

NON-NORMATIVE ETHNONYMS AND INFORMAL TOPONYMS AS MEANS OF VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS

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Abstract: The paper considers the questions of abuse expressed by means of verbal aggressiveness. In modern linguistics verbal aggressiveness is meant as the form of aggressiveness in terms of psychological injury basically involving verbal speech components such as invective, abuse and the like. The paper also defines verbal aggressiveness types and gives some examples of lexical items of aggressiveness provided by linguistic research of Surgut state university scientific-educational linguistic centre. On the other hand, the paper touches upon the problem of non-normative ethnonyms and informal toponyms' study as lexical means of verbal aggressiveness. It is known that ethnonyms used for expressive and negative evaluation of the representative of this or that ethnic group are defined as non-normative ethnonyms, toponyms used in colloquial language are identified as informal toponyms.

Keywords: Verbal aggressiveness, non-normative ethnonyms, toponyms

INTRODUCTION

The Relevance of the Study

The relevance of linguistic research of verbal aggressiveness is principally conditioned by the need of conflict communication research, prospects for verbal aggressiveness linguistics development, and defined by the problems of ideological use of a language and language changes connected with them. Studying the "hostility language" developed in a modern political discourse and the role of expressive etnonimes in formation of this language belongs to urgent linguistic problems.

Modern Problems in Linguistic Research of Verbal Aggressiveness

Attempts to define the concept "verbal aggressiveness", its systematization and classification have been undertaken for a long time. According to Yu. V. Shcherbinina "... challenge of defining the concept "verbal aggressiveness" is, first of all, that this phenomenon cannot be considered the only one form of behavior reflecting the only one intention. This term is used in relation to various speech actions, which can be very non-uniform as for their intention, manifestation situations, forms of the verbal embodiment, intentional orientation and therefore cannot be more adequately defined by means of such generalized concepts as "pathogenic communication", "negative speech impact", "speech roughness", etc. [Shcherbinina 2006: 14].

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In linguistic research verbal aggressiveness is meant as the form of aggressiveness in terms of psychological injury basically involving verbal speech components such as invective, abuse and the like. D. Infante and C. Wigley defined verbal aggressiveness as “a personality trait that predisposes persons to attack the self-concepts of other people instead of, or in addition to, their positions on topics of communication” [Infante 1986: 61].

What’s more in linguistic research verbal aggressiveness classification, proposed by an American psychologist A. Bass, is widely used. In 1976 A. Bass suggested 4 types of verbal aggressiveness:

1. Verbal active direct aggressiveness (direct verbal abuse or addressee’s humiliation);
2. Verbal active indirect aggressiveness (malicious slander or gossip circulation);
3. Verbal passive direct aggressiveness (denial to speak with an addressee). In this case an addresser intentionally keeps silence in order to show his aggressiveness towards an addressee: an addressee is unworthy to get an answer;
4. Verbal passive indirect aggressiveness (denial to give any definite verbal explanations, to speak up for an undeservingly criticized person) [Baron 2001: 29].

According to the results of linguistic research verbal aggressiveness expresses itself through lexes of aggressiveness. Lexes of aggressiveness are words and word combinations used to express aggressiveness either in written or oral speech. Lexes are used for realization of aggressiveness potential in a symbolic form as they are verbal or textual symbols. There are some widely-spread categories of lexes used in the conflict situation:

- obscene words against an addressee;
- insupportable charges;
- any words with changed intonation demonstrating aggressive intentions;
- false evaluations of a person and exaggerated claims about his/her weaknesses;
- intentionally unpleasant words expressing doubts concerning an addressee’s intellectual and physical abilities;
- improper comparisons of an addressee and his/her relatives with animals and material objects;
- any words expressing evaluation of feelings caused by another person;
- threats and curses.

