

“The Yakut Cold” as a brand

*Tatiana Nikolaeva**, and *Anna Pribylykh*

North-Eastern Federal University, Yakutsk, Russia

Abstract. The article considers the Yakut cold as a brand that forms a certain public image of a tourist destination, especially for inbound tourism. Currently, the republic possesses all the necessary prerequisites for the effective development of both inbound and domestic tourism. “The Yakut Cold” brand is an integration (unity) of images and associations, that appear as an emotional response to the word "Yakutia". Formation of an attractive public image requires an integrative approach, including the creation of information services for tourists. The article contains an analysis of the interests and knowledge of foreigners about the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) as potential visitors, which made it necessary to study the Yakut cold as an attractive brand of the region. The authors of the article consider that the ongoing work to create a textbook in German, with the consideration of the national culture peculiarities and the unique ways of survival in extreme conditions, will contribute to the formation of the "Yakut cold" as an interesting brand of a particular destination.

1 Introduction

The tourism industry has become a vital issue of present time as one of the main promising and priority sectors of the economy both on a country-wide and the Republic-wide level.

Yakutia, as a constituent entity of Russia, large in its territory, also offers a number of events for both inbound and domestic tourism, although the tourism industry in the republic began to gather its pace only in the early 2000-s. At the same time, it cannot be denied that even before that time, organized groups of foreign citizens visited Yakutia, but mainly in the summer months to admire the untouched nature of the northern region, making cruises along the route Yakutsk - Tiksi, Yakutsk - Lena Pillars. According to the Framework for the Development of Tourism in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) dated November 20, 2003, at the beginning of the process of restructuring more than 1800 arrivals per year were registered, but later the volume of incoming tourists decreased to 60. In 2002 there was a growth of an interest in the tourist potential of Yakutia, so 530 inbound tourists visited the Republic. The seasonal distribution of tourist flows was following: 70% of annual load in the summer months and 10% each for the spring, autumn and winter. The greatest interest to the Republic of Sakha was observed from such countries as Japan, Germany, USA, Switzerland and France. [12]

The results of the analysis of the state of tourism in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) at the present stage show an increase in the amount of foreign tourists from Germany, the

* Corresponding author: tnikolaeva184@mail.ru

Republic of Korea, Japan and India. For example, in 2019 the total volume of tourist flow amounted to 7,457 foreign visitors. By 2025, the volume of foreign tourist flow is expected to reach the number of 9128. [13]

Yakutia is a territorially large region of Russia with extreme natural and climatic living conditions that determine the traditional lifestyle of the northern people, which is understood as the unique organization of living (survival), authentic culture, preservation of customs and traditions.

2 Materials and Methods

The aim of this research study is the linguistic and cultural interpretation of the "Yakut cold" as a multidimensional concept, the verbalization of which was carried out through a complex of linguistic, linguistic-cultural, sociolinguistic methods and descriptive techniques, as well as the observation method. Recently, there has been an increase in research on brand creation as one of the ways to form the public image of a tourist destination. In this context, we can note a number of works by foreign authors who offer their own approaches to brand promotion, for example, through ensuring its recognition by the use of logos that convey regional symbols and represent the values of sustainable development.

According to the Indonesian researchers, "a brand is nothing more than a name and logo". [3] They approve, that the development of tourist destinations in the direction of the increasing the attractiveness of regional tourism must have its own strengths. Also they emphasize that the study of the development of regional tourism requires a serious and structured approach to "be able to provide real and accurate data information". [3] In 2021, the Polish researches studied the visual components of brands as a tool for promoting tourism. In their study they noted that a large number of local government units (LGU) in Poland use logos. In advertising, one in five of LGUs mainly use logos that depict nature and cultural heritage as a symbol of a tourist destination. [1]

The issue of the presence of the developing brand in the information space is raised in the work of David Barros-Arrieta and Ernesto García-Cali, where the authors recommend promoting (implementing) internal branding in such communication channels as daily briefings, newsletters, corporate websites, meetings, brand guides, message boards, corporate videos, brand books and corporate magazines. [2]

In the context of the current study, we can note the opinion of Russian researcher Diana Tymoshenko on the branding of Arctic tourist destinations in Russia, where the author rightly notes that for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (the AZRF) the problem of integrated tourism branding remains poorly researched and currently requires special attention. [9] According to the author, among the variety, the most attractive objects of tourist interest that should be included in the branding of the AZRF, are the northern lights, observation of Arctic birds, polar bears, deer, Arctic flora, Arctic regional and local cuisine, shamanism, ethnographic expeditions, etc. [9]

