

УДК 811.161.2'373.2:339.176(477-25)  
DOI: 10.18523/lcmp2522-9281.2022.8.5-21

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## MORE THAN A SIGNBOARD: THE NAME OF A STORE IN THE SPEAKER'S MENTAL LEXICON

### *Abstract*

**Background.** *Forming a system of spatial, social and cultural landmarks, each speaker consciously/unconsciously records proper names which seem important. The most significant units are remembered, and it is they that determine the general idea of the entire set of marked objects. Since the system of linguistic units in the individual mental lexicon is regulated by a great number of subjective factors, it can be assumed that the tendencies of the reflection of reality in the mental lexicon common to a group of speakers open the way to the analysis of current social stereotypes. Shop and store names are one of the groups of commercial names, therefore, by their very nature, they are maximally oriented towards reflecting positive stereotypes of large social groups.*

**Purpose.** *The purpose of this article is to analyze how the names of shops and stores are reflected in the mental lexicon of the women residents of Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, and to try to outline the connection between the proper names verbalization in speakers' mental lexicon and their ideas about extralinguistic reality.*

**Methods.** *The material for this study consists of 249 graphic variants of 160 names of clothing, footwear and food stores, collected by surveying 45 women residents of Kyiv. Descriptive, comparative, and quantitative methods were used in the research, and techniques of the structural method were occasionally involved.*

**Results.** *Current store names in the capital of Ukraine create a very colorful linguistic landscape with its main feature – the predominance of foreign language components, both lexical and graphic. Among all this diversity, the speaker remembers 3 or 4 names on average, which determine her idea of the general trends in the nomination of objects in this field and indirectly – these objects themselves. The analysis of store and shop names active in the mental lexicon of Kyiv residents shows that the absolute majority of clothing and shoe stores (79 % and 81 %, respectively) are perceived by names identified with other cultural spaces. Not only the name's origin, but primarily its graphic form is a clear indicator of belonging to some cultural space. The opposite case in the name system of grocery stores is recorded – only 26 % of them were reproduced by respondents in Latin. The form in which the store or shop name is stored in the mental lexicon depends on a) the graphic code visualized on the signboard / in the advertisement and b) the sound form of the name commonly used in informal communication. The activity of the second factor directly depends on the symmetry of the sound and spelling of the barbarism name and the level of speaker's foreign language competence. The result of the collision of different graphic codes in the speaker's mind is mixing, which is manifested in the recording of the original form of the name from Latin to Cyrillic during memorization. Therefore, while keeping proper names in memory, speakers try to assimilate their form to the rest of the fixed units, and this often manifests itself in the transformation of the original form of proper name.*

**Discussion.** *Oversaturation of Kyiv's commercial ergonomics system with barbaric names forms a strong public stereotype about the attractiveness and progressiveness of other cultures in the consumption sphere and creates the illusion of the absence of national Ukrainian in it. Trying to master the system of store and shop names, Kyiv residents find themselves in a conflict situation: the dominant graphic code for them is the Cyrillic alphabet, while the Latin alphabet prevails in the visual space of Kyiv's trade establishments. The way out of this situation is transformation – recording of the original name with the help of a graphic system convenient for the speaker. In order to form a general idea about the reflection of the commercial proper names system in the mental lexicon of Ukrainians, it is necessary to involve in the study data from representatives of different age groups from different regions of the country.*

**Keywords:** cognitive onomastics, ergonomym, shop / store name, commercial name, mental lexicon, onymic concept, graphic code.

## БІЛЬШЕ, НІЖ НАПИС: НАЗВА МАГАЗИНУ В МЕНТАЛЬНОМУ ЛЕКСИКОНІ МОВЦЯ

*У статті проаналізовано, як одна з груп онімів (назви магазинів) представлена в ментальному лексиконі мовців та який вплив має ця частина концепту на формування їхнього уявлення про позначувану сферу. На матеріалі анкетування жительок Києва досліджено обсяг і наповнення субфрейму магазинонімів (сформованого назвами магазинів одягу, взуття та продуктів харчування), схарактеризовано особливості їх концептуалізації.*