Verbal aggressiveness can be both explicit and implicit. Explicit verbal aggressiveness is shown by obvious intention to cause a communicative injury to an addressee, “speaker’s illocutionary goal is directly manifested” [Kobozeva:

<http://evartist.narod.ru/text12/08.htm>] and is expressed in apparent pejorative words (abusive and offensive language). On the other hand implicit verbal aggressiveness is systematic and pejorative pressure upon an addressee, but without open manifestation of hostile emotions.

Verbal aggressiveness is always used for the express purpose – to insult. We mean by an insult any word or expression containing the offensive characteristic of an addressee. When insulting “the communicative pressure upon the personality occurs through some impact on his/her sphere of values” [Klyuev 2002: 12], i.e. using the verbal and aggressive act of an insult, an addresser gains a dominant position. The intended insult is the consciously directed verbal aggressiveness; an addresser purposefully chooses the right words for detraction and expressing obviously contemptuous evaluation.

Moreover, researchers discuss a lot the reasons of verbal aggressiveness, “among which there are:

1. the hostility to the object of aggressiveness caused by a group of subjective, objective or situational reasons;
2. provocative actions on the part of the object of aggressiveness, including aggressive verbal behavior;
3. violation by the object of aggressiveness of conceptual and situational norms of communication, unacceptable for a communicator;
4. the low level of speech and communicative culture of the subject of the statement” [Yakimova 2011: 188].

Markers of verbal aggressiveness can be found at all levels of language: word-formation, lexical, syntactic, stylistic, etc.

It is suggested that non-normative ethnonyms and informal toponyms can be lexical means of verbal aggressiveness. Many researchers are studying different types of ethnonyms (R.A. Ageev, A.C. Arhipova, E. Bartminsky, O.V. Belova, L.E. Berezovich, D.P. Gulik, V.B. Kashkin, I.M. Kobozeva, T.A. Sirotkina, G.A. Haburgayev, A.V. Chernykh, V.N. Shaposhnikov, etc.). Substantial body of research focus on ethnonyms on a wide ethno cultural background in ethno linguistic aspect from the point of view of ethnic stereotypes realization. Studying the “hostility language” developed in a modern political discourse and the role of expressive etnonimcs in formation of this language belongs to urgent linguistic problems. In order to characterize ethnonyms used for expressive and negative evaluation of the representative of this or that ethnic group various terms find their way in modern national linguistics: “nicknamed ethnonyms” (E.L. Berezovich, D.P. Gulik), “ethnic invectives” (V.I. Zhelvis), “pejorative ethnonyms” (A.S. Arkhipov), “expressive ethnonyms” (A.I. Grishchenko, N.A. Nikolin), national and racial insults / pejorative words (V.I. Karasik), “ksenethnonyms” (S.V. Svirkovskaya), “non-normative ethnonyms” (L.P. Krysin, A.S. Polyakov).

As some researchers (L.P. Krysin, A.S. Polyakov) consider, this language phenomenon goes beyond a literary norm, representing “some kind of a painful abscess on the body of the modern Russian language but the analytical scalpel of the linguist should not avoid abscesses like this one: studying of non-normative ethnonyms will help to define their place in the system of lexical means of the Russian language, their social and stylistic potential, and also – broader – their place and role in the national policy of the state” [Krysin 2015: 56]. Non-normative ethnonyms, unlike official ones, always have only negative evaluation which is transferred from a particular person to the whole ethnic group, “generating corresponding and open contemptuous colloquial ekzononims and, thereby, ground forming of the inadequate attitude towards the whole nation, with its ancient and original culture” [Nabok 2011: 64]. Non-normative ethnonyms refer to invective language. What’s more some researchers (O.N. Matveeva) classify them as national-invectives what directly indicates their function in speech: an invective is “in the narrow sense of the word the way of existence of verbal aggressiveness perceived in this social group or subgroup as sharp or tabooed. In a bit different foreshorten the verbal violation of an ethical taboo which is carried out by uncodified means can be called an invective “[Zhelvis 2000: 198]. Thus, non-normative ethnonyms represent “one of the means of stirring up national hatred” [Polyakov 2013: 2].

