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# The Terminological System "Branding" in the Russian Language: Formation, Harmonization and Translation

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The paper is devoted to an issue of lexical and semantic difficulties during the process of transmitting the American terminological system "branding" into the Russian language. The author reveals the notion of the terminological system, describes the reasons and steps of the term harmonization and standardization, and identifies a number of problems associated with the alignment of the basic terms in the Russian terminological system "branding" (term ambiguity, synonymy, divergence, doublets, barbarisms, loan words, manipulative techniques in translation).

Keywords: terminological system, formation, harmonization, translation, alignment, branding, American, Russian

### Introduction

Nowadays we can observe strengthening of the international scientific, cultural and economic collaboration that leads to the rapid formation of new disciplines (their number is doubled on average every 25 years) which need to have their own terminologies. Firstly it causes the spontaneous emergence of terminologies and then borrowing the entire terminological systems from one language into another. Thus, at the end of the 20th century in the U.S. a completely new terminological system known as "branding" was born. It first appeared about 20 years ago and began to develop rapidly even in Russia. Under the circumstances of the "terminological flood" the specialists now raise a serious question

of the alignment of the entire terminological array that needs to hasten the process of the American terminological system harmonization into Russian. The development of the harmonization principles is an important part of international collaboration between terminologists and translators. In this case the most important issue related to the translation of specialized texts, particularly on branding, is an issue of transmitting the original content with the other terminological system.

### Theoretical Basis of Studying the Terminological Systems

For a detailed review of the issue we first need to clarify the definition of "terminological system".

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A terminological system basically follows the same laws of functioning as any other system. The idea of considering a language as a system formation was proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure but for a long time this aspect was not explored. However, with the works of such scholars as V.M. Leychik, D.S. Lotte, S.V. Grinev, V.A. Stupin, V.A. Tatarinov, A.V. Superanskaya, I.V. Podolskaya and others this idea began to evolve and has received a strong theoretical foundation. In this regard, it is sensible to start the study of the terminological system phenomenon with the general concept of the system itself. According to the definition of L.L. Nelyubin, system is a set of interrelated elements indivisible within the system which has a clear structure of the attributes, bonds and relationships with each other and with the elements of the other systems (Nelyubin, 2001: 165).

Any terminological system consists of the terminological units (terms) - words or phrases which are supposed to adequately reflect the concepts of the certain subject field by definitions and their meanings are specified by the context "(Merkulova, 1999: 13). Consideration of the term types that serve a particular industry or a human activity field leads to the conclusion that these units are an interconnected set of lexical units in a specific equilibrium, i.e. a system. In this case a terminological system is a kind of in a more or less balanced and properly functioning generality of the terms, all elements of which are interconnected and interdependent on the basis of certain linguistic, logical or other laws within the system. The language is not a single system subordinated exclusively and only followed the universal laws but it is a set of interacting and interrelated subsystems, each of which has both the general laws for the language and the specific laws for the certain subsystem. The uniqueness and specificity of the terminological systems, the duality systematicity of terms (conceptual

and linguistic) are noted by many researchers. For example, L.L. Kutina thinks that "in contrast to other language systems the specific of a terminological system is concluded in the fact that it is created during the classification, organization and determination of the scientific concepts" (Kutina, 1992: 93). Similarly, E.A. Nathanson defines a terminological system as "a clear correlate of the concept system represented by these terms as a strictly organized set of tools that represents the concepts in all their relationships and interdependence" (Natanson, 1970: 216). As it can be seen from the definitions, a terminological system is understood as an internally aligned set of elements linked by stable relationships.

As a rule, being borrowed the formed original terminological system, in particular the American system "branding", is fully projected on the system of the translation language, in our case on the Russian terminological system, which in turn begins to operate in a broader context – the Russian language. The highly specialized field of "branding" is a domain terminological subsystem within already the well described lexical system of the Russian language and requires its own description. We believe the terminological system of the target language is as essentially unique as the lexical system on the whole (in total). It is connected with the following reasons:

- ✓ the terminological system is a part of the lexical system of the national language, so it reflects its cultural identity in some way;
- ✓ the terminological system reflects the domain and conceptual field of knowledge in a specific discipline which also may vary in different cultures;
- ✓ the terminological system is always dynamic, it constantly changes both in the system relationships between the units

and in the relationships of the content plan of the specific terminological unit.

