

# THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE IN THE LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF DAUGAVPILS (THE MIDDLE OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY - TODAY)

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## ABSTRACT

This paper will focus on the LL of Daugavpils from a diachronic point of view in order to describe the usage of the Latvian language in the public space since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until today, as well as the socio-economic and political factors which influence the language situation. Research sources are old photos which depict legible signboards, and photos obtained during LL research 2013.

The role of the Latvian language in public information increased during the first period of independence, when ideas of nationalism become widespread and the first normative documents about language usage were approved. However, the stability of Latvian as the main language of the public was only established during the first Latvian Republican period at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the State Language Law was passed and implemented in linguistic practice. Currently, the linguistic landscape reflects the political, socio-pragmatic, and social identity motivations of the owners of public texts, but within the confines of the restrictions imposed by language laws.

**Keywords:** linguistic landscape, history, language policy, Latvian, Daugavpils.

## INTRODUCTION

Daugavpils is an interesting object of study because it is the oldest city in the Latgale region of Latvia, seeing multiple name changes throughout its history (Dünaburg, Borisoglebsk, Dvinsk, Daugavpils). Today, it is the second largest city in Latvia by population, and the third largest city by area. In nowadays, ethnic Latvians are a local minority, as was historically the case during the period of the Russian Empire (in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), as well as during both the First and the Second World Wars and the Soviet period. Only during the period of the Republic of Latvia had the Latvians become a local majority. Latvian cultural life during this period developed rapidly (the Latvian Cultural Association was established, the Unity House (*Vienības nams*) was constructed, and many educational institutions were opened), and signboards in the Latvian language dominated in the LL. At this time, the first legislative enactments in relation

to the language were adopted and the official status of the Latvian language was approved in Latvia.

The city has always been a center for commerce, industry, education and culture, and as such has always been home to a multicultural society. Latvians are a local minority in Daugavpils, and the Latvian, Russian, German, Yiddish and Polish languages have been historically spoken and written by the city's various inhabitants.

## THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

The term **linguistic landscape** in publications written in the English language is defined at the end of the 20th century as:

- 1) totality of written language signs in the public space (outside and inside), respectively, application of written language in different text genres (posters, advertisements, property signs, graffiti) and different domains of sociolinguistics (culture, education, trade, industry, social life), from which one can identify trends in the linguistic situation and gain insight into the social and cultural life in a given time and space (Landry, Bourhis 1997; Backhaus 2005, 2007; Gorter 2006; Shohamy, Gorter 2009);
- 2) paradigm of data acquisition methodology, analysis and interpretation that allows to clarify situation of written language (also geographical distribution) in correlation to discourses of the public space, sociopolitical and culturally historical processes, traditions of language application and future perspectives in the specific territory (Gorter 2006; Shohamy, Ben-Rafael, Barni 2010; Gorter, Marten, Van Mensel 2012; Lazdiņa, Pošeiko, Marten 2013).

In the first case, linguistic landscape is to be studied as an object of linguistic research, especially the sociolinguistic; in the second case – as research method in linguistics.

R. Landry and R. Bourhis bring forward two language landscape functions as the most important: the informative and symbolic functions (Landry, Bourhis, 1997, pp. 25–27). The informative function is expressed directly, “with the help of inscription to provide some information, prohibition, invitation or direction,” (Landry, Bourhis, 1997, p. 27). Indirectly it also gives the idea about peculiarities of written language under a certain period of time, gives view over a sociolinguistic situation in a particular environment (language diversity, functionality and prestige, language conflicts, boundaries between language groups, languages used in spoken communication) of a certain territory and also about population of a certain environment and the society, historically cultural processes and events, the political and socioeconomic situation. But the second – the symbolic function– is related to „ownership indication, message choice, and delivering metalinguistic information about the relative power and status of the respective ethnolinguistic group” (Landry, Bourhis, 1997, p. 27).

The linguistic landscape research is “a method of acquisition, analysis and interpretation of quantitative (language signs) and qualitative (interviews) data, that combines several scientific research actions: determination of criteria for selection and analysis of language, photographing language signs and simultan-

eously recording interviews and reactions of surrounding population and interviews, followed by analysis of language signs according to pre-developed criteria and formation of a unified data basis, and finally – interpretation of the acquired results” (Lazdiņa, Pošeiko, Marten, 2013, p. 40; also Gorter 2006; Backhaus 2007).

In the study of the history of any city, illustrative materials are always a valuable source: surviving photos, press, books and calendars with visible texts of public space or language signs (e. g., shop titles, advertisements, posters, and road signs) reveal the linguistic landscape over a specific period of time. Taking language signs into consideration with other historical information about social life (for instance, government, trade, education and culture), makes it possible to characterize linguistic tradition and sociolinguistic circumstances more deeply in a specific period of history, and retrace factors in the development of phenomena which have influenced the modern language situation in a direct or indirect manner.

