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THE RELEVANCE OF IMPLEMENTING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGIES IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING NAMING OF CHINESE BRANDS AND PRODUCTS

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The Chinese manufacturing tradition dates back many centuries. However, until the second half of the 20th century, Chinese trademarks remained uncompetitive on the international stage [4]. Economic reforms and the policy of openness allowed Chinese companies to enter the global market. Yet, at the beginning, products from China were firmly associated with poor quality. For this reason, manufacturers often used a mimicry strategy, releasing goods under names imitating world-famous brands («Abibas», «Sqny», «Nokla», etc.). In recent decades, this tendency has fundamentally changed: Chinese companies increasingly use elements of their national language and cultural identity in naming, shaping the image of China as a producer of high-quality products.

At the same time, the international adaptation of such names is becoming increasingly dependent on language technologies, including artificial intelligence. Chinese written communication is hieroglyph-based and relies on ideographs whose meaning is not reducible to simple “sound guessing”. Moreover, users encounter traditional and simplified forms, and practical input methods differ from the Latin-alphabet logic. Localization tools and translators may also fail, especially when translating brand-like or creative phrases into Chinese, since syntactic flexibility and word order in Russian are harder for automated systems to interpret than in English. For this reason, AI-assisted workflows require careful validation with respect to both phonetic and cultural-semantic accuracy. This study examines the process of Chinese brand naming entering the international market, analyzes consumer perception of these naming decisions, and identifies characteristic features and problematic aspects of adapting Chinese trade names to the Russian-speaking environment.

AI becomes relevant because brand naming involves more than grammar: it is the interaction of sound, meaning, and culture. Therefore, AI should not be expected to “create magic”, but rather to support the naming workflow by organizing large sets of candidates and checking potential linguistic risks. At the same time, it is important to recognize the limitation of current models: they often produce results based on existing patterns, so if training data lacks sufficient phonetic, cultural, and naming-specific validation, the output may remain “raw” [1]. Furthermore, some aspects of Chinese cultural symbolism function inside a relatively closed system of signs, and models that do not interpret this system deeply may miss key features such as culturally sensitive numbers, problematic homophones, or the tradition of hidden messages in brand names.

Chinese brand naming is a multi-level system rooted in Confucian thought, mythology, and folk numerology. Names often use characters with positive

symbolism: 龙 (lóng) “dragon” (strength and luck), 福 (fú) “happiness”, 吉 (jí) “favorable”, 华 (huá) “China / magnificence” [3]. Color and number symbolism are also central: yellow and gold relate to fertility and stability (brand Gold Secret), while red signals life force and beauty (clothing brand Red Sleeves). The number 8 (八, bā) is popular because it sounds like 发 (fā) “wealth”, whereas 4 (四, sì) is avoided due to homophony with 死 (sǐ) “death” [9]. A typical feature is double naming: an international name is paired with a hieroglyphic version carrying additional hidden meaning. For instance, Huawei (华为) combines “Chinese/Bright” and “Act/Do”; Xiaomi (小米) (“Small Rice Grain”) expresses humility and creation; Tencent (腾讯) links “Rise” and “Information”; Geely (吉利) means “Luck and Profit”; and Chery (奇瑞) means “Unusual Favorable Sign” [8].

When entering foreign markets, separate adaptation strategies are chosen for each region: for Europe, priority is neutral premium sound and phonetic simplification; for the USA – brevity, absence of slang ambiguities, and narrative support; for the Middle East – compliance with religious norms; for Russia – readability in Russian manner and checking for unintended comic homonyms. World practice confirms the importance of such checks: Chevrolet Nova in Spanish-speaking countries was perceived as «Does not go», Pepsi slogan in China was read as «Pepsi raises your ancestors from the grave», and bottled water «Blue Water» on the Russian market acquired an ironic sound «Blyu Wotta». Despite extensive localization work, foreign consumers still face difficulties with correct pronunciation of Chinese names, which can act as a barrier to forming consumer trust in the brand [7].

In the Russian-speaking market, adaptation may create interlingual semantic conflicts through unwanted phonetic interference. In the Xiaomi ecosystem, the sub-brand Soocas can trigger stable associations with obscenity. BlinBlin (Bluetooth speakers) relates to a Russian colloquial interjection; KAKA evokes a childish euphemism for feces; Deerma is perceived as sounding like colloquial words; and the battery brand Pisen is associated with a physiological process [2]. Although the products themselves are high-quality, the comedic or negative “coloring” of the name may undermine consumer trust. Notably, these names are neutral in their original context, so the problem lies in cross-linguistic perception. This implies that many producers do not conduct a preliminary linguocultural audit before entering Russian-speaking markets, making cross-linguistic verification an essential step in brand preparation.

A questionnaire survey of about 170 respondents showed key patterns: 86 % encounter Chinese brands weekly, yet only 44,1 % recall 1–3 brands, indicating limited memorability. Phonetic perception is mostly neutral (42,4 %) or positive (38,8 %), and hieroglyphs on packaging are viewed with little interest (57,1 %). Unwanted homophone associations were noticed by 34,7 % before the survey and by another 28,8 % after seeing examples; meanwhile 62,4 % would still buy despite an unpleasant-sounding name if quality and price are good. Preferred

adaptation is soft correction: 64,5 % choose partial spelling/pronunciation adjustment while keeping recognizability, versus only 8,9 % supporting full replacement. Trust is not strongly affected by origin for 66,3 % of respondents, and 68,3 % evaluate the adaptation overall as successful [6]. Chinese brand naming does not face strong rejection; interlingual homophony is a real but not critical problem, and the most demanded strategy is keeping the original sound while making targeted adjustments.

The conducted study shows a major transformation in Chinese brand naming practice. Earlier, when entering foreign markets, Chinese manufacturers often relied on mimicry, masking national origin through names imitating Western and Japanese brands. Today, the tendency is different: companies increasingly use authentic naming to consciously demonstrate Chinese identity and cultural meaning. This shift is also reflected in the way Russian-speaking consumers perceive such brands: everyday speech has adopted differentiated labels like “Honest China” and “Factory China,” while the old stereotype “Underground China” becomes less dominant, indicating a move from perceiving Chinese origin as a low-quality marker toward associating it with accessible value [5]. At the same time, linguistic risk remains real. AI may support candidate generation and assist with cross-linguistic checks, but its outputs are often still “raw” and depend heavily on the domain and data quality. Therefore, the most practical solution is a human-in-the-loop pipeline: combining cross-linguistic verification with AI assistance before launch, rather than relying on AI creativity alone.

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