According to the synergetic approach described in the contemporary philosophy, any system must be open to be able to develop. Based on the fact that the vocabulary of branding theme is constantly updated, borrowed and rapidly assimilated in the translation language, we can conclude that this terminological system is a vivid example of the open evolving system that seems relevant to investigate.

### Harmonization of the Terminological Systems

The goal of the terminology study is to fix, determine, align and harmonize the scientific and technical terms in the fields of special knowledge to facilitate the transmission of knowledge into different cultures by using an internationally admitted denotation for the facts and processes in a particular field or discipline (Gerzymisch-Arbogast, 2007: 16).

The term harmonization is a process of unification of the terms in the case of their cross-language standardization, i.e. a process providing comparability of terminologies of national and international levels. The component part of the harmonization should be a systematic internationalization of the terms, i.e., alignment of meanings which have the close forms of the multilingual terms with determining a clear concordance between them as well as selecting among the synonymous terms with the international forms (Vinogradov, 1999: 207).

The harmonization involves the following steps:

- the systematic comparison of national terminologies and terminological systems;
- 2. making a classification scheme of concepts taking into consideration all

- the concepts reflected in the compared national terminologies;
- developing an agreement on determining clear understanding and use of the equivalent terms of the national terminological systems;
- 4. the internationalization which provides mutual borrowing the terms into the national languages to fill gaps in the national terminological systems.

The harmonization of the national and international systems of concepts and terminological systems represented by them is aimed at developing a common technical language in a particular area of standardization. This allows uniformly describing the object of standardization in the regulatory and technical documentation at the national and international levels (Vinogradov, 2006: 207).

The extra-linguistic assumptions of the international harmonization of the terminological systems are aspects typical for the current stage of the world civilization development:

- ✓ the integration of knowledge, the internationalization of science and technology;
- ✓ the unity of theoretical and methodological basis of science and technology.

The linguistic factors that contribute to the international harmonization of the terminological systems are:

- ✓ developing languages for special purposes, close enough to each other in content and the forms of presentation in several natural languages;
- ✓ active processes of internationalization of the terms which have the function of the lexical units of the languages for special purposes.

The means of fixing the international solutions on the alignment of the term semantics and determining the clear interlanguage

terminology concordance should be the multilingual terminology data banks which are being developed at present. These data banks allow us to store and save information on linguistic and logical characteristics of the terms, their usage, multi-language equivalents and the degree of their alignment (Vinogradov, 1999: 207).

Thus, in the case of cross-language terminology alignment – harmonization – the systematic comparisons of the terminologies of two or more languages are held on the basis of the consolidated system of concepts, supplemented (enlarged) by use of the national concepts. The main means of harmonization is a mutual correction (updating) of the content and the forms of national terms in order to determine the clear concordance between them which is often accompanied by mutual borrowing the terms enriching the national terminology. The results of the harmonization are presented in the form of regulatory translation dictionaries including standards.

However, such the ideal logical algorithms are extremely rare in reality. In this regard, the aim of our research was to identify the lexical-semantic difficulties of the extra-linguistic obstacles in the harmonization of the modern loan terminological systems.

## Translation Problems of the Terminological System "Branding" into Russian

At the present time there is an active exchange of information between the specialists in the same domain from different countries. The field of special knowledge or activities often originated in one country is borrowed by the specialists of the other countries together with the technology and system concepts: a vivid example is the terminological system "branding".

The conception of branding is one of the "tools" developed by the businessmen to improve the efficiency of the competition that exists at many markets.

The history of branding in new Russia spans a little more than 20 years; it is associated with virtually no competition between the goods and services in the Soviet period, especially in the view of their shortage. The end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s were marked by an unprecedented consumer boom. At that time there was a great need of branding as a way to make goods and services competitive and to find a way to the hearts of consumers. Today in the majority of Russian cities the market is already under the competition of brands rather than prices. The time of unbranded goods is over. The rigid monopoly gives a way to the same rigid competitive market. At this stage, the manufacturers are forced to think not only about the benefits of their products over others but about the image of their products. Since consumption is very specific, it is not only a demand that determines supply but it is supply that determines demand for goods and services (Bykovskaya, Golovkov, 2011: 4). Thus, the Russian marketing has borrowed both the American marketing technology of branding and its terminological system. In scientific literature translations of books by American theorists, researchers and experts on branding first began to appear.