Linguistic landscape research tendencies reveal that language signs most often are analysed using a synchronic approach, in order to describe the factors influencing the sociolinguistic situation during specific period of time (Backhaus, 2007; Shohamy, Gorter, 2009; Helot, Barni, Janssens, Bagna, 2012; Lazdiņa, Pošeiko, Marten, 2013). Such research may be implemented rather quickly and easily if one has a camera for data acquisition, criteria for analysis, and a clear approach for data interpretation. The diachronic approach is more rarely used – it focuses on historical tracing of language usage in a linguistic landscape, paying attention to the development of linguistic processes in connection with development of other social processes. Linguist Aneta Pavlenko has carried out broad research in historical sociolinguistics on the linguistic landscape of Kiev, the capital of Ukraine. She has worked with archive materials and research of other scientists on historical texts in order to find out which languages have been used in the linguistic landscape of Kiev, from the 9<sup>th</sup> century until today. In her research, she discusses the factors which have influenced language changes over time: the geopolitical situation, Russification, nationalisation, and globalisation (Pavlenko, 2010; Pavlenko, Mullen, 2015). Additionally, Peter Backhaus has compared the peculiarities of formation of coexisting old (1997) and new (2003) language signs in the linguistic landscape of the capital of Japan, Tokyo, describing novelties and changes (Backhaus, 2005).

Diachronic investigation of the linguistic landscape in Daugavpils is carried out in order to describe the usage and functionality of Latvian from the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century until the present, paying attention to the general language situation in the linguistic landscape and idiosyncrasies in the formation of public texts (orthography, lexicon, syntax) during various time periods. Socio-political factors, including those related to language policy, as well as cultural and historical events in the city which influence language usage in public information directly or indirectly, are taken into account.

Research sources are photos with clearly visible or partially decipherable language signs: for instance, shop names, advertisements, posters, road signs, placards with slogans, graffiti, etc. Research materials were collected from the following sources:

- archive of Daugavpils Regional and Art Museum;

- digital database of the National Library of Latvia (<http://zudusilatvija.lv/>);
- history books and postcard albums (Barkovska, Šteimanis, 2005; Beļikovs, 2005);
- historical articles and collectors' forums on the Internet (<http://latgalesdati.lv>, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Петро-Даугавпилс-Латвия>, <http://dinaburg.ru>; [http://rockbaro.net/daugavpils/dinaburg\\_old/](http://rockbaro.net/daugavpils/dinaburg_old/), <http://old.nasha.lv/rus/blog>);
- digital database of linguistic landscape in the cities of the Baltic States, which is developed in 2015 by the author of the research (<http://lldata.ru.lv>).

Newspapers (*Latgales Ziņas* [News of Latgale], *Latgales Vēstnesis* [Messenger of Latgale], *Daugavas Vēstnesis* [Messenger of Daugava], *Padomju Daugava* [Soviet Daugava], *Latgales Laiks* [Time of Latgale], *Динабург* [Dinaburg], *Сейчас* [Now], *Миллион* [Million]) are studied in order to find both photos with visible language signs and specific information about the linguistic landscape during a certain time period: year of foundation, location, owner, sphere of activity, company offerings, change of business location, etc. In addition, historical research regarding streets in Daugavpils and the locations of companies and institutions are used (Jakub, 1993, 1998; Maimin 2010, 2011). Content analysis of normative documentation, which governs language usage, is also carried out.

In the article, a historically comparative method is applied as the research method in order to compare linguistic landscape data and factors which influence the formation of public information from a diachronic perspective (in various periods of time), dating their historical development. The idea of discourse nexus analysis, which maintains that language usage should always be analysed in correlation with various discourses (spatial, political and cultural) and social activities of inhabitants, is found useful (Hult, 2009, pp. 90–93).

A database of historical language signs is still incomplete, as the location and cataloguing of historical photos is a slow and complicated process. In museums, newspapers and history books, the number of photos is limited. There is also a lack of public information about photo collectors' private collections, and media professionals (filmmakers and photographers) are not willing to perform specific searches for such photos (for example, photos with language signs) and share archive materials. Information about names of companies and posters from exhibits may be found more easily; however, visual evidence in the form of photographs does not exist.

While working with photos, some problems are established. First of all, the photo may not be clear enough to discern language or text; in individual cases, it is possible to distinguish only the alphabet (Latin or Cyrillic). The context of an event reflected in a photo also can be difficult to discern if, for example, it is not clear when and why a demonstration is taking place or why there is a specific poster or notification. Similarly, if the approximate year is not indicated, it can be impossible to determine even the precise decade.

