National and cultural specifics of nicknames based on discourse

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Abstract
This article analyzes the national characteristics of nickname anthroponyms practiced in English and American ethnolinguistics and linguoculture.
The bases of the national-cultural marking of nicknames are determined. Their status in the language and society, in diachrony and synchrony, is described. Their semantics and functional-pragmatic potential are considered. In addition, the article deals with the problems of the modern status of nicknames as secondary unofficial names, which is a consequence of the development of means of linguistic identity of a person in society. The result was a division of anthroponyms into official and unofficial names based on the opposition "primary - secondary".
Key words: English, anthroponymy, nicknames, language and culture, linguistics, ethnolinguistics, national and cultural features

Introduction

Interest in the study of nicknames in recent decades has been manifested by both linguists and representatives of interdisciplinary directions. The article analyzes the linguistic status of nicknames as secondary unofficial names, their grammatical features, cognitive and functional features in a literary text, structural features, semantics and motivation in synchrony and diachrony, sociolexicological aspects. Besides, English nicknames are the object of lexicographic description, translation studies, ethnology and ethnolinguistics, psychology, and sociology.

The categorical features of the concept of nickname and similar nominative units are studied. The features of the semantic structure of nicknames of different motivational types are determined through the analysis of the significative, denotative and connotative components of meaning. A differentiated analysis of the communicative, pragmatic and functional features of British and American nicknames as signs of culture and subculture is carried out. The features of nickname contexts are considered, and their role in the expression of relevant background information in the conditions of Internet communication is determined. The features of nicknames in diachrony related to their status, functioning, and semantic features complete the study.

With all the variety of approaches, the national-cultural and socio-cultural features of English nicknames as signs of culture and subculture have not received a comprehensive and systematic description. Moreover, all of the above aspects cannot be reliably described without taking into account the cultural and social processes in a particular society and in the world as a whole (Bakhtin, 2000).

Many of the nicknames mentioned in the article belong to the 60-80s of the XX century, when tolerance and political correctness did not have a regulatory influence on linguistic personality. Today, the need to take these phenomena into account when studying informal means of nomination is obvious.

In this article, nickname contexts are considered in a form close to oral communication, in conditions that ensure the anonymity of the linguistic personality and freedom of expression of one's own opinion, regardless of the rules of political correctness. At the same time, the Internet discourse is used as a unique source of culturally specific information about nicknames, presented not only in an implicit but

also in an explicit form. British and American nicknames are considered differentially, which allows us to establish universal and national-specific features of two related linguistic cultures. On the other hand, for the first time, the actualization of national-cultural labeling is described on the material of nickname contexts extracted from the English-language Internet discourse. The article examines the Internet discourse as a cognitive and communicative space of a special type, representing current background knowledge in an authentic form, regardless of the requirements of political correctness. The principles of ethnolinguistics with a logical description of nicknames in lexicography are presented to create a linguistic and cultural dictionary of nicknames (Drannikova, 2004).

British and American nicknames have a national-cultural marking, which is manifested in two ways: 1) by reflecting the material artifacts of culture; 2) by reflecting the stereotypes of consciousness. Both aspects form the foundation of current background knowledge in the linguistic and cultural community. The dominant group consists of nicknames associated with the material aspect of culture. The national-cultural potential is manifested in nicknames, depending on the types of motivation. To the greatest extent, it is expressed in categorical figurative nicknames that characterize the named person through its correlation with other objects. The national-cultural marking of anthroponymic etymologized nicknames is manifested in a superficial connection with a culturally significant object on the basis of phonetic associations and etymologization of the meaning of the generating unit. In the anthroponymic nicknames formed by morphological transformations, the national and cultural specificity is expressed to the least extent. The culturally determined features of British and American nicknames in relation to their axiological and evaluative potential are manifested in: 1) the creation of a stereotype about the dominance of positive nicknames (the phenomenon of pseudomelioration); 2) the tendency to neutralize the nickname nomination through the erasure of evaluative semantics. The national and cultural labeling of nicknames in the functional and pragmatic aspect is associated with the spheres of their use and is manifested through such parameters as the stability and frequency of nomination, the hyperbolized role of the emotional and evaluative component. According to these parameters, the spheres of "politics", "sports", "show business" belong to the nationally specific spheres of functioning of British and American nicknames. As a result of the nickname nomination, the person is conceptualized, which consists of the formation of stable ideas about the named. In most cases, the process of conceptualization is distorted. Both distorted and genuine properties of personality concepts form stereotypes and standards of qualities in a certain culture (Karasik, 2001).

