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К ВОПРОСУ О НАЛИЧИИ ЗНАЧЕНИЯ ЛИЧНЫХ ИМЕН

Аннотация

В статье рассматривается вопрос наличия значения у личного имени. Проанализировав теоретические источники по данной проблеме, авторы статьи приходят к выводу, что личное имя имеет значение. При этом, значение личного онима – это комплекс, который включает в себя лингвистическую информацию об имени как о языковом знаке, с одной стороны, и экстралингвистическую информацию об именуемом объекте, с другой. Личное имя – это полноценный языковой знак, семантика которого включает в себя все те же элементы, что и семантика имени нарицательного, однако значимость коннотативного аспекта выходит на первый план, что приводит к своеобразию данной языковой единицы.

Ключевые слова: коннотация, оним, антропономастикон, личное имя, имянаречение.

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ARE PROPER NAMES MEANINGFUL OR MEANINGLESS?

Abstract

The article deals with the question of the meaning of a personal name. The authors of the article after having analysed theoretical sources on this issue concluded that a personal name has its meaning. At the same time, the value of personal onym is a complex that includes linguistic information about the name as a linguistic unit, on the one hand, and extra-linguistic information about the named object, on the other. A personal name is a full-fledged language sign the semantics of which includes the same elements as the semantics of the common noun, but the significance of the connotative aspect comes to the fore that results in the singularity of this linguistic unit.

Keywords: connotation, onym, anthroponomasticon, personal name, naming.

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Introduction

There are a great number of proper names in any language along with common names. Proper names are used to denote a large range of people, objects, places, phenomena, and concepts.

Since proper names perform identification function, it is worth noting that personal onyms are an integral component of human nature or linguistic identity. They characterise it, evaluate, and give an idea of the name – bearer to the recipient.

Onyms remain a controversial subject for many researchers. The main bodies of issues are:

1. the process of name creation and naming;
2. the existence and absence of the meaning of the name;
3. the functioning of the name in language and speech;
4. the semantic structure of the name.

Methods

To achieve the goal and solve a number of specific problems we apply a descriptive method, etymological method, componential analysis, and method of classification. The methods of study are dictated by the specifics of the subject, linguistic material, as well as the goals and tasks of the research study. The direct study of linguistic material was accompanied by partial analysis taking into consideration not only the semantics, but also a wide linguistic and cultural context.

Discussion

The absence of a single common concept of a proper name is largely explained by the difference in initial positions on the semantics of proper names and methods of their study. This fact gave rise to the opposite theories, based on the connection of a name with the concept referring to an object.

John Stuart Mill's point of view that proper names have no meaning is the most traditional and common in linguistics. Referring to Thomas Hobbes, John Mill wrote that the name is a word arbitrarily chosen to serve as a label, which can excite the idea in our minds, similar to the one we had before. A name, being pronounced to others, may be a sign of what thought the speaker had before in his mind. Names are the names of things themselves, and not just our ideas of things [9].

As for proper names, John Stuart Mill believed that if names give any information about the things that they name then they have their own meaning, and it is contained in what they connote, rather than that they name. "The only names of objects, which connote nothing, are proper names, and they have, strictly speaking, no signification" [9, P. 288].

The main thesis of John Mill is that proper names are lack of any signification. The theory of definitions closely relates to it and is a necessary component of the theory of names. Proper names may not have definitions as they do not have connotations. According to John Mill, to be a connotative name means to have a signification.

H. Joseph, as well as J.S. Mill considers names as marks, but they refer to a human and, therefore they have a linguistic meaning. In accordance with Bertrand Russell's theory of descriptions, proper names obtain the meaning through the description, which is associated with the referent (a particular object of reality), and, consequently, the amount of the meaning depends on the scope of description.

John Searle also considers that the names have meanings; he suggested the identification when a specific reference occurs only when using an expression that can inform the listener with the description that is true to one object [10].

Attributes referred to denotatum are disclosed in the practical application of proper names. It can be clearly seen when characteristics of proper names are compared with common names. We perceive such personal names as *Alphonse* (the name of the main character of the drama "Mr. Alphonse" by Alexandre Dumas Fils, which is attributed to any man who allows his mistress to pay for his living expenses), *Romeo, Ruslan and Lyudmila* (the names of the main characters of Alexander Pushkin's first narrative poem,

which moved into adjunction to the category of common nouns in the Russian language area) on the associative background when revealing a large amount of meanings. Moreover, we often associate the names with the names of well-known bearers of a particular name; that means that the name bears stable associations with sample bearers in a national area.

