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Peculiarities and problems of eponyms (on the material of Kazakhstani periodicals)

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Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to collect eponyms from Kazakhstani political periodicals 2011–2017 years. We used distance method which means to read, analyze and collect eponyms as units of investigation. Moreover, we used quantitative method in order to count eponyms. The authors arrive at a conclusion that given several peculiarities make eponyms unique and eponyms must be written with capital letters because of anthroponyms, but if the word goes through metonymical process the new eponym must be written with small letters. They recommend to use them frequently in the future in daily conversation and scientific life.

Key words: eponyms, anthroponyms, toponyms, periodicals.

Peculiaridades y problemas de epónimos (en el material de periódicos kazajos)

Resumen

El propósito de este trabajo de investigación es recopilar los epónimos de los periódicos políticos kazajos 2011-2017 años. Utilizamos el método de distancia que significa leer, analizar y recopilar epónimos como unidades de investigación. Además, usamos un método cuantitativo para contar los epónimos. Los autores llegan a la conclusión de que, dadas varias peculiaridades, hacen que los epónimos sean únicos y que los epónimos se escriban con mayúsculas debido a los antropónimos, pero si la palabra pasa por un proceso metonímico, el nuevo epónimo debe escribirse con letras minúsculas. Recomendamos usarlos con frecuencia en el futuro en la conversación diaria y la vida científica.

Palabras clave: epónimos, anthroponyms, toponyms, publicaciones periódicas

1. INTRODUCTION

At the present time in many branches of the sciences, we have a huge number of terms. They become casual and we use them regularly in our speech. Of course, people do not think about them, especially where they come from. One of them is an eponym. There are a number of scientists, linguists who dealt with eponyms such as (Trahair, 1994; Boycott, 1983; Novinskaya, 1989; Leichik, 2007). Trahair points out that:

Eponyms begin with a name, and the name is usually that of a person. Sometimes people give their own name to an item, and sometimes others do it in their honor. Most eponyms come from people who are living and lived some time ago, but others are based on a fictional character, a legendary hero, or even a monster (1994: 17).

Boycott (1983: 423) mentions “An eponymous word is one that has entered the English language because of a person or that person’s deeds”. According to Marciano (2009:14) “An eponym can also be a word that explodes into the language because of who a person is or what he or she has done, often to that person’s dismay”. Podolskaya (1978: 11) says that “Eponym – famous person’s name whose name is the main reason of creating another one” . Shubov (1964: 6) “Eponyms imply terms derived from proper names”. Thereby, we understand that in order to be in the category of eponyms, those people should be famous in the sphere of science, literature, arts, politics and others. However, Trahair (1994) also points out that “In the social sciences, many eponymous events are associated with the names not of people but of important places”. All these definitions show that eponyms can be derived not only from anthroponomy, but also from toponyms.

Most eponyms come from politics; economics yields many technical and theoretical eponyms; and religion provides a vast source. In the social sciences, many eponymous events are associated with the names not of people but of important places.

According to Leichik “An eponym in the past had stressed on the second syllable and was named after myths, Gods or sacred places

who/which did not have any relationship to them” (Leichik, 2007: 22). But in the past eponym meant another meaning and there was another stress. To be more exact on the second syllable eponym, not on the first syllable like EponYm and EpOnym.

Let me give some examples:

- a) Athens (ancient Greek God);
- b) Sequoia (in honour of Indian mentor);
- c) Poseidon (God of water);
- d) Narcissus (son of Ephesus, very handsome God).

All these examples show that eponyms were created due to some legends, familiar, holy people. But in fact, they did not have a direct link to eponyms. People at that time thought it would be great if they put the name of God names to ancient towns, places. As a result, they would develop as they keep the name of great people or personages. There is also one more example, Pythagorean Theorem in mathematics. But this person did not discover this theorem. This theorem was used after the life of Pythagoras. But ancient people thought it would be correct to name the theorem in honor of him. As we understand before 18 century, the term had different stress and the objects of the term were an outstanding people, great things, events and others. So, people did not pay attention to the thing that was renamed, they paid attention to the person, thing that was put to the places, things. But in the middle of 18 century a tremendous number of

scientists who discovered new types of diseases, notions, inventions and as a result the terms were named after scientists who discovered them (Starichenok, 2008). Therefore, the object of investigation moved from the mythical names to the real names. Some examples are below:

a) Parkinson's disease;

b) Koch bacillus;

c) Downs syndrome.

Day by day new terms appear in our life. Lots of them are loan words. But they have some peculiarities and problems. We investigated some newspapers and tried to find some peculiarities that make eponyms unique. It is quite important to identify the essence of eponyms. Because some researchers confuse eponyms with precedent names therefore, the first task is identifying, collecting and demonstrating peculiarities of eponyms. In the process of defining peculiarities we faced with some existed problems of eponyms.