The influence of the facultative factor became decisive in the further development of the nickname system, which was reflected in a number of distinctive features of the nickname concept, which became categorical. The optional, secondary status of modern nicknames is manifested in:

1) the absence of its own nomenclature, which is borrowed from the nomenclature of proper and common names;

2) the tendency to constantly replenish the corpus with occasional units (while the only limiting factor concerns a limited number of educational models);

3) a combination of the properties of proper names and common nouns, expressed, in particular, in a combination of the functions of individualization and generalization, assuming characterization.

At the present stage, the categorical features of the concept of nickname reflect its status in the system of nominative means, the type of motivation, functional features. According to these criteria, the concept of a nickname has the following prototypical features:

- other (additional) name of onomastic and (or) appellative origin;

- opposed to the personal as unofficial,
- used instead of or along with the proper name;
- used by relatives or friends;
- expressing close, friendly, informal relationships.

Due to the above properties, this category of vocabulary makes it possible to trace the reflection of relevant cultural background information in the language. A large number of occasional nicknames illustrates the high mobility and openness of the class, which allows us to record new facts about culture and changes in its value component. The usual stable core of nicknames preserves the categorical features of the class and reflects the facts of culture on a micro - and macro-social scale that are resistant to the influence of time or have become historical realities.

Next, the following features of the semantic structure of nicknames of different types are considered. During the analysis of the features of the significative meaning of nicknames, it was found that the linguistic and cultural potential is manifested in these names, depending on the types of motivation (Kulinich, 2000). Motivating features of modern nicknames reflect the main historically established and relatively independent ways of identifying a person in society: name, profession, origin, characteristic features. Thus, nicknames form groups that can be contrasted on the basis of "the ability to characterize an object", forming an opposition of "characteristic" (77 and 80.6%) and "non-characteristic" (23 and 19.4%) nicknames.

The most informative sources of information about culture are characteristic figurative nicknames, indicating stereotypes and standards of the embodiment of a certain quality. Ideas about standards are reflected primarily in nicknames based on the metaphorical principle (metaphor, antonomasia) (Leonovich, 2007). In the course of the study, it was found that imagery and allusiveness are important properties of language units that contribute to the creation of culturally specific meanings at the linguistic level. Along with universal, cross-cultural metaphorical associations, nicknames that reflect imaginary similarities of a person with other objects of the surrounding world often demonstrate patterns of perception and description of a cognizable object in terms that are atypical or peripheral for representatives of other cultures. The tendency to characterization is manifested not only in the dominance of the corresponding group of nicknames but also in the desire to etymologize one's own name when creating an otanthroponym nickname. Thus, nicknames can acquire national and cultural marking at the formal level, which implies a superficial, often accidental connection with a culturally significant object, "inspired" by phonetic associations and based on the desire to etymologize the meaning of the generating unit through the mechanisms of language play. In these nicknames formed by morphological transformations, the national-cultural specificity is expressed to the least extent and is reduced to the typicality of a particular word-formation model for a certain English-language ethnolinguistics. As a result of the consideration of the features of the nickname polysemy and homonymy and the lexical-semantic paradigmatics of nicknames, the existence of a unique lexical-semantic paradigmatic system of nicknames, parallel to the paradigmatic system of generating units, was revealed. This system is characterized by a greater degree of occasional connections and relationships, which largely determines the development of national and cultural meanings in nicknames.