However, language signs are being slowly collected despite these problems and time-consuming work, by taking photos or scanning photos of museum materials and historical periodicals, or "cutting" fragments (photos) from digital newspapers, databases and forums with the help of the computer tool *Scissors*. These pictures are num-

bered and saved in a document folder on a personal computer. The number of each picture, along with its source is entered into a spreadsheet, detailed with the necessary information for precise reference (for instance, number of museum collection, year and number of newspaper issue, web address and picture's owner (if known)). It must be indicated that those who have published photos in collector's or historical forums on the Internet are often not themselves owners of this material, but mediators who have taken photos or scanned them from library or museum collections. It is important to read the information on the homepage, where, possibly, specific archive or owner is mentioned. If the precise year of a photo is known, it is recorded into the spreadsheet. If not known, an estimated period of time is given. The type of language sign is also listed in the spreadsheet – name sign, advertisement, sign of street name, reference, etc. There is also a space for comments on any specific photo, mentioning additional information about the portrayed activity (for instance, march, picket, celebration), institution or company, language peculiarities, language contacts, information in every language and translation, as well as the interpretation visual material (symbols and drawings).

Data obtained during this research falls into four periods of time: the Russian Empire, the first period of independent Latvia, the Soviet Union and modern times (the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century). It must be emphasized that all examples discussed in the article are texts from photos, and that all photos mentioned are included in the author's digital database.

## LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OVER TIME

### **The middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

From the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Daugavpils was the largest city in the Vitebsk province of the Russian Empire, and the influence of the Russians affected the social life of local inhabitants. Mainly Jews and Russians lived in Daugavpils, but Poles, Latvians, Belarusians and Germans existed as minorities (Jakub, 1998, pp. 37–38). Language and cultural policy is explicitly characterized by Russification, which, first of all, was reflected by a change of the city's name from a German to a Russian one. From 1864 until 1904, print prohibition existed, which means that books, newspapers, journals and other texts with Latin letters could not be issued and distributed legally; however, duplication and distribution of various publications took place illegally. Russian was the only language of documentation and language of instruction at schools. The number of schools increased overall (e. g., the first boys' school in 1880; the founding of German, Latvian, and Jewish schools; and a scientific school, where French was taught by the first woman teacher; Maimins, 2010). The formation of several libraries was important in the development of education and culture; the first libraries were private libraries (e. g., J. Padežins's library with more than 13 thousand books in 1859); in 1905, a public reading room was opened. In 1856, the first Russian theatre in Latvia was opened; at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the first cinemas were opened (in 1909, ЭДЕН<sup>38</sup> [Eden] and in 1910

38 In the examples here and hereinafter, original writing is preserved (also in the usage of initial capital letters).

– АПОЛЛО [Apollo]) and the first newspapers in Russian were issued (for instance, the first newspaper in Daugavpils in 1900 – *Двинский листок* [Leaflet of Dvinsk], *Западная Двина* [Daugava], and *Двинский курьер* [Courier of Dvinsk]).

The rapid development of industry and trade could be observed in the city. Several production and trade companies began their activity successfully. At the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century, one shop existed for every 420 inhabitants of Daugavpils, and by the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century – one shop for every 75 (Jakub, 1993, pp. 48–61). Shop names were mainly in Russian, and they were based on nomenclature words and the owners' personal names. However, many names of companies were of Jewish origin due to a sizable Jewish population, most frequently seen in the spheres of trade and medicine.

In this period of time, urban infrastructure was also developing. Improvement of railway junctions was especially essential – railway lines to St. Petersburg, Orel (in Russia), Siauliai (in Lithuania) and Warsaw (in Poland) were opened; and this changed the town's image and linguistic landscape. At the railway station, new signboards appeared (e. g., the route sign *ВАРШАВА* [Warsaw] in Russian, as well as bilingual signs such as *III KLASSES BUFETE БУФЕТЬ III КЛАССА* [Third class buffet] at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. New hotels with names in Russian were opened: for instance, *ГОСТИН МОСКВА* [Hotel Moscow], *БОЛЬШАЯ ЦЕНТРАЛЬНАЯ ГОСТИНИЦА* [Big Central Hotel] and *КОНТИНЕНТ* [Continent] (later becoming *DAUGAVA* during the first period of independence, *LATVIJA* during the Soviet Period and *Latgola* today, with the name being in Latgalian, the second writing tradition of Latvian) in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, *БОЛЬШАЯ ГОСТИНИЦА* [Big Hotel] was opened, which became popular among celebrities of that time.

Paying attention only to linguistic landscape, it is clear that, from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Russian was the only language in the town's public texts – language signs of municipal institutions (including schools), shops, pharmacies, hotels and banks. Later, the number of bilingual signs increased, and information was also provided in Latvian. During the First World War, written announcements in German existed beside monolingual signs in Russian (e. g., a hotel for German soldiers, *Deutsches Soldatenheim* [House of German Soldiers] and shop signboard with the text *ГОТОВЫЕ ОДЕЖДЫ* [Ready-made Clothes]), providing bilingual information on a street. In public texts, Latvian appears only after

**Fig. 1. Language signs of Typography**



Source: Daugavpils Museum Archives, No. 13505

the abolition of print prohibition at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Latvian was used in bilingual commercial signboards, mainly in order to name local companies (e. g., ergonyms). An example would be photo in Figure 1 (the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century), where two identical name signs in Latvian and Russian may be seen.