2. METHODOLOGY

We investigated several Kazakhstani political periodicals such as Zhas Alash, Zhas Kazakh, Egemen Kazakhstan, Novoe pokolenie (New generation), Central Asia Monitor 2011-2017 years and tried to find eponyms, identify their peculiarities and problems. In order to collect we used distance method which means to read, analyze and collect eponyms as units of investigation. Moreover, we used

quantitative method in order to count eponyms. Generally, we collected 200 eponyms. As we investigated periodicals there were a huge number of texts. That is why we used discourse analysis. Let me give some very frequently used eponyms that we found in periodicals:

- Parkinson disease;
- Nobel Prize;
- Alzheimer's disease;
- McDonalds;
- Bermuda triangle
- chauvinism;
- Ebola;
- Shammellenberg virus;
- Buddhism;
- Higgs boson;
- Diesel;
- Stalinism;
- Bates method.

Diachronic method is the method that considers the development and evolution of a language, phenomenon through history. In order to know is the name of a person or a place, we examined the history, etymology of eponyms. First of all identify the semantics and examine the peculiarities of them. Then descriptive method is used to depict eponyms, what do they mean, do they have negative meanings or positive meanings. Would like to mention that eponyms derive from many other onyms, but they mostly derive from

anthroponyms and toponyms. That is why in this work we deal with anthroponyms and toponyms, how eponyms are formed from them.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a result of investigation, we identified several peculiarities of eponyms:

1. When there are many new discoveries, there will be necessity to name them. Thereby, there will be new terms, things named after people or places. It means new eponyms.
2. Eponyms mostly must be written with capital letters. Because they are composed of proper names (anthroponyms), for example, Downing Street (residence of PM in UK). Downing is the name of a person.
3. But eponyms which have undergone metonymical process, they are written with lower case. Because in this case we forget about the name of people, mostly we think about or have an association about certain things. In a word, when we hear such eponyms we have association about one event. They become terms or even words that we use in our daily life. For instance, boycott, nicotine (Jean Nicot de Villemain), sandwich (John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich), chauvinism (Nicolas Chauvin), colossal (Rhodes Colossus), mausoleum (King Mausolus). Chauvinism, Nicole Chauvin was a French soldier in the Napoleonic era and was an exaggerated patriot of his nation. He

believed in his nation's superiority. That means fanatical devotion to your nation. Nowadays, in many political issues it has a negative denotation and a negative associative meaning. But when we are talking about chauvinism we do not think about is it from anthroponym or toponym. We accept it as a term or just at least a word. The main point here is that eponyms which went through metonymy process, are written with lower case. And one more fact is that it is a time-consuming process for eponyms to write down them with lower case because those should stick in people's minds.

4. From periodicals we understand that eponyms they are concise and facilitate conveying information to the audience. For example, we faced with eponym Alzheimer's disease. This term is popular and not only people in the field of medicine, but just ordinary people can understand that it means problems with memory and brain aging. Therefore, instead of writing above-mentioned definition, it is very easy to utter or write Alzheimer's disease.

5. One of the very important peculiarities of eponyms is its memorial feature. Eponyms are created in order to save someone's name. Eponyms are formed due to people who worked for the prosperity of sport, medicine, literature, politics, economy and others. So they keep their names as a keepsake for many years or even for centuries. For instance, Nobel Prize (in

honor Alfred Nobel). Thereby we arrive at a conclusion eponyms are language monument.

6. Eponyms are international. The word boycott is derived from an economist Charles Boycott. They are very similarly pronounced in almost all countries:

- boycott Dutch
- Boykott German
- boykot Filipino, Danish, Turkish
- бойкот Bulgarian, Russian
- boikott Indonesian
- boikots Latvian
- boikote Portuguese
- boikott Estonian, Norwegian
- boicot Catalan, Romanian, Spanish
- бойкот Kazakh

7. Eponyms are divided into high motivational and low motivational (Novinskaya, 1989). Motivational means that a person straightly dealt with the discovery. Whereas in contrast, low motivational do not have any relations to discover, just was put by other people. For example, McDonalds is high motivational. Brothers McDonalds set out their business and become world renowned due to their business. Another example, Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. It is high motivational. Because two ministers of foreign affairs of the USSR and Germany signed this act about peace between countries. But

Pythagorean Theorem is low motivational because he did not have direct relation to the creation of this eponym.

8. Every nationality has different writings concerning eponyms. Some countries write with capital letter, but some not. For example, in American periodicals they write mostly with capital letters. The word Putinism is written with upper case in American periodicals, however in Russian and Kazakh with lower case. We think that in American periodicals authors would like to make an accent on this term and make more colorful, vivid. But in Russian and Kazakh no need to underline, because it is without any exaggeration clear that Putinism is very strong economic policy.

9. Eponyms might be idioms or phrasal verbs. For example, in Kazakhstani periodicals (in Kazakh and Russian language newspapers) there were eponyms as follows:

- Cross the Rubicon. It means to pass a point of no return and refers to Julius Caesar's army's crossing of the Rubicon River in 49 BC. So these eponyms named after Rubicon.
- Achilles' heel. According to Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary "Achilles' heel – is a small problem or weakness in a person or system that can result in failure" (Cambridge dictionary, 2013: 104).

- Sisyphus work. It is the hard work that has no result. The work that is done in vain. It derives from the ancient Greek personage Sisyphus.

