelling rules in texts of Chinese outdoor advertising in Russian. The authors find typical errors in graphics and spelling in Chinese advertising texts in Russian and explain their reasons.

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### 1. Introduction

In recent decades, the border areas of Russia and China are actively forming a multicultural space, i.e. a territory of the preservation and development of cultural differences. Geographically, the area is associated with the Russian Far East and Trans-Baikal and the north-east of China.

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Multiculturalism in these areas shows in the tolerance towards different cultural attributes of different nations, first of all, Russian and Chinese, as well as in the promotion of these attributes in order to attract the attention of foreign consumers of goods and services. By cultural attributes, we understand cultural identifiers of a people that characterize it as a special ethnic group: language, cuisine, national household practices, national architecture, traditional national costume, etc.

National cultural attributes permeate the border areas, make them specific if compared with other regions, and demonstrate the various forms of cultural and linguistic interaction while maintaining their overall identity.

A manifestation of multiculturalism is a curious fact of numerous advertising texts in Russian that the native Chinese have written in order to attract Russian tourists who come to China in large numbers for Chinese goods and services.

We have studied the frontier cities of the People's Republic of China, Heihe (Heilongjiang Province) and Hunchun (Jilin), located in the north-east of the country. Heihe is located on the right bank of the Amur River opposite the Russian city of Blagoveshchensk, Amur Oblast. Hunchun is located 10 km away from the Russian Primorsky Krai border. These cities have a lot of outdoor advertising in Russian that often makes native speakers of Russian smile and linguists wish to find an explanation for this linguistic phenomenon (Kolomenskaya, 2010; Oglezneva and Jiang Ying, 2014; Petrova and Petrova, 2014).

Besides the fact that the advertising space of northeast China is verbalized in the Chinese and Russian languages, it includes advertising in Korean. For instance, in Hunchun, advertising signboards in Chinese often have Korean translations, as this city is in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture of China, and Russian translations, so the advertising space of the city can be described as trilingual (Petrova and Petrova, 2014). A relevant tendency in this connection is the growing presence of English in advertising texts of China's northeast; it has different forms and reflects the general trend of the spread of English in the world.

Language interaction issues have always been at the center of research attention and discussed on different linguistic data.

The problems of language contacts were profoundly theoretized in the classical work by U. Weinreich, *Languages in Contact*, where interference has been described as a result of the violation of rules of a language influenced by norms of another language (Weinreich, 1979).

Violations of rules, or errors, are natural and logical in learning and using a foreign language. Typical errors prompt to identify the causes of such errors, understand how they appear and find ways to prevent them, which is of great practical value, e.g., when learning a foreign language, when translating from one language to another.

The relevance of the study of language and communication errors in a mother tongue and a foreign language has been emphasized by A. Nikunlassi and E. Protasova. They noted the prospects of using the knowledge in this area to evaluate and improve the methods of teaching native and foreign languages, to diagnose the level of language ability, to establish the native / non-native language of the speaker, to diagnose types of aphasia and psychophysiological abnormalities, etc., as well as to mark the social group affiliation of the speaker (Nikunlassi and Protasova, 2014).

There are different aspects of the study of errors in language interaction. The greatest number of works in this field is devoted to errors of learners of a particular language, e.g., pronunciation errors (Pussinen, 2014), grammatical errors (Hara, 2014), semantic errors (Ovchinnikova and Pavlova, 2014; Shchemerova, 2014). Typical studies concern errors at different levels of the language system (Zemskaya, 2001; Gülbeyaz, 2012; Perotto and Niznik, 2014); the general typology of errors (Pfau, 2012), and cause of errors (Beysenbaeva, 1994; Harley, 2006; Shaklein, 2008; Gülbeyaz, 2012; Oglezneva, 2014; Suryanarayan 2014).

Research material for such studies is diverse: texts written by non-native speakers, e.g., written works of foreign language learners (Voeykova, 2014; Nenonen, 2014; Peeters-Podgaevskaya and Dorofeeva, 2013), advertising texts (Ibraeva and Alisharieva, 2014), translated texts (Ovchinnikova and Pavlova, 2014) and oral texts (Perotto and Niznik, 2014).

Chinese advertising texts, namely texts of advertising signboards in Russian, have not been analyzed in terms of their classification at different levels of the language system, which is the novelty of our study. The results of our research contribute to the development of contact linguistics as they show typical and specific, traditionally manifested and new elements in language facts caused by the interaction of the Russian and Chinese languages.

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