As for toponyms, besides official ones, lexicalized in reference books and maps, there are also those which are, as a rule, used in colloquial language. Modern linguists call them localisms, regionalisms, regional dialects, usual naming units, informal regionalisms, toponyms-nicknames, urbanisms, etc. We will call the toponyms used along with non-normative ethnonyms as means of verbal aggressiveness, informal ones.

In linguistic research and expert reports you have to face the active use of invective language. Linguistic research show the materials put forward to Surgut state university scientific and educational linguistic centre contain obscene words, offensive non-normative ethnonyms and informal toponyms. Analyzing non-normative ethnonyms and informal toponyms, there is a need for their interpretation, classification, a way of derivation. When carrying out linguistic research we rely on non-normative ethnonyms classification offered by A.I. Grishchenko and O.S. Korobkova. This classification based on etymology allows distinguishing unmotivated expressive ethnonyms (usually borrowed ones) and expressive ethnonyms motivated by different features. Being guided by the principle of non-normative ethnonyms and informal toponyms frequency, we will consider only those which are practically not fixed by modern lexicography, having left beyond the scope of this article such non-normative ethnonyms as *zhid*, *hach*, *moskal*, *khokhol* which can already be found in standard dictionaries. The examples of non-normative ethnonyms and informal toponyms are given in original spelling of the analyzed language material.

From the word building point of view the ethnonym “*zhidyara*” is a derivative ethnonym. Word-building cutting is peculiar to slang in general (especially youth slang) including the building of non-normative ethnonyms. The ethnonym “*zhidyara*” is formed by means of suffixation without stem cutting: *zhid* + *yara*. The non-normative ethnonym “*zhidonegr*” or “an ethnic nickname” is the ethnonym, motivated by racial feature reflecting the idea of appearance and built by compounding (an ethnonym + an ethnonym). Both elements comprise a contemptuous evaluation component.

The ethnonym “*slovak*” indicates a semantic way of word building from the literary normative ethnonym “*slav*”, non-normative ethnonym “*slavyashka*” is not motivated by ethno stereotypes, its motivation is likely to be only by word building. The suffix -*shk(a)* from the etymological point of view is a compound one. It includes the diminutive-hypocoristic suffix -*k*- but gives to the word some familiar neglect connotation. Moreover, the ending -*a* indicates the contemptuous and pejorative form of use. It is curious that a number of suffixes connected with the category of common gender belong to pejorative and caressing ones. By adding a diminutive suffix the contemptuous connotation is given to the word.

The ethnonym “*urus*” represents a foreign-language ethnonym borrowing. The word with the connotation “Russian” is the general one for the Turkic languages and remains in them. In the context studied neutral emotional connotation of the borrowed ethnonym changes into a sharply negative one.

The ethnonyms “*ruzkeyane*, *ruzke*” are formed by scornful falsification in writing in order to give negatively evaluated connotation to a lexical meaning. Such ethnonyms are not a consequence of the author’s illiteracy, but his negligence to representatives of the ethnic community.

The ethnonym “*rusnya*” is formed by means of the suffix -*n*-. The suffix -*n*- is the word-building unit forming nouns with the meaning “a group of people, called by the motivating noun” is added to the cut to the root stem of the word “Russian”. The words formed on such model are getting scornful or even contemptuous connotation as the attitude to the whole group excludes perception of the group members separately. The speaker negatively perceives the whole group in general and discriminates it.

The ethnonym “*rashist*” is formed from the informal toponym “*Rasha*” by calquing from the English language word “Russia” (Rossiya). The suffix -*ist*- forms nouns with the meaning of a person belonging to some institution, a profession, a certain public direction.