**Ключові слова:** когнітивна ономастика, ергонім, магазинонім, комерціонім, ментальний лексикон, онімний концепт.

### Introduction

Commercial names (proper names denoting the names of trade objects), together with proper names of business associations in various spheres, including industrial, trading, and cultural domains, compose a system of ergonyms. In addition to their main nominative and identification functions, ergonyms act as “signs of social and cultural space” (Poznixirenko, 2018, p. 23), “linguistic and cultural marker signs” (Poznixirenko, 2018, p. 25), while at the same time reflecting current stereotypes that are wide-spread in society and preserving the traditions of various social groups. Being open and dynamic, the system of ergonymics is an inexhaustible object for research, and the use of new research methods enables various approaches to their study. At present, the studies of the Ukrainian ergonyms are developing in the following dimensions: linguists are interested in their structure and semantics (О. Дудка, В. Пономаренко, Ю. Горожанов, О. Белей, Н. Лесовець, Н. Кутуза, et al.), origin and motivatedness (Г. Зимовець, Л. Соколова, Ю. Дідур, О. Сидоренко, Ю. Позніхіренко), their role as one of the components of the street text in shaping the language landscape (О. Хрушкова), the lexical and semantic shifts in the ergonym system (О. Шестакова), the ability to reflect the ideological tendencies and dominant identities of an epoch (Г. Зимовець), and the reflection of ergonyms in the mental lexicon of speakers (О. Карпенко). Recently, the anthropocentric research approach to this group of lexis has become increasingly articulated since ergonyms are a source of investigation not only into language facts, but also into the features of a society at the certain stages

of its development (Zymovecz, 2009, 2010, 2018). Therefore, answering the question how the consciousness of an individual speaker captures and reflects proper names will bring us closer to the understanding how the language environment influences the formation of the current picture of the speaker's world (and the community of the speakers of a certain language through such a world). Therefore, an analysis of the system of proper names, in particular shop-onyms, and the features of their representation in the lexicons of different groups of speakers is one of the ways to trace active trends in the development of the worldview guidelines of a society in general.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In Ukrainian studies, O. Karpenko was the first to raise the need to study proper names as components of the mental lexicon: the researcher developed the cognitivist ideas of the real existence of language in the human mind (the language of a brain) and evolved a coherent theory about the system of onymic concepts as individual components of the speaker's mental lexicon. Through a detailed description of the process of mastering ergonyms, O. Karpenko has traced how a speaker recodes them into verbal and non-verbal information, which, along with the knowledge of other groups of propriatives, such as anthroponyms, toponyms, zoonyms, etc., shapes an onym-based concept in the speaker's mind. Following B. Pamp, the linguist O. Karpenko concludes that the notions of the general language lexicon can be formed by studying the contacts of individual lexicons through speech (Pamp, 1985, p. 117; Karpenko, 2006, pp. 5–7). So, each speaker only masters a fragment of the common language lexicon, which determines the knowledge of that speaker about the surrounding world. This determines the purpose of this study, which is to analyze a separate group of proper names (specifically, names of stores) reflected in the mental lexicon of a group of speakers, by examining the special characteristics of their conceptualization.

The interpretation of language as a system of signs that exist in the human mind makes it possible to conclude that the system of ergonyms (just like any other lexical units) has two dimensions: external level, as a set of objects of the surrounding world, or denotations and lexemes signifying such denotations; and internal level, as a set of units fixed in the speaker's individual lexicon. These dimensions are interconnected and complement one another because ergonyms are simultaneously the “products of the national consciousness

[Emphasis is ours – O. K.], reflecting all aspects of the spiritual and material life of a country” (Poznixirenko, 2018, p. 64), and also the objects creating a real linguistic landscape (the external system of ergonyms), and also factors shaping social stereotypes. Ukrainian researchers are mostly focused on studying the external dimension of the ergonym system. It means that the issues of how this system is perceived by a speaker, what transformations it undergoes when entering a speaker’s mental lexicon, and how it influences the shaping of an individual linguistic picture of the world remain unattended. Researchers of onomastics have long been suggesting that the semantics of proper names is potentially connotative, and it contains a large number of associations which depend on the speaker’s personal experience (see: Langendonck, 2007, p. 440; Pamp, 1985, p. 117).

