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"THE NOTION OF SYMBOLIC PROPER NAMES IN MODERN LINGUISTICS"

The meaning of the word is the main problem which linguistics investigates. In every language there are a lot of words which have lost their primary meaning and are used symbolically. It often happens with proper names. Such words are spread all over the world, they penetrate from one language to another through literature, history and of course culture.

Our article deals with symbolically use of proper names in modern English. On the modern developmental stage of linguistics, investigation of its main trends in the historical discourse we can't but refer to the very sources, to the profoundly entire foundation on which the modern linguistics and country study are undoubtedly dependent. Thus the increasing interest towards such units as *toponyms* is quite obvious. The problem of investigation of cultural component of the word meaning, embodied in the very entity of toponyms-symbols is of actual importance nowadays.

Toponyms (the names for geographical objects) set the certain place in the studying of the background knowledge of the particular language speaker and cultural background. First of all they are the names of the country objects, while speaking about the particular speaker they reflect predominantly the places where the person lives. By the lingo-historical approach to the cultural heredity of the language speakers, the object of the investigation comprises only that particular field of the geographical names, which is an indivisible part of the so-called 'background' knowledge. And in this case the toponyms are investigated not only in their direct meaning (signaling the object), but also in complex with those culturally historical associations, which they have already undergo in this specific lingo-ethnic community.

The very information that the proper names carries, very often determines the national coloring of the language. As well it serves the source of the certain association, necessary for the comprehension of the object needed to mark. Toponyms serve as the illustrative example of the given information since they carry the portion of knowledge about the exact geographical position of the object and besides the random characteristic of the traditions, customs, individual points of the ethnical unity of the background knowledge, accumulated in the recess of the speaker's mind.

E.g.: **American Workhouse** – 1.the name given by the taxi drivers of London to the Park Lane Hotel, because of its great popularity among the American wealthy tourists.

Arcadia – 1.the country on the Peloponnesians, the middle mountainous part of Ancient Greece; 2. idyllic places for innocent enjoyment; 3. the peace coast; the happy life without troubles.

Atlantis – 1.the legendary island sunk to the bottom of the ocean; 2.the splendid dreamy country.

Looking-for Atlantis: 1. the searches of Atlantis; 2.hard attempts to make some discoveries.

Olympus – 1.the name for the mountain in Greece; 2.the placement of Gods (from the Greece myth) 3.carefree life.

Hell – the Kingdom of the underground (the place where live the souls of the people, who have died of natural death).

Gethsemane – the garden near the Jerusalem, where Jesus Christ was first arrested – the place of the great soul suffering.

Wall Street is the street in London where the famous stock exchange is located; as well it denotes the financial capital, financial oligarchy;

Samson- 1.a male name 2.from the Bible 3.strong man;

Boniface- kind-hearted man;

Canterbury – 1.a town in Great Britain 2. "Canterbury Tales" by Geoffrey Chaucer; 3 very long dull stories;

Romeo – 1. a male name; 2. young fellow in love 3. a kind of shoes.

It is interesting to note that in some occasions the initial and principal meaning of the toponyms (the signaling for the geographical object) reevaluates and the information concerning the psychological, social and some other characteristic sets the major place, thus toponyms acquires the symbolic meaning and becomes toponym-symbol. The comprehension of such toponyms-symbols forms the basic peculiarities of the understanding the very objects marked by such symbol. The background knowledge is the necessary condition of the adequate understanding of the text with the nationally cultural coloring. We can provide some vivid examples:

Cocaigne – the land of fairy tale, which is generally associated with the wealth and prosperity.

Golgotha – taken from the Bible – the name of the place served for the sufferings and tortures of the peoples.

The major criteria according to which we select the toponyms-symbol is their actually in the massive everyday conscious of the average language speaker. Only those toponyms are selected which are the indivisible part of the background knowledge.

The actuality of the toponym-symbol for the modern linguistic consciousness is conditioned not only the size of the object, but more its role throughout the discourse of the historical development and its place in the system of the background knowledge. Its employment in the modern life is of extreme importance for the toponym, for example the culture of the modern world often successfully interlaces with the reality of the past since it mirrors the main objects having undergone the specific culturally historical associations.

The actuality of the culturally valuable toponyms- symbols is tightly connected with the ability of the certain toponym-symbol to participate as reality, i.e. the facts, closely connected with the national character of the country, governmental peculiarities or its natural characteristics, history and culture of the given nation.

E.g.: **Shangri-La** – the kingdom of Paradise, the Heaven on the Earth.

The Big Smoke – the name of the big city, especially the name of the London.

New World – 1. The New World in general, America; 2. American Western hemisphere.

The usage of toponym is employed on the different levels and language spheres. Toponym is predominantly used in the geographic literature and in the materials, in which the strict localization of the events is needed. The frequency of the toponym usage depends on the social knowledge. The greatest part of all the geographical names still remains unknown even in terms of one and the same nation, the inhabitants of the of the country hardly know 3-5% of the street names, the names of squares, parks, etc., the toponymy of which exists but still preserves the large percent of the inexplicable ignorance among people.

Thus, for example the word **Panama** was transferred on the word, denoting the small cap, used in summer time, besides new word **Panama** came into usage, denoting ‘Big Crime’; it also has one more meaning- the kind of material of the artificial silk. **Yorkshire** is the breed of the big swine, named after county Yorkshire in England where this breed was originated. **Madeira** is the sort of the wine as well. **Westminster** the district of London and the English Government at the same time.

Thus, as can be seen from the examples above the toponyms may undergo the symbolic meaning under the certain circumstances, at the same time preserving the major properties of the object proper name, or in other occasions turn into appellatives.

To sum up we must say that being the indivisible part of the background knowledge of the humanity, the toponyms-symbols, indisputably present the greatest interest for the linguistic researches, thus belonging to the vast sphere of the lexicology and linguistic called linguistic country study. They are so-called containers of the information based on the social and cultural experience of the humanity.

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