Regarding the signs in the photo, two facts should be emphasized: first of all, different nomenclature words are used in each language (*DRUKATAVA* and *ТИПОГРАФИЯ* [typography]), thus reflecting the usage of two different terms in this period of time. Secondly, the long vowel is missing in a word in Latvian (it should be *DRUKĀTAVA*, from the verb *drukāt* [to print]). In 1908, the Orthography Commission of the Riga Latvian Society passed new spelling rules which standardized the usage of Latin letters, notation of the length of monophthongs and palatalization of consonants, and replacement of the consonant *w* with *v*. However it was later allowed not use lengthening marks with vowels if it did not change the meaning of a word, and to denote the diphthong *ie* with *ee*. The lack of diacritical marks, the usage of the consonant *w* and doubling of the monophthong *e* (e. g., *Rigas eela* [Riga Street], see the following text) is established in the linguistic landscape still until the 1930s. Conversely, the letter *i* may be seen in Russian; it was officially cancelled after the reform of Russian orthography in 1918, but, in practice, it was still used for a period of time. Both examples reflect written traditions of that time, not only in printed publication but also in the texts in the public space.

## INTERWAR PERIOD

After the First World War, Daugavpils was included in the Republic of Latvia in 1920. During the first period of independence, the ethnic composition of inhabitants was altered – Latvians were the majority, and after them – Jews, Poles, Russians and other nationalities. These changes were related to a decrease in the total numbers of inhabitants, as well as emigration of prisoners of war and refugees from the city (VSP, 1921, p. 3, 38).

In the city, a flourishing of culture could be observed during the period of independence of the Republic of Latvia. The new national government took it upon themselves to distribute national ideas and promote their consolidation. This was represented in part by a new city name, *Daugavpils*, from the hydronym *Daugava*, and the Latvianization of other place names. In this period, the Daugavpils Latvian Society was founded, which had a significant role in the improvement of social life and the development of culture; new public libraries were opened (e. g., the libraries of the Association of Teachers, Latvian Society, and Railwaymen Society); and several state and municipal institutions (e. g., police) started to function. In the sphere of education, several significant events took place: the opening of the Daugavpils State Teachers' Institute in 1923, the opening of the Latgale National Conservatory in 1923, and a reform in existing schools, increasing the role of the Latvian language in education. In 1934, six Russian, five Jewish (with Russian, Yiddish or Hebrew as the language of instruction), four Latvian, four Polish, one German and one Belarusian primary school were in the city, as well as secondary

schools (Latvian, Polish, Russian, Belarusian) and vocational schools (for instance, a Jewish craft school, Polish craft school, and state railway vocational school). In just one year, the German and Belarusian schools were closed, and integrated schools with Latvian as a language of instruction and compulsory training in native language and religion were opened (Maimins, 2011).

After a visit from president Kārlis Ulmanis in 1934, permission for building a cultural house was received, as well as a proposal for the name of the building. The multipurpose cultural house *VIENĪBAS NAMS* [Unity House] was opened in 1937. The building housed a hotel, swimming pool, theatre, hair salon, confectionery (signboard *KONDITIONĒJA* [Confectionery] without symbolic ergonym), typographer *Rota* [Adornment], publishing house, and editorial office *Daugavas Vēstnesis* [Message of Daugava]. The Daugavpils library was also housed in the building after 1938, and for two years also the army surplus store *ARMIJAS EKONOMISKAIS VEIKALS* [Army Economic Shop], where exclusive goods could be purchased or obtained with the help of leasing (large format advertisements of this shop could be often seen in the press of that period of time). Next to *Vienības nams*, a taxi station was located, as well as the first petrol station of the city, at which signboards with the ergonym of new company – *SHELL* – were placed.

In this period of time, traditions of the local press were developing, for instance, newspapers published in the city were as follows: *Daugavas Vārds* [Word of Daugava], *Latgales Ziņas* [News of Latgale] and *Latgales Vēstnesis* [Message of Latgale], later – *Daugavas Vēstnesis* [Message of Daugava] in Latvian, and newspapers in Latgalian written language – *Latgalīts* [Latgalian] and *Latgolas Dorbs* [Work of Latgale]. For some time, the journal *Latgolas škola* [School of Latgale] and some calendars were also published. Activities of the societies and organizations of national minorities were not forbidden; however, they were controlled (permission was required, for example, in order to use minority languages in concerts). Ethnic minority libraries were opened, and minority press was published (for instance, the Russian newspaper *Двинский голос* [Voice of Dvinsk] and the Polish newspaper *Dzwon* [Bell], which was the first daily newspaper in Latgale).