As the author and the addressee of speech, the speaker has a double role. This functional dichotomy is especially evident in the system of modern commercial names, since they must convey cultural and historical information that should be understandable to a wide range of speakers and accepted favorably by them. The impact of social stereotypes on this system of names is so strong that “the nominator, shaping a motivational base for choosing a name, cannot always reveal one’s individual personality, and from time to time he or she is forced to [Emphasis is ours – O. K.] act in compliance with the requirements of the system, which is commercial in this case, when choosing a name for a commercial place...” (Poznixirenko, 2018, p. 75). Therefore, the freedom of a nominator is actually limited. In this case, the subjectivity of the speaker as the author of speech is reduced to a minimum level, whereas the understanding between the author and the addressee, which is necessary for a commercial name to successfully implement its advertising function, comes to the foreground.

Proper names of stores and shops are among the most mobile layers of the onym vocabulary, since they respond to changes in public mood as quickly as possible. Social and cultural processes in Ukraine and beyond in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the change in the status of Ukrainian from the language of communication of certain groups to the language of general use and its active entry into the sphere of mass culture, which is market-oriented, stereotypical, and corresponding to the “spirit of the epoch”, as defined by R. Bezugla (Bezugla, 2010, pp. 32–33), undoubtedly affected the system of proper names. The Ukrainian commercial ergonym came into a new round of development quite recently – since the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, having deci-

sively rejected the Soviet tradition of monotypic and purely informative names of stores such as “Shoes”, “Food Products”, or “Clothes”, and ideologically charged names, such as “Salute”, “Central”, or “Colossus”. Today, the system of commercial names in Ukraine is extremely mixed and diverse in terms of its structure, origin, motivation, ability to reproduce cultural space, etc. Critically reviewing it, O. Karpenko notes: “The old monotony in ergonyms has gone away, but the new possibilities have not yet led to a reasonable harmony.” (Karpenko, 2006, p. 212).

Describing the dynamics of the linguistic and cultural life in post-Soviet Ukraine, B. Azhnyuk concludes that “language has become not just an active participant in commodity exchange, but also a part of the product itself.” (Azhnyuk, 2002, p. 144) Projecting this statement to the system of commercial signboard names, it can be argued that the language used to form the name of a store also implements the marketing strategy of promoting a store or a shop: in any case, the selection of a native or foreign name is based on positive social stereotypes. That is why, a study of the coexistence and correlation of the elements of different languages in the external, and therefore internal, dimension in the system of the analyzed ergonyms, will deepen the knowledge about the system of value orientations of the community of speakers.

The representation of various types of onyms in the lexicon of an individual speaker is very limited and selective due to the linguistic factor (O. Karpenko views it in the ability of a proper name to refer to one denotation only (Karpenko, 2006, p. 7), and this ability contradicts the speaker’s desire to save linguistic means) and non-linguistic factor (the scope of the speaker’s mental lexicon is limited). Therefore, the core of an individual vocabulary is made up of appellatives that are semantically more general and, at the same time, deeper. When forming their lexicons, speakers choose the units which are relevant for them according to various criteria. When it comes to acquiring the external system of ergonyms, the mental lexicon incorporates, first of all, the names of the objects that are important for a particular speaker, and also the names widely present in the public information space, both directly (texts on store signboards) and indirectly (through mentioning in different types of visual and audio advertisements). So, the shop names stored in a mental lexicon are the names of socially significant objects. As an identification sign, a shop name is not only a means of formal communication in business, but also an important informational sign in the system of social relations in general (seller – buyer, client – potential client). The permanent presence of shop names

in the information space in general and in personal life in particular (for this study, names of clothing, footwear, and food stores were chosen as the most frequently visited retailers) causes their inevitable entry into the mental lexicon of various groups of speakers. Anchoring in one's lexicon, these names interact with other components, and together they form a system of the speaker's verbalized view of the world, thus reflecting a separate layer of mass culture in a concentrated way.

### **Methods and Material**

The material for the study consisted of 160 names of clothing, footwear, and food stores. These names were recorded in 249 graphic variants. The names were collected through surveying. The survey participants were 45 women aged 25–53 with higher education, residents of Kyiv city. The survey questions asked the participants to reproduce in writing the names of stores of various types: clothes, shoes, food products, household chemicals, and cosmetics, precisely in the form recalled / used by the respondents.

What makes the analyzed material particularly valuable is that it was collected in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2021, so the research results reflect an actual fragment of the linguistic picture of the world revealed by female residents of the capital of Ukraine before the full-scale invasion of Russia in February 2022.