The materials provided for research often contain informal toponyms “*Moskvabad*”, “*Churkistan*”, “*hachastan*”, “*Khokhlyandiya*”, “*erefiya*” which are word building derivative toponyms. The informal toponym “*Moskvabad*” is formed by portmanteau (according to O.S. Korobkova’s classification) by combining two

expressions or similar forms or their elements: *Moscow + bad* (cutting of a stem of the toponym Ashgabat). The semantic motivation of formation of this informal toponym is used for detraction of the city and has obviously contemptuous evaluation as it is meant that in the capital there are a large number of migrants from Central Asia.

The lexemes “*Churkistan*”, “*hachastan*” (contemptuous – a field label in lexicography about the countries of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Transcaucasia) are also formed according to this word-building model: *Churki / hach* (non-normative ethnonyms) + *stan* (cutting of a stem of the toponyms Tajikistan or Turkmenistan, or any other toponyms with the similar cut stems). The semantic motivation of formation of these informal toponyms is used for detraction and abjection of the existing official toponyms that is strengthened by using in them non-normative ethnonyms. The toponym “*Khokhlyandiya*” represents the colloquial, nonstandard or playful name of Ukraine.

The toponym “*erefiya*” is formed from the abbreviation of “*RF*” and represents word building derivative toponym which is not motivated by an ethnic stereotype and is used pejoratively.

It should be noted that “the aspiration to lower the social status of an addressee or level of his/her self-assessment, to cause moral loss is the cornerstone of invective communication. Secondly, the practical aim – to achieve the change of behavior of an addressee – through an insult and offense can be pursued” [Zhelvis 2001: 23]. The use of national-invectives used as an insult, humiliating honor and dignity of an addressee, also highlights such communicative strategy as discredit.

Today there are still a large number of problems in studying of non-normative ethnonyms. One of the main, in our opinion, is the question of non-normative ethnonyms lexicographic recording. We support the colleagues’ opinion on the necessity of creation of non-normative ethnonyms special dictionaries: “Non-normative ethnonyms are very frequency in uncodified kinds of language – an informal conversation, a substandard language, slang, jargon, and also in some printing and electronic modern mass media, and therefore they need dictionary representation with an explication of their semantic, selectional, stylistic and pragmatic features” [Krysin 2015: 47-48].

As we see verbal aggressiveness in communication has been studied to examine the underlying message of aggressive behavior and to gain control over occurrences. Verbal aggressiveness is thought to be mainly a destructive form of communication that has a negative impact on relationships.

However a paramount task for modern linguists, psychologists, political scientists and specialists in communication is the development of mechanisms of cooperation in situations of conflict communication and search of the constructive solution of communicative tasks. Therefore, studying of non-normative ethnonyms

and informal toponyms as linguistic means of expression of verbal aggressiveness will promote the prevention of the communicative conflict escalation and formation of tolerance and harmonization of speech communication in modern geopolitical society.

METHODS OF STUDY

This data was collected with the following groups of research methods: text and contextual analyses, componential analysis, and descriptive method, morphological, lexical (dictionary) and stylistic analyses.

The Experimental Base of the Study

The research was conducted during 2012-2016 years. It includes content put forward to Surgut state university scientific and educational linguistic centre for linguistic research. The data for study was represented by texts from printing and electronic mass media i.e. some information containing obscene words, offensive non-normative ethnonyms and informal toponyms from social networks, criminal cases and others. During the research about 500 non-normative ethnonyms and 150 informal toponyms were analyzed.

CONCLUSION

Taking into consideration the results of this research, we shall note that non-normative ethnonyms and informal toponyms as lexical means of verbal aggressiveness are widely used in invective conflict communication. This is the reason why studying of language tolerance problems in the conditions of modern global world, when cross-cultural communication becomes not only a necessity but

a lifestyle as well, has theoretical and practical importance. Summing it up, we make a conclusion that such research help to improve techniques of overcoming verbal aggressiveness and technologies of effective speech communication.

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