In general, diacritical marks were not used in the linguistic landscape until the 1930s (e. g., hotel *REZEKNE*, shop names *VINU TIRGOTAVA* [Wine shop] and *DZELZU TIRGOTAVA S. KARASIN* [S. Karasin's iron shop]), many direct and symbolic ergonyms did not have endings (e. g., hair salon *FRIZIERS M. MILOSEVSKIS* [Hairdresser M. Milosevskis] and clothing shop *ELEGANT*), words such as *tirgotava* [shop], *manufaktūra* [manufacture], *restoracija* [restaurant], *traktieris* [small restaurant, café] and *tējnīca* [tea shop], *galantērija* [millinery], and *divertissements* [afterpiece] were often used; these words are rarely used in modern Latvian and are considered as archaisms. In the 1920s, information in Russian was rather often used together with the text in Latvian, for instance, shop name *L. K. MAZURKEVIC* Л. К. МАЗУРКЕВИЦЬ.

The law designating an official language, which was passed in 1935, is essential to the understanding of language policy. The law maintains: “the official language is the Latvian language, and public notifications: signboards, posters, placards, advertisements [...] should be in the official language. [...] The usage of other lan-



guages is admissible only with the permission of Minister of Internal Affairs or his authorized representative. If another language is used together with official language, the text in Latvian must be considered as the most important, and it must not be smaller than text in the other language in terms of form and content" (Ulmanis, Gulbis, 1935). Consequently, the usage of Latvian and its functionality in the linguistic landscape broadened, and the usage of Russian declined in the 1930s. The Latvian language as a symbol of free Latvia gained unprecedented prestige in public information. In several photos, placards made in the style of national romanticism may be seen. For instance, *Vienības tilts* [Unity Bridge] above the Daugava River, which was opened 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 1935, may be seen in Figure 2; the upper part of bridge is decorated with the coat of arms of the city and a rhetorical encouragement to use the new bridge, alongside the national flag. The text (*EJ, TAUTIETI, DROŠI PĀRI PAŠA CELTAM TILTINAM!* [Go, countryman, safely across the bridge which you have built yourselves]) emphasizes the significance and responsibility of every inhabitant to develop and manage the surrounding environment (in a broader sense - the united state).



**Fig. 2.** Placard on Vienības Bridge

Source: <http://old.nasha.lv/rus/blog>

### Soviet times

During the Second World War, the city was devastated (approximately 70% of buildings were destroyed), and a large part of the local population was deported and/or killed. However, the development of industry (metalworking, food, leather and foot-wear, textile and clothing) started again in the city from the 1950s, and a huge immigration of Russian guest workers took place. Consequently, the number of inhabitants increased; in Daugavpils, the proportion of Russians tripled (Barkovska, Šteimanis, 2005, 96). These processes necessitated the construction of new buildings (e. g., apartments, shops, education institutions and cultural houses) and housing estates (e. g., chemists' village), as well as development of the tramway system, thus broadening not only residential areas in the city, but also the linguistic landscape. Alongside Latvian texts, texts in Russian started to again appear more often. In Figure 3, a newly opened cultural house and supermarket in the chemists' village may be seen. Above the cultural house, the bilingual name sign Д. К. ХИМИКОВ [Chemists' C.(-ultural) H.(-ouse)] KULTŪRAS PILS is located with different information in each language - in Russian, the location of the institution is indicated.

On the wall is a signboard with text *TIRDZNIECĪBAS NAMS* [Shopping Centre] – and two brand names of automobile factories – *HONDA* and *VOLVO*.

**Fig. 3.** Information outside the cultural house in the 1950s

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ретро-Даугавпилс-Латвия>



The Soviet times featured public texts, praising communism and collectivism, focusing on state interests, mutual loyalty, discipline, soviet patriotism and values, as well as state supervision (including censorship of publications). In all celebratory marches and various types of public events, posters were displayed which portrayed verbal information in conjunction with photos of communists (Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin), symbols of the Soviet Union (USSR) and communism (red star, flags of the USSR). An example can be seen in Figure 4, which portrays a May Day march (i.e., May 1<sup>st</sup>, Labour Day). In the background, a cinema with a name sign in Latvian (*KINO DAUGAVA* [Cinema Daugava]) may be seen; a constant text of the city. Over it, a temporary placard in Russian (*ДА ЗДРАВСТВУЕТ 1 МАЯ* [Long live the 1<sup>st</sup> of May]) may be seen.

**Fig. 4.** May Day march in the 1940s



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ретро-Даугавпилс-Латвия>

In the city, the Russian language dominated in all spheres of life, including documentation and higher education. Although native language and literature instruction still took place in schools, the content was changed according to ideology of the USSR (e. g., photos of Lenin and stories about the Kremlin were in ABC books), and the number of lessons was decreased. There was a tendency to increase the number of Russian schools and decrease the number of minority schools; particular schools were not renovated at all after the war. In the city, six newspapers were published (in the Latvian, Russian and Latgalian written languages).