Since the process of harmonization deals with the forming terminological system, the source of translation equivalents of the terms can serve only online glossaries and thesauruses but not the checked printed dictionaries. The authors of the network glossaries are not known in most cases. The lists of term translations are limited in number (about 20-30 words) although there is an impressive number of glossaries themselves (about 50). However, their quality leaves much to

be desired. Thus, our primary goal was to find and assess the adequacy of existing translations from the perspective of their subsequent harmonization.

Thus, during the study of the lexical items of the Russian terminological system "branding" we identified a number of problems associated with the alignment of the basic concepts and the basic terms.

One of the key issues, in our opinion, is the ambiguity of the term.

Fuzzy boundaries or constant "blurring" the boundaries of the basic concepts leads to term ambisemy – it is a property of the term to operate in a language with different volume of semantics, a property which is caused by a number of extralinguistic factors (using the term in different periods of the science development, by different schools and different scientists). In other words, ambisemy means that there are divergences of the content. For instance, the term branding still causes misunderstanding among the specialists and translators because of its ambiguity. Thus, depending on the activity under the branding we can understand: 1) the decision to use a branded approach to the commercial policy of the company and at the same time 2) a special process of promoting the trademark to the state of the brand including through massive advertising and PR. Hence during the translation of a special text there is a need to clarify the meaning of the term by the context. But here we must remember that term ambisemy is a natural state of the term and an indispensable component of scientific, technical and translational activities which is based on both extra-linguistic and inter-language reasons (Tatarinov, 1996: 264).

A special challenge in the process of harmonization of the terminological system is term evrisemy, meaning that it is a term's ability to refer to the indeterminate number of denotations. The process of evrisemantisation can be considered as a process of desemantisation of the word to its monosemy structure and the preserved monosemy becomes highly abstract. The term has an infinite number of meanings. The general scientific and technical terms are usually susceptible (exposed) to evrisemy. For example, in branding: *image — имидж, design. — дизайн, choice — выбор, culture — культура.* 

The categorical ambiguity is especially inconvenient in the case of the term alignment. For example, the term advergaming does not have a lexical translation in Russian yet. In the network one can meet the transliteration адвергейминг and the descriptive translation рекламная игра or промо-игра. In the book "Marketing Game. Divide and Rule" by Anton Popov<sup>1</sup> a Russified calque – рекламИгра – is proposed. Different interpretations of the concept of this term leads to the fact that in the context advergeyming means both a process of using the brand in video games, interactive environment for advertising or promotion of the goods and the material result (the video game itself, online entertainment)2. All of these, firstly, slows the search of the equivalent; secondly, it causes some confusion while translating the specialized texts. and thirdly, in the case of translation errors it leads to the inadequate perception of the recipient of the translated literature.

Following the urgent problem of the term ambiguity the synonymy of terminological units also becomes an obstacle in the process of harmonization.

The variant translations due to the synonymy of the terms in the translated language are observed in the transmission of the meanings of the basic and compound terms. Thus, the English term may have two (three) variants in the Russian translation.

For the transmission of the term meaning from the source language into the translated language, several terms which are partial or absolute synonyms can be used. The existence of the phenomenon of term synonymy is recognized by the most of terminologists. Based on the types of synonymic relationships connecting the variant translations of one term in the source language, we can identify the following reasons for the ambiguity:

- ✓ In the translated language there are termssynonyms which equally accurately transmit the term meanings of the source language and have no particular differences in functioning in the text. For example, family brand — общий бренд, фамильный бренд, семейный бренд, видовой бренд, семейная марка, семейственный бренд.
- ✓ In the translated language there are terms which have close meanings (partial synonyms) but different compatibility with the other commonly used terms and words. For instance, brand recognition распознание бренда, узнаваемость бренда, пассивная известность. The different distribution of the Russian terms, corresponding to the English, makes the choice of one of them in a particular context and defines the features of the lexical structure of its derivative terms.
- ✓ In the translated language there are international terms-doublets: both the Russian and loan (American) terms are used to express one concept.