To achieve the research goal, various methods were used: surveys to gather the research material; quantitative methods to study the volume of the speakers' mental lexicon; comparative methods to determine the qualitative relationships among the analyzed groups of store names and between the initial form of the name and the speaker's reproduction, and descriptive method to describe the transformation of the word form in a mental lexicon. As an auxiliary tool, a structural method was used to analyze the formal grammatical structure of ergonyms.

### **Results**

To explore the structure of a frame formed by store names in the mental lexicons of speakers, the method proposed by O. Karpenko was used. The researcher defines the entire set of proper names displayed in a mental lexicon as a group of onymic frames. Based on the denotative correlation, each of them can be divided into several subframes or domains, where each has a concentric structure, the elements of which are grouped around the I [Self] of the owner of a lexicon, forming four circles, at least: (1) the names of one's favorite, or one's

“own” retailers; 2) the names of the personally visited stores; 3) the names of well-known places, but not in the sphere of stable interests of a person; 4) all proper names unknown to a person (Karpenko, 2006, pp. 8–9). Given the non-verbal nature of the elements in the fourth circle and the fact that none of the respondents worked in the recalled entities, the store names obtained through the survey can be considered representatives of the first and second circles, and partly of the third circle.

### *I. Quantitative characteristics of the frame shaped by shop names*

According to the survey, the group of names to denote clothing stores was the most numerous in the mental lexicon of the interviewees: in total, female respondents recalled 80 objects. The least numerous group of the recalled names consisted of food stores: only 27 objects were mentioned. Although the mental lexicons of the interviewees cover the objects of the surrounding world in different scopes, the average number of the store names that each respondent recalled remains the same: 4 names for clothing and food stores and 3.5 names for shoe stores. Based on this, we can conclude that the verbal volume of a separate smallest “cell” of the mental lexicon, correlated with a group of denotations of the same type (names of stores with various goods – clothes / shoes / food products), is 3.5–4 names on average. The largest number of store names received from one female respondent was 10 items (names of clothing stores), and the smallest number was 1 item (names of food stores). The wording of the survey questions (“Recall 3-5 names of clothing stores”, “Recall 3-5 names of shoe stores”, and “Recall 3-5 names of food stores”) was intended to reveal only those names that are expected to be part of the first and second circles of the ergonym frame. However, the interviewees’ comments such as “It was somehow difficult to remember any names”, “It was sometimes difficult to recall even 3 stores”, “It was difficult to remember”, “It took a lot of time to remember”, or “I had to use Google to remember the name” assume that the study also involved names from the third circle of the ergonym frame – the circle more remote from the core of the lexicon.

As we can see, the number of the store names fixed in the mental lexicon is quite small, compared to the total number of names referring to the external language space of the city. Apparently, it can be explained by several, mainly extra-linguistic, reasons: store names are gradually losing their significance for residents of big cities because (1) the location of stores in large shopping centers nullifies the importance of the identifier names (sometimes it is enough

to remember the name of the shopping center and the location of a store in it, and this information can replace the verbal component of the concept); (2) supermarkets and hypermarkets are becoming more popular as universal stores combining several different objects (we assume that remembering one name instead of several names is easier and, therefore, it is a priority for speakers); and (3) Internet trade plays an increasingly important role (instead of a store name, the site name becomes the object identifier; and the speaker clearly distinguishes between objects of the virtual and real world, therefore does not place knowledge of them in the same “cells” of the lexicon).

## *II. Shop-onyms as representations of culture*

The second important question regarding the constituency of the shop-onym-subframe in the mental lexicon relates to its sociocultural informativity. Many researches of different modern ergonyms earlier pointed out that the names of food stores, residential complexes, and TV programs in general give grounds to say that commercial onymics in Ukraine are not representative of the national culture (Karpenko, 2006; Cilyna, 2006; Zymovecz, 2010; Bagan, 2018; Poznixirenko, 2018).

While analyzing the ergonyms as representations of social beliefs, H Zymovetst views this tendency as a reflection of the general civilizational orientation of the Ukrainians at the global world. Hereafter the linguist has distinguished several language markers: the use of the borrowings – the ancient ones and the new ones, and the coexistence of the original spelling alongside with the transliterated Ukrainian one, or the so called language mix within one nomination (Zymovecz, 2018, pp. 110–112). The information openness as prominent characteristics of the global processes, which resulted in active presence of the foreign participants in the information sphere, has been singled out by B. Azhniuk (Azhnyuk, 2002, p. 145).