The meaning of the name appears as the amount of characteristics and represents itself as if it were a point of contact in linguistic and extralinguistic context.

The linguistic part of the meaning of onym is the specific character of the existence of the name in the language, its perception, history, and etymology of its appellative base. The extralinguistic part of onym involves the conditions for the name existence in society, cultural and historical associations, the specific relationship between the name and the object being named, as well as the degree of popularity of the name-*bearer*.

Personal onyms as lexical units consisting of a certain set of the semes: a man, sex, ethnicity, as well as they may also have social, religious, and age-related connotations.

Without reference to any particular person all personal names, surnames, patronymic have the same set of characteristics. When anthroponym is firstly mentioned in the text or speech, it points to the number of persons with the same name who, however, belong to a certain nationality, certain generation.

The speaker who uses the personal name in the speech associates the name with the characteristics of the bearers of such a name who are familiar to him/her. The circle of people who are known for the speaker will be united in the social or territorial communities where individualisation of the person – the name-bearer will be implemented.

Therefore, from the abovementioned, we can conclude that the personal name has the meaning. It relates to a particular person and performs its main function that is it identifies the name-bearer; and as a linguistic unit the name stores the information and has a cumulative function.

A significant component of the meaning of the personal name is reduced to the plan of expression. As for the plan of expression of personal names, it has two aspects. On the one hand, it is etymology expressed by a noun, which has been turned into a name and gives it the content; on the other hand, it is lost, rethought, and associatively reinterpreted over time to create a new content.

The meaning of a personal name (the relationship between the name and the meaning) one should not only consider the connection of the name with its bearer (with extralinguistic information), but establish the denotation of the onym.

Extralinguistic part of the meaning can be named by different terms: denotation, designatum, referent, and object.

According to E. Grodzinskiy [2], we may divide proper names into:

- mono-designated – proper names in the ideal sense having only one bearer *(Jesus, Judah)*;

- multi-designated – names having many bearers *(Ivan, German)*;
- undesignated – names of mythological creatures really did not exist *(Voldemort, Dobby)*.

This classification allows us not only to relate onym to one or another group (to identify the bearer) but to determine connotative shades of a personal onym (expressive, emotive, and cultural).

A connotative aspect in the semantic structure of onym does not level but provides it with emotional, expressive, cultural, and social coloration.

The connotation can be freely reproduced and be stable, therefore it can be included in the semantic structure of the word.

We include evaluative, emotive, expressive, and cultural components in the structure of the connotation of personal onyms. These four elements are not a mechanical sum, but they are an interdependent unit.

We can distinguish various components in the evaluative component of personal onyms based on expressive characteristic of the name-bearer:

- personal (diminutive and hypocoristic derivatives of personal onyms). Derivatives combine abbreviated, hypocoristic, diminutive, and familiar names, which are not amenable for a clear differentiation;
- social (a relation to a famous name based on nationwide and group stereotypes) - the American politician said at the press conference that he worked with *Jack Kennedy* and *Joe Califano, Cy Vanse*. This naming of the person is not typical for standard naming, but in this case, they expressed a positive emotional assessment with a touch of familiarity, due to which the speaker emphasized his personal nearness to the mentioned politicians;
- registrative (the use of derivatives in formal and informal situations) - *Rina* Zelyenaya – the full form of the name is *Ekaterina*.

Results

1. In our study, we concluded that a personal name has a meaning. It relates to a particular person and performs its basic function to identify the name-carrier.

2. The specific character of the semantic structure of the personal name defines its specialisation in the identifying function and reveals the main trends in the occurrence of various kinds of connotations.

3. Connotation of the name refers to the wide array of positive and negative associations of the name-bearer. Connotation and denotation are two aspects of onyms. In this case, the connotative characteristics cannot exist without the denotative meanings.

4. Connotation represents the various social and cultural implications, or emotional features associated with the name-bearers.

This study breaks a new ground for a future research of extralinguistic characteristics of personal names especially interconnectivity of connotative meaning with motivation for naming.

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