In the linguistic landscape of Daugavpils, the Russian language was established in many monolingual language signs in the official and commercial domains: shop offer signs, posters, advertisements, metro maps, texts on post boxes (e. g., ergonym *АВТОВОКЗАЛ* [Bus station], shop *РЫБА* [Fish] and encouragement over general store *ХРАНИТЕ ДЕНЬГИВ [...] КАССЕ* [Keep money [...] in cash-desk]). The Latvian language was more often used beside the Russian language in bilingual language signs, for instance, on signs with shop names: *PASTS. TELEFONS. TELEGRĀFS. ПОЧТА. ТЕЛЕФОН. ТЕЛЕГРАФ* [Post Office. Telephone. Telegraph], *ROTAĻLIETAS ИГРУШКИ ROTAĻLIETAS* [Toys] and *GRĀMATNĪCA КНИЖНЫЙ МАГАЗИН* [Bookshop]. It must be added, that the text in these examples in each language is separated by a symbol – a rhombus or square. Monolingual signs in the Latvian language (especially larger texts) were restricted to signs of powerful ideological rhetoric of the USSR, for instance, the text on the wall of a building: *DAUGAVPILS DARBA ĻAUDIS! AR TRIECIEN-DARBU STIPRINIET MŪSU DZIMTENES EKONOMISKO UN AIZSARDZĪBAS VARENĪBU!* [Working people of Daugavpils! With your hard work you support the defence and economic well being of your motherland!] This text includes a specific form of address to inhabitants of the city and encouragement where “hard” work (the quality of work which characterizes the Soviet worker), “motherland” (evoking Soviet patriotism) and power (characteristic of the USSR) function as the keywords. In the same way, semantics of symbolic ergonyms were mainly related to the ideology of Soviet power.

In the 1980s – 1990s, the process of the dissolution of the USSR began, coinciding with the national revival of the Latvian nation. For instance, a march with flags of the Latvian SSR coupled with the placard *Latvijas TAUTAS FRONTE* [The Popular Front of Latvia] may be seen in a photo, thus demonstrating its formation and activities in Daugavpils. The characterization of the language situation in Latvia in that period of time appears in the press, indicating that “Lithuanians, Estonians and Gypsies are the only major ethnic groups which know the Latvian language beside Latvians. [...] However, almost everyone knows Russian. [...] Knowledge of the Russian language among all ethnic groups is increasing rapidly, and many know this language better than their native language, for instance, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, Tatars, Germans, Armenians and Moldavians” (Mežs, 1988).

In 1988, a decision of the Supreme Council of the Latvian SSR about the status of the Latvian language was reached, which declared that “the Latvian language

is the official language of the Republic of Latvia, because free and comprehensive functioning and development of all national languages corresponds to the principles of national policy of Leninism and resolutions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) of XIX All-Union Conference" (Gorbunov, 1988). Additionally, in the Language Law of the Latvian SSR, which was approved one year later, it was stated that: "names of institutions, companies and organizations are to be formed in the Latvian language, and, in case of necessity, may be reproduced or translated into other languages. In inscriptions, these names must be used in Latvian, but, if necessary, a translation into Russian or another language may be provided to the right (or below)" (Gorbunovs, 1989).

Beside existing and newly placed bilingual language signs, an increase of monolingual texts in Latvian could be observed in the linguistic landscape as a result of law. For instance, the name sign of the bus station was replaced, the ergonym became Latvian (*AUTOOSTA* [Bus station]), and the name signs of shops and cafés became mostly Latvian, for instance, the bar *ALUS* [Beer], the shop *PĀRTIKAS VEIKALS* [Food shop], the canteen *PELMEŅI* [dumplings] and the gambling hall *KOMJŪTERU SPĒLES* [Computer games]. However, language signs of individual companies (mainly shops, cafés, restaurants and hairdressing saloons), signs of street names, road signs and references (e. g., language sign at tramway door – *IEEJA ВХОД* [Enter]) were rather commonly in both Latvian and Russian. Occasional placards with ideological rhetoric – slogans and catchphrases – in honour of an especially important event or anniversary were mainly in Russian. Two examples may be mentioned: the placard in a meeting in honour of elections of the Supreme Council of the Latvian SSR in 1990 – *ДА ЗДРАВСТВУЕТ СОВЕТСКАЯ КОНСТИТУЦИЯ – САМАЯ ДЕМОКРАТИЧЕСКАЯ КОНСТИТУЦИЯ В МИРЕ!* [Welcome, the Soviet Constitution – the most democratic constitution in the world!] and a placard commemorating May 9<sup>th</sup>, Victory Day, in 1985, with the text *40Я ГОДОВЩИНА ПОБЕДЫ СОВЕТСКОГО НАРОДА В ВЕЛИКОЙ ОТЕЧЕСТВЕННОЙ ВОЙНЕ!* [40th anniversary of victory of the Soviet nation in the Great Patriotic War]. Bilingual information in general outdoor information of an institution or company was a common sight; the text in Russian was highlighted using paralinguistic means (colours, letter size).