From the analysis of the denotative meaning, it was concluded that the significance and uniqueness of the denotation or its individual properties in linguoculture endow a nickname reflecting these properties with national-cultural labeling and provide it with the status of a denotative reality (Likhachev, 2004).

Based on this, it was found that this potential of nicknames at the denotation level can be manifested through:

1) the primary denotation, i.e. the primary bearer of the name, representing a cultural reality (a culturally specific object or a well-known person);

2) a secondary denotation, i.e. a named person who has the status of a cultural reality due to fame at the level of the macro-society (nicknames of celebrities);

3) primary and secondary denotations, when they are both cultural realities (nicknames of celebrities that represent a secondary nomination referring to precedent phenomena or realities).

Particular importance for the analysis of the nickname as a sign of culture is the consideration of the features of the connotative meaning. In other words, the dependence of the evaluative and ex-pressive-emotive potentials of nicknames on the type of motivation was noted. Thus, characteristic nicknames can have a meliorative, affectionate, humorous, mocking, sarcastic, ironic, pejorative, and offensive coloring, often manifested explicitly through the nickname itself or the nickname context. Quantitatively, humorous nicknames with blurred evaluative expression, aimed at bantering in the conditions of friendly communication prevail (Slyshkin, 2004).

Otantroponymic nicknames are usually neutral in terms of evaluation or express an assessment implicitly, or indirectly. Since the use of anthroponymic transformations is aimed at demonstrating friendly relations or reducing the degree of formality of communication, the implied assessment is often positive.

Stylistically, most nicknames refer to the unofficial sphere of functioning. At the same time, a number of nicknames in relation to celebrities maintain a tendency to move from the informal sphere to the field of semi-official "second" names, reflecting the nickname traditions of the culture and its constituent subcultures. The national-cultural specificity of nicknames at the extralinguistic level is manifested in their functional and pragmatic features.

In the process of addressing the functional aspect of nicknames as signs of subculture (social signs), it was found that the set of functions implemented by a nickname depends on the scope of its use at the levels of the micro - or macro-society. The sphere of existence and the functions of nicknames are formed into a pragmatic situation that determines the type of nickname (the type of motivation, the mechanism of education, and semantic features, including emotive-expressive and evaluative characteristics) (Zalevskaya, 2003).

For nicknames functioning at the level of a microsocium (the spheres "family", "school", "yard", "student collective", "professional collective", "interest group", "military sphere", "criminal world", "pub society"), the integrating, differentiating, status, password, phatic and conative functions are of particular importance. Besides, the nicknames of the macro-society level (the spheres of "politics", "sports", "show business") are distinguished by conceptualizing, propaganda and memorial functions. The differences in the functioning of British and American nicknames in each of these areas are determined by such national character traits as self-irony and irony towards others, emotional restraint, stinginess of praise, emotional openness, restraint in negative assessments, encouragement of the desire for leadership and success, self-presentation in the best light (Kobozeva, 2004).

Assessing the prospects for further research of the national-cultural potential of nicknames, the author considers it important to address such problems as:

- the phenomenon of political correctness and its influence on the choice and use of informal anthroponymic names;

- nicknames-anthroponyms and American cowboy culture;

- the types of discourse in which the implementation of the monstrous contexts takes place;

- the role of nicknames and nickname contexts in the process of conceptualization of personality; the construction of the concept of personality through nicknames; the role of nicknames in the formation of identity;

- the allusive potential of nicknames; nicknames and precedent phenomena;

- the figurative potential of nicknames; groups of metaphorical and metonymic nicknames;

- linguistic and cultural description of nicknames in lexicography; compilation of a linguistic and cultural dictionary of nicknames of English-speaking cultures;

- regional and national similarities and differences of nicknames of English-speaking countries;

- comparative analysis of linguistic cultures (British, American, Russian) through the nickname nomination;

- nicknames as part of the cultural picture of the world and the carnival picture of the world.