Doublets are especially characteristic for the initial stages of forming terminology when a natural (and conscious) selection of a better term has not occurred yet and there are several variants for the same concept. Between the doublets there are no relationships that align the synonyms; there are no emotional, expressive, stylistic or connotative oppositions. They are identical; each of them refers directly to the signification. When the existence of synonyms of the common language is justified by the fact that the usage of any of them affects the content of the speech, changes stylistic coloring or gives it a unique color, at that time the doublets neither of any common language nor in the language of science do not possess these properties and represent an undesirable and even harmful effect (Graudina, Shiryaev, 1999: 457).

However, in our opinion, the assessment of the existence of doublets in each case is determined by functioning of the terminological system. In particular, the parallel usage of the native and loan term may be permitted if one is not able to create form derivatives. Here we speak about the term derivation ability. For example, if we cannot form an adjective from the word moprosan марка, there is a term derived from the term бренд: брендовый $^3$  (qualitative), брендинговый (referring to the brand), брендированный (extending the functionality). The same thing happens to the term фирменный знак, low derivational ability of which is compensated by the derived from of its doublet nozomun логотиный (i.e. with the logo). These kinds of doublets are widespread, they are usually regarded as absolute synonyms, i.e. synonyms which have quite the same meaning but they are used in parallel because of the low derivational ability of the native term in the translation language. This phenomenon demonstrates the ability of the Russian terminological system "branding" to self-regulation, thereby providing its effective functioning.

There are also partial doublets – variants. For example, brand book – руководство по использованию бренда, книга бренда, каталог бренда. The usage of these synonyms can lead to mutual misunderstanding among specialists and it is desirable to eliminate them during the alignment of the terms.

Before the illustration of the next example of translating the American term *brand attributes* 

into Russian it must be said that the terminology can be met in two areas:

- ✓ in the area of functioning where the terminological units exist in a context and where the interaction of the terms happens in the frame of the terminological system (specialized texts);
- ✓ in the area of fixation where the terms are in a closed system and where they are isolated from each other (special bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, encyclopedias, glossaries, thesauruses).

Thus, we turn to the electronic dictionary and get the following information:

Brand attributes – атрибуты, бенефиты бренда (ассоциации бренда, т. е. описательные характеристики, которые отмечены покупателями, как описывающие бренд)<sup>4</sup>.

Now we turn to the context: «У данного мероприятия, как у любого бренда, есть все главные атрибуты: бенефиты, ценности, сущность, приверженцы и критики. Это означает, что бренд жив! Что уже здорово»<sup>5</sup>. This example demonstrates the divergence of the term meanings during the term fixation in the dictionary and functioning in a specialized text, so it eliminates the variability of a pair атрибуты / бенефиты in the case. Because of not well-assimilated translations in modern literature we can also meet the texts with the original terminological units in English. The process of reading such the texts in Russian is quite hard: «Ребрендинг, как любая бизнесинициатива, оценивается в ROI – return of investments. Сколько вложено и получено и как скоро вернулись инвестиции. В маркетинге, помимо ROI, оцениваются и другие изменения, такие как TOM (top of mind), Brand Perception (восприятие бренда), мониторятся изменения Brand Attributes (атрибуты бренда)»<sup>6</sup>.

Based on the results of this analysis during the harmonization of the terminological system "branding" we believe it is reasonable to consider the following dictionary article as the most accurate:

Brand attributes (атрибуты бренда) — набор сенсорных характеристик, имеющих отношение к товару или услуге. Внешняя форма, воспринимаемая зрением, слухом, осязанием, обонянием или вкусом<sup>7</sup>.

In many works on terminology study the authors use only the dictionary definitions in their analysis, not paying sufficient attention to the functioning of the term in speech. We believe during linguistic analysis of the terminology the specialized branded texts should be the center of attention because many terms are fixed not only in the dictionaries but in the specialized texts. The economic dictionaries compile only a small part of the terminology. In support of this there are many examples.

It becomes apparent that the study of only lexicographical research and discreet sources of the terms is not enough. V.A. Tatarinov said that "... there are two sides, two points of view in the creation and definition of the term: structural (linguistic) and conceptual (semantic) caused by the development of the concept system of any science, manufacture or craft. Both these aspects are interrelated and at the same time connected with cultural and historical traditions ... "(Tatarinov, 1996: 264-265). The conceptual side of the terminological system reflects the relationships between the terms in this field.