There are different languages and script systems coexisting in the ergonyms of Kyiv now, with Cyrillic and Latin as the most competing ones. It is worth adding that Latin is not only prevailing but is also pushing Cyrillic spelling out of the ergonym sphere: e.g. in one of the biggest Kyiv trade entertainment centers “Lavina”, one could see only 18 Cyrillic signboards (ca. 10 % from the whole number of 200 signboards) as of 2021.

The mixture of different graphic systems in the spelling of food stores in Kyiv oblast was mentioned in the dissertation thesis of Y. Poznikhirenko. The results show that the Ukrainian names constitute 109 items (almost 17 %) of

the total number of 643 names, and hybrid mixed names constitute 25 items. The rest 509 cases are written in other languages (Russian, English, French, Spanish, Italian, and Georgian) (Poznikhirenko, 2018, p. 148). M. Tzilyna, in her paper published a year later, says that the number of Latin-script names of residential complexes in Kyiv makes about 30 % (Cilyna, 2019, p. 91).

The survey has found that the onym subframe “the shop names” in the lexicon of the analyzed speakers is mostly of non-Ukrainian origin, or, putting it more precisely, the prevailing origin of foreign languages in the shop names can be considered as its prominent characteristics. This fact is evidenced by the application of a certain graphic code used by the respondents to recreate onyms of different groups: only 21 % (14 items) of the mentioned clothes stores names had Cyrillic scripts, with an even smaller percentage of 19 % (10 items) in the names of shoe stores. However, the names of food stores demonstrated an opposite tendency, with only 26 % (7 items out of the total number of 27) written in Latin script. The presence of foreign language elements in the mental lexicon of Ukrainian speakers undoubtedly signals their wide use in the outer domain of onymicon. In addition, the prevailing foreign language shop names and the names converted through foreign alphabets make speakers perceive the denoted objects as phenomena, brought in by a foreign cultural space.

While analyzing the dynamics of the development of different languages, B. Azhniuk warns against consecutive use of different languages in identical communicative situations, which might lead to “a pleasant psychological ground” for asymmetrical language contacts, resulting in an undesirable language codes mixture and marginal grammar use (Azhnyuk, 2002, p. 145).

Modern ergonym system (as one of the constituent parts of the language system), with its utmost orientation at the domination of foreign components, is being enriched today with new items created according to the well-known patterns of borrowings, and their quantity is increasing. As an evident example here might serve the system of clothes shop names, where alongside with the borrowings well established in the modern lexicon, such as *Есмеральда* (*Esmeralda*), *Акварель* (*Aquarel*), *Мегаспорт* (*Megasport*) and *Бембі* (*Bembi*) we can witness names, created by analogy with the foreign shops, such as *Must Have*, *Cat Orange*, *Andre Tan*, *Dolcedonna*. It is impossible here to establish a Ukrainian origin of these objects. The reason for this “masking” (calling objects with the help of foreign lexemes with non-typical for the Ukrainians scripts), as we might presume, lies in the desire to produce a stereotypic

name, which would accumulate a speaker's beliefs about elitism, prestige, actuality, etc. (and the foreign stemming is evidently associated with the high quality and influence, etc.).

At the same time, the high productivity of this means of nomination can be explained by the desire of the speaking community to get rid of the established traditions of nomination "as it was before", as excessive openness of the language to the borrowings is one of the forms to represent the decolonization tendencies.

Nevertheless, one should not consider the Latin scripts as a negative phenomenon only. The dominant use of Latin script relates to the renewal and modernization of the nomination language system, while visual coding of the name is a material sign of linguistic delimitation between the old and the new. Therefore, we trace the emergence of the following Latinized names as *Bazhane*, *promin*, *Vovk*, brilliantly representing the national and cultural origin of the denoted objects. Due to the mixture of linguistic codes (the Latin script and the specific Ukrainian form), the mentioned shop names strikingly differ from the rest, making them easy to remember and reproduce.