An interesting approach is observed in the work by Galina Rats and Sardana Gavrilyeva titled "Creation of priority development areas in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)", which touches upon the problem of the development of the Arctic territories of the Russian Federation through the creation of territories of advanced development and analyzes the experience of organizing such zones in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). According to the authors, "Tourism in Yakutia cannot be wide-scale due to its climatic and geographical features. However, the promotion of winter tourism will allow Yakutia to stand out from other regions. Every year more and more tourists attend winter festivals held in the Republic. They are of interest to tourists from other regions of Russia and foreign countries". [5]

In the present article, the authors of this research relied on the information from the scientific literature of recent years and their own observations. First of all, we consider the series of works by Alexander Suleymanov devoted to the problems of "Anthropology of Cold", where the author raises the question of the effect of low temperatures on the existing life support system of the Yakuts. [7]

The representations of the cold among the Yakut people, reflected in the folklore worldview are described in the study of Aytalina Kuzmina on the example of texts of different folklore genres: epics, legends, mythological stories, folk songs, fairy tales, proverbs and sayings. [4]

The work by Ekaterina Romanova and Oksana Dozhdanskaya presents the multidimensional image of the Cold in the metaphors of calendar and social time based on two models of the Yakuts and the indigenous peoples of Taimyr. According to the authors, the cognitive comprehension of the image of the Cold will find its embodiment as an art studies problem within the framework of the "Anthropology of Cold" developing direction. [6]

Thus, the brief description of the "Cold world" and the research results obtained by the authors confirm the growing scientific interest in the phenomenon of the "Yakut cold" not only as a natural phenomenon, but also as a resource that determines the direction of human life development in permafrost.

3 Results and Discussion

A comprehension of the image of Yakutia, first of all, is associated with the cold, although its perception will not always be adequate and is somewhat abstracted due to the fact that it can be formed indirectly, for example, through the information received from various sources. Sources of information are represented by a developed network of information services (guides, maps, Internet, etc.). A convincing argument in favour of attracting the attention of foreign guests to the republic can be the direct establishment of personal contacts, for example, with the help of students or graduates undergoing various forms of internship or other forms of abroad stay, in our case, in Germany or Austria. Guided by the urgency of the issue posed, we conducted a survey among graduates who are in Germany and Austria, studying at a Bachelor's, Master's degree programs or staying by private invitation. We were interested in their answers to the questions in order to "feel" the degree of respondents' interest in Yakutia as a potential tourist destination. The following questions were sent out:

1. When meeting the Germans, when they find out that you are from Yakutia - what questions do they ask you about Yakutia or the North?
2. Do the Germans know anything about Yakutia? What information do they have?
3. Do the Germans ask you to tell about Yakutia?
4. If so, what do you tell them?
5. Is it easy for you to find the necessary vocabulary when you describe Yakutia?
6. Do you have any difficulties in storytelling due to ignorance or limited knowledge about the culture and nature of Yakutia?
7. What topic is of greater interest to the Germans?

The results of ranking the responses as relevant information were summarized as follows:

1. Frequently asked questions relate to the location of Yakutia, the lowest air temperature in winter, climate, cuisine, traditions, conditions of survival in harsh climatic conditions, nationality of Sakha.

2. In general, based on respondents' answers, we can conclude that the majority of Germans have a general idea of Yakutia as the coldest place in the world and that Yakutia is somewhere in Siberia.

3. Informants note that the Germans show a great interest in Yakutia and that it is better for them to receive information "firsthand", that is, preferably, from a native of Yakutia and during live communication.

4. Informants mainly talk about the geographical and natural features of Yakutia, the Yakut language, religion, tradition, culture, permafrost, mentality, cuisine and shamanism.

5. Informants experience difficulties in translating and explaining the meanings of culture-specific elements (for example, "хотон" [khoton] - a cowshed or a house for cows, "тон балык" [toŋ balik] – In the North and Siberia: frozen fish (or meat) cut into thin slices, eaten raw, etc.).

6. Most of the informants pointed their insufficient knowledge of some elements of the culture of Yakutia. Some of them emphasized the fact that, being far away, they began to understand the uniqueness and beauty of their native land.

7. The Germans are especially interested in such topics as winter clothing, house insulation in winter, cuisine, climate, living in harsh climatic conditions, shamanism.

Examining German-language websites helps to get a view on a feedback in the form of short summaries. Within the framework of this article, we will present only a brief fragment of a survey of opinions, in which they offer readers some facts about Yakutia, sometimes bypassing the sphere of culture, tradition and way of life of the Yakuts. When informing about the coldest region of Russia the main focus is made on the climate and Oymyakon (www.welt.de, www.schulz-aktiv-reisen.de), which is known as the coldest settlement in the world. Today many environmentalists argue about the coldest settlement in Yakutia, since the lowest temperature was recorded (-67.7 °C) also in Verkhoyansk in 1892. This sparsely populated city in Yakutia is rightfully considered one of the coldest places on Earth, the coldest city in the world; it is often called the Pole of Cold in the Northern Hemisphere. Nevertheless, Oymyakon remains the most famous branded tourism destination, where they have been promoting the "cold tourism" for foreigners for more than 15 years at the state level.