It is especially important to pay attention to this level in the comparative research of the terminologies in different languages. In the terminological dictionaries the attention is often drawn only to the linguistic level that leads to the errors of the translation.

The need of the component and comparative analysis of the terminological systems, according to M.V. Umerova, may be caused by the practical translation demand connected with the problem

of choosing the translation equivalents in the divergence between the whole terminological systems (Umerova, 2009: 566).

Continuing to talk about the problem of doublets it is necessary to mention that there are phonetic, graphic, morphological, word formational, syntax and other variants of the terms that lead to variations in their writing forms. For example, суб-бренд<sup>8</sup>, саб-бренд<sup>9</sup>, суббренд<sup>10</sup>. In the study of the specialized texts it has been observed that even in the same sentence the authors can use different spelling of the same term: «В Москве наградили лауреатов высшей российской профессиональной награды в области построения брендов и маркетинговых коммуникаций «Брэнд года / EFFIE 2009», организованной компанией PБК» $^{II}$ .

Terminological divergence, lack of a uniform or a preferred variant of the term names and spelling (compare: паритет брендов — бренд паритет; переключение брэнда — переключение на другую торговую марку — переключение смарки на марку—переключение между брендами) complicates communication among the specialists and the formal difference often leads to semantic differentiation giving rise to the requirement of invariance of the terms — the immutability of their forms.

In the research an extensive usage of barbarisms was also observed (i.e. not yet assimilated in the Russian language loan variants sometimes saving their foreign-language graphical forms)12. Here are some examples: СВОТ-анализ, Smart, Ко-брендинг, Мастербрэнд БрендСкейп, истории о брендах c WOW-эффект, brand wheel, brand promise, moodboard. The natural desire of any living language to replace the barbarisms by neologisms can be justified, but not always. For instance, there is no need to put neologisms instead of the specialized scientific names which are conditional

terms that facilitate the use of the scientific works in foreign languages. But, on the other hand, the purity of the literary language requires avoiding the unnecessary barbarisms because they are too abstract in perception and alien among the words of the native language.

However, we have observed that the translators still prefer barbarisms even in the cases when there are well-known Russian-language terms, such as: наружная реклама  $\rightarrow$  outdoor, OOH; деловая реклама, бизнесреклама  $\rightarrow$  b2b-реклама, b-to-b-реклама; реклама в местах продаж  $\rightarrow$  POS-реклама; частная марка  $\rightarrow$  private label.

The number of synonyms-variants of the existing well-assimilated terms unnecessarily increases, for instance:  $mовар \rightarrow nродукm$ ;  $VT\Pi$  (уникальное торговое предложение)  $\rightarrow$  уникальное товарное предложение;  $PR \rightarrow \Pi P$ .

In translation practice, transliteration and transcription are often used to transmit many terminological units. These techniques can be regarded as the most appropriate only if the further explanatory translations are followed, i.e. there are definitions of the terms after transliterations and transcriptions. It should be mentioned that this method, on the one hand, leads to the internationalization of the terminological systems; on the other hand, a consequence of this method may be unreasonable borrowing which provokes a shift in the terminological system as a whole.

The most difficult obstacle in the harmonization process, in our opinion, is extra-linguistic interference. The point is that in modern society translators-nonspecialists (on request of the clients-marketologists) or translators-professionals (often on their own initiative) manipulate the semantics of the terms. In the semantic and etymological analysis of the basic terminological units we have identified

some manipulative translation techniques such as artificial narrowing of the term semantics. By studying the functioning of the term *mosap* (*product*) it was revealed some distortion in the modern works on branding: so that *mosap* is just a product of the manufacture but not "all that can satisfy the need or demand and all that is offered to the market ..." as it was in the traditional understanding of the term in marketing.

In analyzing the term VTII (USP) the distortion of the concept by R. Reeves<sup>13</sup> was discovered: so that VTII is laid only at the production stage and can be only a brand with the unique physical properties.