- regularities of the functioning of nicknames in multinational collectives;

- nominative, pragmatic and national-cultural features of unofficial names of inanimate objects;

- the influence of political correctness on nicknames and unofficial names of inanimate objects of various types;

- the pragmatic potential of nicknames-endonyms and nicknames-exonyms

In addition, the specificity of nickname names as a moving part of the onomasticon determines the need for continuous work to collect the studied units. The inclusion of this resource in the study can help clarify the concept of nicknames in modern culture and will allow us to compare the features of the functioning of nickname contexts in various types of discourse: formal, informal, oral, written, artistic, documentary. The cognitive features of the nomination are particularly evident when comparing a person with representatives of flora and fauna and with inanimate objects. The most frequent models of metaphorization include the following: "man is an animal world", "man is a household object"," man is a technique"," man is a means of transportation"," man is a weapon"," man is a weather phenomenon"," man is a plant world","man is a geographical object". Depending on the dynamism or static nature of the objects, the nicknames of a particular group may reflect the external or internal characteristics of a person. Above, when analyzing connotative realities, the national-cultural specificity of zoomorphism nicknames was shown, associated with their ability to reflect such human properties as character, behavior and physical abilities, as well as aspects of appearance, which gives them special value as sources of information about national stereotypes (Chernobrov, 2008). The names of natural objects, objects surrounding a person in everyday life, usually reflect the external similarity of the named and the corresponding object: Jug, Teapot (ears), Peanuts (bald), Ginger (red hair), Pickle (low growth) – BrE; Lunchbox, Garbage disposer, Pillow (fullness), Pumpkin (red hair) – AmE.

Most nicknames derived from the names of sweets are used to express a generally positive assessment (affectionate nicknames). This model is especially popular in American culture: Jellybean, Cookies, Cakes, Candy. The description of the character and behavior of a person through the prism of weather and natural phenomena is based on such properties of these phenomena as unpredictability, danger, force, inevitability, and impetuosity. Thus, there is an intensification of such signs as quick temper, irritability on the one hand (Volcano) and courage, physical strength, and energy, on the other (Flame, Tornado, Hurricane). Nicknames derived from terms related to weapons and similar items, as well as military concepts and qualities, symbolize aggression, danger, strength, a source of physical pain (Tank, Dynamite, Torpedo, Battleship, Jigsaw, Hammer), speed (Bomber, Tank, Bullet), unbalance

(Shellshock, Dynamite), bright appearance (the Blonde Bombshell). The perception of a person's mental and physical abilities and capabilities as a kind of mechanism, a device that accurately performs its work, is manifested in the corresponding group of nicknames. Such nicknames are common in the sports field. At the same time, the names of types of transport and means of transportation are used to characterize speed, and speed (Scooter, Jet), often in combination with strength and impetuosity (Bus, Train). The accuracy and technicality of actions is emphasized through the nicknames Automatic (List of North American football nicknames), Digital (Soccer NickNames), Radar (Famous Mormons in Golf).

Inexhaustible power, human energy in various spheres of mental and physical activity correlates with performance and power as properties of mechanisms, engines, generators and other objects, phenomena and concepts from the field of energy: the Human Joke Machine (TV Acres), Tower of power (Soccer NickNames), Megawatt (Soccer NickNames), Dr. Kilovolt (Huff) (Fox, 2004). The examples given reflect the most typical metaphorical models of the nickname nomination, although they do not exhaust all their diversity. Speaking about the ability of metonymic names to express national and cultural meanings, it is important to note that the nature of the connection between the two designated somewhat limits their ability to act as cultural signs. However, in some cases, the connection between the two objects is not always obvious, and their interpretation may seem more difficult than that of metaphorical nicknames. Depending on the complexity of the motivating feature, metonymic nicknames can be used as concise and capacious labels of situations: Jethro < "playing Jethro Tull records at full volume" (Funniest Nicknames) -BrE; Carol < "I like singing Christmas carols" (Nicknames - Xenith Forums) - AmE. The national-cultural specificity of nominative units can manifest itself in other means of imagery, such as irony, and paronomasia. As a result, these nicknames become one of the most striking ways to create an entertaining, carnival effect: Crenshaw had occasional bursts of temperature on the course, and his "Gentle Beri" nickname was given to him sarcastically (Kelley) (Morgan, 2009).