### *III. Coding of shop names in mental lexicon*

Competing of different language alphabets in the segment of ergonyms under analysis shatters speakers' understanding of graphic representation of the names. The comparison of the initial ergonymic form (the name of the shop on the signboard) and the final one (i.e. reproduced by the speakers during the survey) confirmed this. While migrating from the outer to the inner system of speech, and transforming into the part of the mental lexicon, the proper name interacts with its other components; in particular, it conforms to the ruling norms of graphic language coding.

To master the ergonymic system, the speaker should decipher different language codes, and in this case, the domination of the Latin script in the visual domain of shop names does not match with the Cyrillic graphic code, so familiar to the respondents. Because of this mismatch, we observe the transcoding of the name. That is why some of the ergonyms were either transliterated or transcribed by the speakers in their reproduction. As a result, various forms of the same shop name appeared. Most of the changes have been related to the proper names with initially fixed Latin script. These were reproduced by the respondents in both forms: in the original and the transformed one: e.g. *Mida* – *Μιδα*, *Intertop* – *Інтертоп*, *Waikiki* – *Ваїкікі*, *Walker* –

*Волкер, Nike – Найк, Adidas – Адідас, Пума – Пума, Reebok – Рібок, Billa – Білла, Varus – Варус, Metro – Метро, Orange – Орендж, Levi's – Леві, Colin's – Колінс – Колінз.*

It is worth mentioning that the names of the clothes and shoe shops rarely undergo transformation compared to the names of grocery stores. For instance, 15 respondents reproduced the original form of the clothes shop *Zara*, while only 1 respondent reproduced the transformed form *Зара*; *Bershka* – 4 respondents, and *Бершка* – 1 respondent; *Mida* – 10 respondents, while *Міда* – 4 respondents; *Intertop* – 15 respondents, and *Інтертоп* – 8 respondents. At the same time, 14 respondents recalled the transformed form *Аушан* compared to only 3 cases of the original form *Auchan*; 7 cases of the transformed form *Новус* to 13 cases of the original form *Novus*. In general, the respondents named the maximum of 15% of all shop names denoting clothes shops in both graphic scripts, 14,6 % of shoe shops names, and 83 % of grocery store names. We may consider these graphic transformations as the signs of general habituation and domestication of the original foreign form to the native language. Presumably, by the means of such graphic transcoding speakers can remember the names easier. This finding resonates with the idea of Y. Poznikhirenko, who stated that the use of the foreign script in graphic representation of the shop may cause an effect of psychological estrangement and lead later to a problematic memorization, reproduction and recognition (Poznixirenko, 2018, p. 118). However, it would be fair to underline that the Latin script did not prove to be a great problem to educated respondents (all of them have postgraduate degrees). On the contrary, the use of Latin in the graphic name production creates a stunning effect for Ukrainian speakers, which leads to better memorizing, while for the speakers of other languages, vice versa, it may become a means of domestication of the foreign word.

We consider it interesting that instead of the original Latin scripted names as *Underarmour* and *NewBalance*, the respondents named only the transformed *Андерармор, Нью Беленс*. One might see the reasons for their transformation in the asymmetry of graphic and acoustic forms of the words: i.e. the sound [a] in the first example is rendered by several letters in the Latin alphabet – *a* and *u* (*Underarmour*), but the sound [e] in the second example has the following equivalents in the Latin script – *e* and *a* (*NewBalance*). Realizing the mismatch between the acoustic representation of the word and its graphic form, the speaker makes an involuntary choice for a “safer” way to remember the word.

The analysis of the answers to the survey, signaled for another type of transformation, the orthographic one, caused by the lack of foreign language competence by the speaker. Here we mean the responses that show different deviations from the initial form and the reproduced: *oodji – odjii, Oodgy; Collins – Collins – Colin`s; Rieker – Riker; Carlo Pazolini – Paşolini; Charman – SharMan*. A high level of foreign language competence, in its turn, can lead the speakers to a different type of mistake, called hypercorrectness, when the original form of the shop name *Веллмарт* is driven from the English adverb *well*, though the initial form of the name is *Веллмарт*. Therefore, emergence of this type of transformation is mostly a result of the speaker's knowledge of the graphic representation of the acoustic speech.