In the German media, tourists visiting Yakutia are called "crazy" (www.welt.de), the same Internet resource claims that Yakutsk the coldest city, although the average minimum temperature in this city reaches -45 °C in winter. Despite this, the authors of the article "Wenn Ausländer kommen, dann meist „verrückte“ (When foreigners come, then mostly "crazy") were able to describe the Yakut harsh winter elaborately and vividly from the eyes of a foreign tourist; they included several historical facts into the article, a little information about Yakut shamans, the Mammoth museum and Siberian huskies. [14] But all these facts do not fully reveal Yakutia as the largest region of Russia with its national and natural characteristics, and this, most likely, can be considered as a potential tourist's disinterest. In summary, the impressions, perceived by German tourists after visiting Yakutia, published in the Internet sources (analyzing reviews), are expressed as follows: 'The coldest region, where nature is unique and untouched, winter is long, cold is a challenge', 'Windproof, insulated and water-repellent clothing is required'; in addition, the most popular phrases used by the Germans are the definitions: 'extreme nature', 'vast borders', 'incredible adventures'. One of the German visitors to Yakutia writes, "What surprised me was that the car engines were running almost all the time, or that people had an extra heater turned on" [15]. We should not ignore even such facts when popularizing tourism in Yakutia and teach our students to be able to find explanations for the life phenomena of Northerners in the German language.

The received answers can help us in compilation of the manual in German with the consideration of the peculiarities of the national culture, especially for extreme tourism.

Currently, among such promising tourism directions, as ecological tourism, cultural tourism, event tourism, themed tour and others, extreme tourism is no less interesting as it is attractive from the point of direct interaction and observation of such unique natural phenomena as the Yakut cold and northern lights. This type of tourism can be associated with a life risk, due to such factors as the presence of a route through sparse and uninhabited areas and even the failure or inability of use of the latest devices that are not designed for and not adapted to extremely low temperatures. We have observed recent attempts to not only cover long distances on bicycles, but also to cover low-temperature routes alone through Yakutsk with further progress to the north, where the cold pole is located. Such attempts are made mainly by foreign extreme sports enthusiasts, which speaks of an emerging segment of the Republic's tourist product. On the other hand, according to observations, it is possible to state individual facts, when both extreme sportsmen and inexperienced tourists experience a failure to complete their plans and stop their movement halfway, due to an unexpected technical breakdown, or due to frostbite under the influence of low temperatures, and other cases. Inexperienced tourists take on a journey without proper preparation, practical skills of survival in the cold, or simply are unaware of the peculiarities of the Yakut frosts, for example, when a trip by a private car in most cases may end in a failure. As the people say, the north does not forgive mistakes. This point is supported by the opinion of Galina Rats and Sardana Gavriilyeva, that "on the one hand, harsh climatic conditions become a factor that drives tourists back from a mass visit to Yakutia, but, on the other hand, attracts a certain category of tourists to the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). It is about those who are ready for extremely low temperatures and who are interested in ecological, cultural, educational and extreme tourism. [5]

The developing project of the textbook in German will mainly contain several interdependent topics related to the unique characteristics of the concept of the "Yakut cold". This formulation of the question is results from the tasks of realization of the contents of the "Yakut cold" mental entity, its internal potential to transform into a brand of Yakutia, which, accordingly, presupposes a qualitative description for its identification. Let us refer one more time to the opinion of Diana Timoshenko, that "The identity of the AZRF tourist destinations is determined by both natural objects and the traditions of the peoples inhabiting these, elements of culture, authenticity, crafts, local cuisine, artistic incarnations of the Arctic in rituals, folklore, folk costumes, holidays, engineering peculiarities, decorations of houses and traditional dwellings of the northern people". [9]

Following the task of implementing this project and based on the interests of potential guests, we defined the interdependent parts of the textbook:

1. The image of cold, the representative potential of which will be the factors that construct and structure the concept of the "Cold" (snow, ice, permafrost, Pole of Cold).
2. "Resources of cold" according to Alexander Suleymanov [8]. This section will present the experience of the practical use of low temperature resources in the life support system of the northern people: food, housing, clothing.
3. Language and Culture.