A photo, where a picket with the flag of Latvia and placards in Latvian and Russian may be seen, is peculiar; one of the placards contains the rhetoric *ГОРКОМ – УМ, ЧЕСТЬ И СОВЕСТЬ?* [The City Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union – mind, honour, conscience?] next to a placard with text *ATŅĒMUŠI MUMS PAGĀTNI – NEATŅEMIET MŪSU BĒRNIEM NĀKOTNI!* [Robbed our past – do not rob the future for our children!], two more placards containing an address – *БРАТЬЯ БЕЛОРУСЫ! [..] [Brothers, Belarusians] [..]* and some illegible text. These photos reflect the formative ideas of the national state at the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s; it is possibly an expression of support to Belarus for declaration of its independence, but, not less important, it is a demonstration of the unity of demonstrators, irrespective of their nationality or language.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE 1990S – NOWADAYS

After the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Latvia, the transition to the free market and privatization took place in Daugavpils, as well as in the rest of the territory of Latvia; however, social problems also became more widespread, including unemployment, inflation, and difficulties in transnational relationships. The main ethnic groups of the city at this time were Russians, Latvians, Poles and Belarusians.

The current educational and cultural situation in Daugavpils reflects great diversity. This can be observed first and foremost in educational establishments (public and private schools, driving schools and training centres). Several cultural houses and societies (including societies of various nationalities: Latvians, Russians, Poles, Byelorussians, Germans and Lithuanians), cinemas and theatres, museums, art centres and libraries of the city provide cultural activities. In the city, there are six newspapers (only one – *Latgales Laiks* [Time of Latgale] – is in Latvian, with a parallel publication in Russian), one journal in Russian *Kanumai Pezuon* [Capital Region] and a journal in Polish, *Polis Latvijā* [A Pole in Latvia].

Considering the changes in language policy, a fact must be mentioned: the language law, which was passed in 1988, was amended in 1992, and as a result of this, the role of the Russian language in public information was decreased: “names of institutions, companies and organizations are to be formed in the Latvian language, and, in case of necessity, they may be reproduced or translated in other language. [...] Public notifications, signboards, posters, placards, advertisements [...] should be in the official language” (Gorbunovs, 1992). In the regulation “On the usage of official language in names and information” in the same year, adjustments of the language law considered above may be found: “official and contracted names of institutions, companies, business entities, agricultural holdings and organizations (hereinafter – enterprises) are to be formed in official language according to normative requirements of Latvian literary language and orthography. Other alphabetical letters must be reproduced in Latin alphabetical writing [...]. Without a specific argumentation, names of other states and countries cannot be used in the names of companies [...] Public notifications, signboards, posters, placards and advertisements should be in the official language. [...] Beside the official language, which must dominate, other languages may be used in public information if this information: is necessary for safety reasons; refers to activities of national culture societies and religious denominations; refers to information provided by such organizations, which are related to international tourism, and the necessity of its usage is agreed with the State Language Centre; refers to international events” (LR Ministru Padome, 1992). Currently, the State Language Law passed in 1999 is effective in establishing the usage of official language in public information. In cases where a foreign language is also used on a signboard, the text in the official language must be considered as the most important, and it must not be smaller or narrower than text in the foreign language in terms of form or content (Viķe-Freiberga, 1999).

Some Latvians living in the city remember that after the adoption of the language law several managers and employees of companies were admonished about

mistakes in spelling, punctuation and style in public texts in Latvian, and reaction to this varied – from gratitude for corrections to expulsion from the company.

In the research of linguistic landscape in 2013, 1544 language signs in different sociolinguistic spheres (for instance, education, culture, municipal government, health) were documented. The current linguistic landscape has comparatively more posters, announcements and advertisements; language signs (which could not be seen in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, for instance), language signs of driving schools, labels of security firms at institutions and companies, public texts of insurance companies and pawnshops, as well as graffiti, also exist.

Similarly to the previous situation, various language signs at shops (42%) constitute the largest part of public texts in the linguistic landscape. These are mainly name signs – in total, 38% of public texts at shops. In general, monolingual language signs (82%) dominate the public information of the city; they are mainly in Latvian – in total, 86%. The usage of Latvian in language signs of official sphere (texts of state and municipal institutions) is logical; it is comparatively smaller in the entertainment (language signs of night clubs, gambling halls) and commercial industries (inscriptions of beauty, catering and financial spheres: ergonyms of shops, hairdressing saloons, cafés, restaurants and banks, announcements and advertisements) and in informal communication (graffiti). However, 12 languages are detected in total in Daugavpils, beside the official language of the nation, also present were English, Russian and Italian, more rarely – Lithuanian, Spanish, German, Chinese and the Latgalian written language, which has been used since the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century but is not detected in linguistic landscape. Larger diversity of languages is found in commercial texts; text in foreign languages is more often nominal (e. g., ergonyms, brands of various products in advertisements, personal names and names of events, which may be read in posters), thus realizing the symbolic function of the language. Unlike the linguistic landscape of previous centuries, the choice of foreign language is related to euphony, associations and linguistic stereotypes (e. g., French in language signs of cosmetics shops and beauty parlours, German in signs of construction companies), but not out of socio-pragmatic necessity.