- Pyrrhic victory. According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's dictionary "Pyrrhic victory – a victory that is not worth winning because the winning has lost so much winning it"(Cambridge dictionary, 2013: 804). That means a victory gained at too great a cost. It derives from the king Pyrrhus of Epirus gained such a victory over the Romans in 279 BC at the battle of Asculum in Apulia.

- Trojan horse. Merriam Webster gives such kind of definition "someone or something intended to defeat or subvert from within usually by deceptive means"(Merriam-Webster dictionary, 2003: 899). Trojan horse was an enormous wooden sculpture in the shape of horse and inside of it were soldiers. At night they got out of it and killed lots people. The eponym (idiom) derives from the city (country) Troy (Starichenok, 2008).

10. Eponyms are also formed from abbreviations. In Kazakhstani periodicals (both in Kazakh and Russian language newspapers) we faced with the following eponyms:

a) KapJap (Kar Lag). In Kazakhstan when it used to be a part of the Soviet Union there was a prison. It was a terrible prison, because lots of people died there. And this

prison was located in Karaganda. Karaganda is the city which is located in the central part of Kazakhstan. There was a tendency to call it shortly as Kar Lag (Karagandin's prison). In many archives it is called Kar Lag. So this eponym comes from toponym Karaganda.

b) АЛЖИР (ALZHIR). It was also a kind of prison in Akmola in Soviet Union. This city is located in the northern-central part of Kazakhstan. ALZHIR stands for Akmola prison for motherland betrayals' wives (Akmola camp wives traitors). So these eponyms derives from toponym Akmola.

11. Eponyms are the tool of increasing lexicon or nominative units of scientific vocabulary. And they make scientific language more clear, brief and scientific-oriented.

Problems of eponyms:

1. When we talk about eponyms we forget about in honor of who / what these eponyms are created. We do not think are they from anthroponyms or toponyms. It might be one of the peculiarities, but we consider it as a problem of eponyms. We tend to forget about names of scientists and linguists, because the object of investigation is mostly events discoveries. That is why we forget about the subject who has discovered eponyms, for example, Koch bacillus. Here, we have an association about the bacterium that causes tuberculosis, not the scientist Koch. We think how this bacteria has a detrimental effect on human beings. The word boycott, we have an association that it is to refuse to buy, to use and to protest

against something. It became a word and no idea about a person Charles Boycott.

2. One more problem is its controversial issue, do eponyms have to be famous or non-famous. We think that it is not necessary for eponyms to be famous or world-renowned. Because in medicine there is a huge number of eponyms that we do not know, some diseases, cure, processes and others. Let me give some examples, Edelman's syndrome (medicine), Eden's treaty (history), Edinger's nucleus (medicine), Durham rule (Law). Lots of people have no idea about what they are or who they are. But they are eponyms, because they have anthroponyms as structural elements. We have demonstrated a number of peculiarities and problems of eponyms based on the Kazakh periodicals. It is given briefly in Table 1.

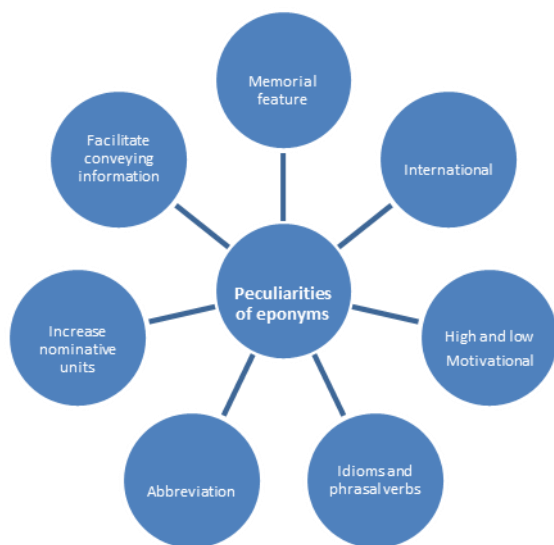


Figure 1. Some peculiarities of eponyms

4. CONCLUSION

We have discussed some peculiarities and problems of eponyms that collected from Kazakh political periodicals 2011-2017years. Several peculiarities are given in Table 1. All these peculiarities and even problems make eponyms unique. We automatically use eponyms in our life and we need them to make our daily life speech and scientific language more vivid, understandable, briefly. But it does not necessarily mean that they should be Metalanguage of science. After doing research, we arrive at a conclusion that eponyms:

1. They are formed by 2 ways a) through adding personal names (anthroponyms), place names (toponyms) and in this case eponyms are with the capital letters (Parkinson disease); b) through metonymy process, eponyms are written with small letters (Boycott).
2. It is welcomed if eponyms are world-renowned. But it is not an obligation. The main point here is that a term must take a name of a famous scientist, person.

We want to say that in the future we must use eponyms regularly, because if we do not use, possibly they will become an onyponymous. As a result, no one will know about them. An eponym is the language memorial or language heritage that we must pass from one generation to another generation. Moreover, we need to know the etymology of eponyms, at least some crucially important eponyms and

use them frequently in our daily or scientific speech. Thereby, we solve the problem of eponyms that was brought up in this article.

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