Another manipulative technique can be considered as an artificial extension of the term semantics or increasing the term rank in the hierarchy. Here is an example of the term партизанский маркетинг (guerrilla marketing). The concept of guerrilla marketing was invented as an unconventional system of promotions that relies on time, energy and imagination rather than a big marketing budget. Typically, guerrilla marketing campaigns are unexpected and unconventional, potentially interactive, and consumers are targeted in unexpected places. The objective of guerrilla marketing is to create a unique, engaging and thought-provoking concept to generate buzz, and consequently turn viral. According to Levinson<sup>14</sup>, guerrilla marketing focuses on low cost creative strategies of marketing. Basic requirements are time, energy, and imagination, not money. Sales do not compose of the primary static to measure business but is replaced by profit. Emphasis is on retaining existing customers then acquiring new ones<sup>15</sup>. However, to demonstrate the effectiveness of their marketing approach some Russian specialists in this area promise to use techniques that include much more expenses (including the expensive media advertising). As a result, the conceptual boundaries of the term are diverged.

#### Conclusion

In consequence of the identification of the lexical-semantic difficulties in alignment of the basic terms we came to some conclusions:

Firstly, the failure of the classical demands to the term (systematicity, striving for a clear and unambiguous definitions, the lack of expression), ignorance or poor knowledge of the theory and practice of translation, terminology and terminography and sometimes poor knowledge of the native language leads to the formation and usage of "parallel" new "fashionable" terms-hybrids, loan terms, "term-monsters", the entering of the "new" concepts-doublets into the "professional" scientific and technical sublanguages litters the language and complicates the process of harmonization of the terminological system.

We should, of course, keep in mind that the development of the scientific and technical concepts, especially if it occurs rapidly, is faster than the development of the language. It takes time to adjust to the needs of the language for special purposes. In this case, there is a favorable base for the mass of loan terms that may have the inhibitory effect on the development of the means of words formation in their own language.

Secondly, we must understand that the majority of the terminological units are created on the basis of international vocabulary and morphemes. Therefore, we can often have the illusion of the terminological isomorphism which in fact does not, or we can have an attempt to reconstruct the semantic structure of the term based on the meanings of its morphemic components. Such situations often lead to the inaccurate translations or even serious errors. So during analytical search of the variable translation equivalents we must take into account the motivation of the term just after its etymological analysis. The preference to barbarisms or

neologisms should be permitted only if there is no unified concept of the term or there is a lack of derivational ability of the term to form other parts of speech.

Thirdly, it is necessary to fulfill the goaloriented and constant professional work not only on the terms but on the terminological system. So there is an urgent need for comparative studies of the terminological systems both in semantic descriptions of the term meanings and studying the methods of nomination, productive in different systems of knowledge, as well as the need to develop methods of translating nonequivalent terms. Consequently, we need to develop a set of specific procedures for translating the terminological units from one language into another.

Fourthly, it is necessary to create monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, thesauruses and glossaries not only including the systems of synonymous, hierarchical and other relationships, but also indicating the recommended allocation of the term and manipulative techniques, if there are any

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The term "Unique Selling Proposition" was introduced to a well-known ideologue of advertising Rosser Reeves. In his view, to ensure the success of your campaign, you find such a statement about the product, which competitors can not repeat.

Jay Conrad Levinson (born 1933 in Detroit) is the author of a popular 1984 book "Guerrilla marketing". The first to use the term "Guerrilla Marketing" describing 'unconventional' marketing tools used in cases when financial or other resources are limited or non-existent.[1] Guerrilla Marketing is the best known marketing brand in history, named one of the 100 best business books ever written, with over 21 million sold. His guerrilla concepts have influenced marketing so much that his books appear in 62 languages and are required reading in MBA programs worldwide.

<sup>15</sup> The Free Encyclopedia Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla\_marketing.

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### Терминосистема «брендинг» в русском языке: формирование, гармонизация и перевод

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В данной статье ставится вопрос о лексико-семантических трудностях, возникающих в процессе передачи американской терминологической системы «брендинг» на русский язык. Автор раскрывает понятие «терминологическая система», описывает причины и этапы гармонизации и стандартизации терминов, определяет ряд проблем, связанных с упорядочиванием базовых терминов русской терминологической системы «брендинг» (неоднозначность термина, синонимия, размывание границ термина, дублетность, варваризмы, заимствования, манипулятивные приемы в переводе).

Ключевые слова: терминологическая система, формирование, гармонизация, перевод, упорядочивание, брендинг, американский, русский.