Another type of graphic transformation which has been identified during the research is related to the non-conventional use of capital and small letters, solid, disjunctive or hyphenated spelling of multicomponent shop names. The emergence of the onyms originated in a result of the play with graphical form, violating the recognized spelling norms, distorts speakers' understanding of the form of other onyms. Therefore, the respondents produced the following variants of the names like *Vito Rossi – Vitto Rossi – VITA ROSSI, Olko – OLKO, mida – Mida, Ашан – ашан – АШАН, Еко-лавка – Еколавка*. In those cases, when the graphic interplay is based on the change of the form, speakers might also have difficulties in preserving the initial form. The following graphic variants like *CatOrange – Cat Orange, МегаМаркет – Мегамаркет, Всі свої – Всі.Свої*, then appear to be motivated either by the conventional spelling of the components of the word combination as separate words, or representation of the original form of the shop name as a solid graphic unit, where capital letter and a dot usually signal a division into smaller parts. The biggest difficulty is connected with two-component names, created via stem composition or with the help of lexico-semantic means.

## Conclusions

The results of the analysis prove the importance of investigating the great potential of ergonyms as cultural signs. Today's bustling development of Ukrainian ergonymics is determined by active global tendencies alongside with the persistent desire to get rid of soviet naming traditions. The main source of onyms remains with the borrowings from European languages. The system of onyms should be analyzed in two dimensions – in the inner one and

the outer one. As the objects of the real world, they become real signs, representing positive stereotypic images of the group of speakers, and, being fixed in the mentality of the speaker, they determine his/her world view. Only the objects with subjective importance can get into the individual lexicon of the speaker, therefore the current image of the speaker “hear and now” can dramatically differ from the world representation in the outer domain. The analysis of the representation of shop names in the mental lexicon of socially active group of speakers prompted us to make the following conclusions:

I. The abundance of foreign language words in the Ukrainian ergonymic system is a reflection of the social stereotype about the attractiveness and progressiveness of the foreign (non-Ukrainian) in the everyday life. Therefore, the name is the key indicator of whether the word belongs to one cultural sphere or not.

The domination of the Latin script in the shop name system of the city of Kyiv is reflected in the individual lexicon of a group of speakers, who reproduced about 73% of all the familiar names of the shops with the help of the Latin script. Further development of the modern tendencies in nomination, identification of certain objects with another cultural code, with a foreign graphical marker, may cause a dangerous illusion of the absence of any Ukrainian segment in this sphere. One can observe some negative scenario of this situation even today when tracing the process of coining new names, devoid of any Ukrainian national and cultural coloring. Further increase in the quantity of such shop names will only help distancing for the whole layer of national culture.

II. The basis for mastering a lexeme-shop name is, first of all, its acoustic, not the visual form. The widely spread tactics of Ukrainian speakers to transform the graphic image of ergonym with the help of the conventional graphic code (with the Cyrillic alphabet prevailing for Ukrainians) can point in favor of this statement. A tendency to preserve the acoustic image of the shop name is prompted by the desire to help recognition of this word in communication (mostly orally, as the items under analysis circulate in non-professional informal communication).

III. The graphic form can influence the memorization of the onym. Although this process is highly subordinated to the subjective factors, the range of average number of words for a certain group of shops, kept by the speakers in their memory, is not huge and equals 4 language units. Mainly these units

form the speaker's beliefs about the outer dimension of the onymic system. The way of acquiring proper names by a mental lexicon depends, on the one hand, on the actual language situation in the outer domain of onyms, and, on the other hand, on a bunch of subjective constraints. Specifically, the speaker is determined by the melodicism of the name, its informativity, originality, correlation with language norms, etc.

IV. Asymmetrical mixture of different alphabetic codes in the system of shop names leads to a certain destruction of the speaker's beliefs regarding language norms, which can be proved with numerous graphical and spelling transformations of the initial form (material dimension) of the shop names. However, the motivated use of the Latin alphabet becomes an effective way of modernizing linguistic and cultural experience of the Ukrainians.

The set of research problems raised in this article paves a way to further exploration in this sphere for the list of reasons: (1) there is still a lack of understanding in the nature of conceptualization and categorization of other groups of commercial names in the mental lexicon of the Ukrainians; (2) it is necessary to perform a comparative analysis into the characteristics of lexicons of different social, age and regional groups; 3) it is still necessary to study the changes in the constituent structure of mental lexicon of speakers, caused by the desire of Ukrainians to make their national and cultural identity more clear and articulate in relation to various social processes, including the latest unprovoked full-scale war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

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Матеріал надійшов 21.08.2022