Transliteration may be considered a rather new trend (e. g., canteen *PELMENNAJA* [Ravioli Eatery], night club *Moskva* [Moscow], shop and café *ŠOKOLADŅA* [Chocolate]), when text in Russian is written using Latin letters. In such a way, a wish of Russian speaking inhabitants to provide/receive information in the Russian language is satisfied in an indirect manner, and moreover, the state language law is not broken. The number of language signs where more than two languages are used has increased as well. The photo in Figure 5 portrays outdoor information of a Chinese restaurant in three languages: English, Latvian and Chinese. Each language in the sign has its own function in transmission of text: in English, the café is named (*GOLDEN DRAGON*) and its cuisine (*CHINESE ORIENTAL RESTAURANT*) is indicated specifically; in Latvian, an informative sign about video surveillance is provided, and, beside the text in English, the type of company and its differentiator (*kīniešu restorāns* ‘chinese restaurant’) is indicated in a central sign; in Chinese, two inscriptions are used: to the left – 笑迎八方客 [Welcome guests from

eight cardinal points]; to the right –满意在金龙 [Satisfaction (of guests) is a golden dragon (in the Chinese perception of the world, the golden dragon is something very good – S. P.)]<sup>39</sup>. It may be seen that none of the languages provide complete information: English and Latvian have pragmatic functions – to indicate the type of company; in addition, English has a symbolic function since the ergonym is used in a direct way only in English (it is expressed non-directly also in Chinese), but the Chinese has also actual (direct-contact) language function, starting with communication with visitors of the café, and an informative function, reflecting motivation of company name, as well as the main aim of company's activity. However, the majority of local inhabitants and guests to the city most likely do not understand the text in Chinese; therefore, it must be considered that the Chinese language in the sign has a symbolic function – the language is used as an authentic sign of Chinese culture, which represents the company.

**Fig. 5.** Advertisement information outside café



Source: <http://lldata.ru.lv/LATVIJA/Daugavpils/>

In general, the current linguistic landscape is characterized by three “*multi-*”: multilingualism, multiculturalism and multimodality, providing information with the help of various linguistic and artistic means in the form of verbal text and pictures. However, the usage of the Latvian language proves functionality of official languages in all sociolinguistic functions related to linguistic landscape, its prestige, economic value and symbolic meaning, as well as a significant role in the formation and maintenance of social identity.

## CONCLUSION

This article is an attempt to reconstruct a historical linguistic landscape of Daugavpils and compare the obtained data with the situation today, paying intensified attention to the usage of the Latvian language in correlation with the sociopolitical, educational and cultural situation in different periods of time. Characterization of separate examples of linguistic and sociolinguistic peculiarities and visual layout reflects actual language usage.

In general, despite the ethnic and demographic situation, the usage of two languages (Russian and Latvian) may be considered as traditional in the linguistic

<sup>39</sup> Translation in Latvian done by Kārlis Rokpelnis – doctoral student of Minzu University of China.

landscape of Daugavpils; in different periods of time, it has had changing significance and different functionality. From the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Russian language was explicitly dominating; in the Soviet times, it was widely used; it is also one of the languages in the largest part of bilingual language signs. Conversely, after retrieval of independence of the Republic of Latvia, the usage of Russian is minimal in the linguistic landscape, providing only additional information and offering goods or services in the signs, which are next to constant language signs, or in the graffiti texts. English as an international language of globalization appears in public information of the city only since the 21<sup>st</sup> century, realizing symbolic and informative function of the language mainly in the spheres of trade, entertainment and tourism. The usage of other foreign languages (e. g., Yiddish, German, Polish, Italian and French) is sporadic and mainly related to symbolic function of the language.

According to the research, the role of the Latvian language in public information had increased during the first period of independence, when ideas of nationalism become topical and the first normative documents about language use were approved. However, its stability and comprehensive usage in the linguistic landscape may be considered only after the reestablishment of independence of the Republic of Latvia at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the State Language Law was passed and implemented in linguistic practice. Currently, the linguistic landscape reflects strict compliance with language normative documents, political and language power motivation of the owners of public texts, as well as sociopragmatic and social identity motivation when choosing the language.

Language has always been a powerful tool in rebalancing power and disseminating ideology; imposed language policy and management has a significant role in regulation of the language situation in any of the considered periods of time. The political situation has always been the main factor which determines the choice of language. Nowadays, state ideology and language policy in Latvia highlight the essential importance of the presence of an official language in the feeling of national identity, and the necessity of encouragement and maintenance of integrating motivation.

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