Also, at the semantic level, nicknames reflect the connection with culture through allusion to groups of culturally marked objects, among which the dominant:

1) a real or existing person (28.8 and 35% of the total number of allusions), actors, musicians and singers, athletes, politicians, public figures: Marley (dreads like Bob Marley), Babe Ruth (physical data), Prince Charles (protruding ears), Honest Abe (honest). Politicians ' nicknames are often based on allusions to famous historical figures, reflecting the specific qualities of representatives of this sphere of activity, in particular, dictatorial tendencies (Shankle, 2005).

2) a character of a work of art, including legends, fairy-tale and folklore texts (25.7 and 19.5 %). At the same time, most modern nicknames are characterized by allusions to characters that are additionally popularized through movies, cartoons, etc. Several nominative units for nicknames are borrowed from a number of works at once, which indicates the importance of certain texts in culture. For example, in both British and American cultures, nicknames referring to the fairy tale of F. are frequent. Baum's "The Wizard of Oz", established the status of a precedent text thanks to the famous film adaptation by Victor Fleming: Haircut(hairstyle), Wicked (<Wicked Witch of West), Munchkin (affectionate nickname; small stature). At the same time, the nickname context can serve as an additional way to update the relevant precedent text:

Mythological and biblical characters in the current nickname contexts of Internet discourse are quite rare (5.5-5 % of the total number of allusions), while they reflect allusions to well-known precedent names: Aphrodite (ugly), Goliath(tall), Hercules (strong) (Paxman, 2007).

3) the hero of a cartoon, comic book, feature film, as well as a TV show (28.3 and 31 %). The popularity of such nicknames is explained by the influence of the mass media and the virtual media environment on the nature of actual background knowledge in the language consciousness of modern native speakers of the language and culture. This is facilitated by the principles developed by the American mass media to maintain the popularity of the product through its exploitation in various genre forms of video products. Among the most frequent sources of nicknames are cartoons produced by the film studios "Walt Disney", "Warner Bros.", animated series ("Ice Age", "Peanuts", "The Powerpuff Girls", "SpongeBob SquarePants", "Scooby Doo!", "The Smurfs"), series about superheroes ("Spiderman", "Superman", "Batman"), science fiction ("Star Wars", "Star Trek"), TV shows ("Muppet show") (Stone, 2016).

It is noteworthy that the characters of animated films for kids that cause emotion for adults often serve as sources of children's family nicknames: Chunky Monkey, Scooby, Bubbles, Charlie Brown, Peanut. Most of the nicknames referring to this group of fictional characters are based on their typical external characteristics: the Mecop (big head, greenish skin tone like an alien from the Eagle Comic), Penguin (resemblance to the hero of the Batman series), Smurf (small stature, blue color of jewelry), Jabba The Hut (fullness), Egghead (head shape), Noddy (ears). Nicknames can also contain an allusion to geographical objects (6.2 and 5.3 %), and well-known brands (5.2 and 4.2 %) (Taylor, 2016).

Conclusion

Many nicknames are based on allusions to precedent texts of a supranational nature. At the same time, a significant proportion of nicknames reflect precedent phenomena known only to representatives of Anglo-American culture, and many phenomena acquire mutual fame, popularity and relevance in the two analyzed cultures. This shows the interpenetration of cultural images, and the commonality and closeness of the two cultures, enhanced by the expansion of the media space. The logical conclusion of the research is the compilation of a linguistic and cultural dictionary of nicknames, which is planned as a comprehensive reference guide that combines information related to the national and cultural specifics of English nicknames with information about the objects and phenomena of the described culture, which are directly or indirectly reflected in nicknames. In the future, it is promising to study the nominative, pragmatic and national-cultural features of nicknames of inanimate objects; to identify regional and national similarities and differences of nicknames of English-speaking countries; to describe the patterns of functioning of nicknames in multinational collectives.

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