Each section is going to have a dictionary (glossary) with definitions, comments and examples, articulations of words, expressions and texts. At the end of each section, a thematic selection of literature, sources and references to these must be indicated. The recommended literature can be in German, Russian and Yakut languages, as will direct the readers (students) to obtain missing or additional information. We consider it necessary to include the data resource of the Associative Dictionary of the Yakut Language, which can in overall represent the reaction of the Yakut language speakers to the "ТЫМНЫЫ" [tımniı] (cold) stimulus. The ranking of the vocabulary entries reveals not only the position of reaction words by frequency, but also provides a rich ground for differentiated interpretation of less frequent reactions, for example, Oymyakon, as the location of one of

the coldest places on earth, does not occupy a leading position in this ranking, which gives rise to an exchange of views. In general, the results of the Yakuts' reactions to the "Yakut cold" stimulus represent a spectrum of emotions and associations, which puts the problem of studying the linguistic worldview of the Yakut natives on the agenda, thereby deciphering the conceptualization of the real world. For further discussion of topics by readers, additional questions will be proposed. These questions will not only directly relate to the presented content, but there also will be the situational, indirect questions about opinions and other. According to a survey, life necessities support at low temperatures is of particular interest for informants, therefore the section "Resources of cold" is going to be factually filled and substantively convincing, since potential guests should be psychologically ready in advance to try Yakut frozen dishes, for example, "stroganina" (frozen fish cut into thin slices and eaten raw) or visually perceive amazing outbuildings (an icehouse, for example). To determine the meaning of words more accurately, one can refer to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Yakut language, where each word has its own dictionary entry, which gives a descriptive characteristic of its meaning or meanings. As an example, we can consider the interpretation of the word "булуус" [buluus]: 1) Permafrost under the soil, persistent in summer; 2) Deep cold cellar for ice storage and food freezing in summer, an icehouse. [11] Alexander Suleymanov writes about it in his research study, "this construction was most representative of the potential of "Resources of cold" and allowed to store food in a frozen state all year round". [8] Regarding the word "buluus" itself, the author hypothesizes that it is indigenous, not borrowed, and that it already existed and meant "icehouse" before the arrival of the Russians. Thus, it is impossible to prove the appearance of icehouses in the Yakut households at earlier stages, nevertheless this construction has proven its practical suitability and to this day finds its use in settlements. [8]

In the "Language and Culture" section a brief overview of the Yakut and German languages will be presented, including the comparison of vowels and consonants, which reveal some phonetic similarity. This phenomenon is familiar and understandable to all Sakha-speaking people who begin to learn German as a foreign language. In this context, we also will propose to refer to the additional materials that describe the role of the Germans, who devoted their best works to the study of the severe endless expanses of Yakutia. We believe that students should have an idea of the contribution of such renowned researchers as G.F. Miller, A.F. Middendorf, R.K. Maak, O.N. Böhtlingk, V.V. Radlov, etc. For example, Alexander Middendorf has conducted a number of studies in Yakutia that established the foundation for the scientific study of the "permafrost" phenomena. Middendorf's research on the Yakut language was one of the sources for Otto von Böhtlingk's work "Über die Sprache der Jakuten" (About the language of Yakuts) - the first scientific grammar. [10]

It is natural that foreigners have an interest in the original culture of the Northerners, so it should be presented in as multifaceted and as natural way as possible. The constant question of foreigners about the survival on the permafrost is motivated not by idle curiosity, but by a rational consideration of the material of clothing, for example, which either is artificially adapted to subzero temperatures, or is a product of natural origin. According to our observations, in winter one can get frostbitten even without leaving the city of Yakutsk, just because the clothes are not of a sufficient quality for the Yakut winter and, accordingly, cannot protect from low temperatures. In the section "Language and Culture", we should also mention the phenomenon of "Yakut hospitality", which is an integral entity that is accessible and understandable only through direct observation or interaction.

Thus, the authors of the proposed manual project, guided by the general framework of formulating the "Territories of Cold" issue in terms of content, pursued the task of

promoting of such attitudes as respect, love and being proud of own country, among the youth and adequate representation of their culture abroad in the broader sense. Students and graduates, being representatives of their country, can become broadcasters and promoters of cultural values in the process of intercultural interaction.

4 Conclusion

Summarizing the material considered in the article, it should be said that the phenomenon of the "Yakut cold" is a difficult object both for study and for the formation of a tourist destination product on its basis. The multidimensional nature of the "Cold" requires comprehensive understanding as a holistic problem and requires new creative approaches. It should be noted that the Cold has become an object of interest for the humanities in the light of the dynamics of its perception development in an anthropological context only recently. Therefore, we can notice the rapidly increased interest of humanities researchers in the image of the Cold. Fully supporting the tourism development general concept of Yakutia, we agree with the opinion of Alexander Suleymanov, that "The fact that the cold can and should become one of the brands of Yakutia attracting tourists from all over the world is an undoubted fact". [8]

For our part, we believe that the textbook under compilation will help to formulate in German diverse supplementary information about the native language, culture, nature, population, social organization of small and large homelands, which are at the same time a means of educating a harmonious, externally and internally well-balanced personality.

The processes taking place in the international and domestic tourism practices will have a significant impact on the development of this industry in the territory of the Republic. It is these processes that form the public perception of tourism as such, the willingness of a person to understand the world around, the priorities of human values at the present stage of society's development.

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