The Main Features of Onomastic Units in English Epics

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*Abstract***:** *Onomastics is a branch of linguistics that studies any proper names, the history of their origin and transformation as a result of long-term use in the source language or in connection with borrowing from other languages.*

Key words: Onomastic, linguistics, epic, mythology, proper names, folk tale.

Onomastics is a branch of linguistics that studies any proper names, the history of their origin and transformation as a result of long-term use in the source language or in connection with borrowing from other languages. Onomastics helps to introduce people to traditional universal values and introduces them to the history of the language and the people. Proper names act as a key to understanding mentality and recreating information about the life of the ancestral generation based on linguistic information. Literary critics pay considerable attention to proper names in the works of individual writers. Special onomastic studies of names in works of art can give a lot to both literary critics and linguists. The evolution of anthroponymy in literature is a broad process associated with the evolution of social conditions, political trends, etc. Parallel to it, in the work of each author, there is a process of changing his attitude to the events described, the evolution of images, and at the same time the names of his characters. Sometimes names in a literary work serve to create "Aesop's language". A special problem in literary criticism is the coincidence of names in the works of different authors and names repeated in different works of the same author. The transposition of the plot position taken from another author, its transfer to another setting and social environment is so great that without the "suggestive" (AA Reformatsky) role of proper names, all this would be difficult to uncover. Thus, onomastics as a special linguistic discipline turns out to be associated with a complex of humanities, as well as with the sciences of the Earth and the Universe. All of them, helping to identify the specifics of named objects, and at the same time the status of the name, turn out to be auxiliary to linguistics, the methods of which Onomastic studies are being conducted. At the same time, linguistics turns out to be an auxiliary, applied discipline for historians, geographers, literary critics, archaeologists, etc., helping to extract non-linguistic (historical, geographical, etc.) information from the analyzed names.

Proper names in a literary text form a special subsystem with its inherent system-forming mechanisms, as well as patterns of functioning. Their role is quite strictly defined: "1) they serve as a textual milestone – they designate the main (main) characters; 2) create a rich onomastic background; 3) act as an identification mark of an optional nature; 4) contain important features of the implementation of the national and cultural component of the work".

Onomastic space is understood as the sum of proper names that are used in the language of a given people to name real, hypothetical and fantastic objects. Accordingly, the onomastic space of an artistic work (OSAW) should be considered the totality of all the poetonyms that occur in an artistic work. The boundaries of onomastic space in poetic onomastics can be expanded by combining works of art according to a certain genre or time slice. It is possible to outline the onomastic space of artistic the works of one writer or a group of authors. A broader understanding of the boundaries of onomastic space is provided by the analysis of the totality of the poetonyms of a particular national fiction. The limit can be considered the description of the OSAW the entire world of fiction, which is acceptable, most likely, as a theoretical assumption. But in any case, the onomastic space of fiction retains a sign of secondary importance in relation to national onomastic spaces, which is reflected in the presence of distinctive features in them with a certain similarity. The onomastic space of an artistic work acts as a subsystem of a general figurative system, on the one hand, and on the other hand, it reflects the specifics of the author's work, genre and style differences, the correlation of the content of an artistic work with the epoch of the image and the time of creation of the work, etc. The OSAW is clearly manifested in the analysis of epic works of art or several small works by one or a group of writers.

Mythological onomastics as a set of proper names of supernatural beings is a significant constituent of the onomastic space. Being a heterogeneous formation, it traditionally splits into the areas of theonymy and demononymy in accordance with the sign of belonging of the bearer of the name to one of the hierarchical levels (higher or lower) of the mythological system (the systemic status of heroes and, accordingly, the totality of linguistic means of their individualization has not received an unambiguous interpretation. This article examines the structural features of the proper names of characters belonging to the oldest system of folk ideas about the universe. The names selected from four collections of English folk tales [3-6] are classified according to the characteristics of the appearance, habitat, habits and activities of mythological characters. Individual proper names (IS), according to researchers of English folklore (K. Briggs, E. Gillian, J. Simpson, S. Roud), occupy an intermediate position between different groups mythonyms (the Cauld Lad of Hilton) or may refer to more than one group of mythonyms (Puck).

Thus, the onomasticon of the English folk tale contains the following groups of mythonyms denoting:

➢ Brownies and goblins (Hedley Kow, Koo, the Bogey-Beast, Bogie, Hobyah, Boggart, Brownie, the Cauld Lad of Hilton);

➢ elves and Pixies (Scantlie Mab, Habetrot, Elfin, Robin);

➢ Giants (Blunderbore, Thunderdell, Galligantua, Cormoran, Giant Skillywidden, Grumbo);

➢ dragons (Knucker, Laidly Worm,

Dragon, the Lambton Worm);

➢ Will-o'-the-Wisps (Jacky-myLantern, Will-o'-tha-Wyke);

➢ Mermaids (Madgy Figgy);

➢ Other supernatural beings

(Banister Dolls, the Dead Hands, Crawling Horror, the Quick, Gabriel Ratchets).

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Bargest, Brownie, Bogle, Bogie, the BogeyBeast). In some cases, the appellative may be accompanied by a toponym that restricts the habitat of the creature (the Boggart of Hellen Pot, The Bargest of Grassington, the Cauld Lad of Hilton).

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related to the names of ancient Germanic gods Thor and Thunor, or Thonar), and traces Scandinavian influence, representing elements of Scandinavian beliefs (the synonymized common name Ettin is correlated with the lexeme Jötunn (Jotun), which in Scandinavian mythology is the name of giants). The analysis of the mythonyms of this group gives reason to say that the naming of giants serves as the most important means of their individualization and is most directly related to the mythological ideas of people about the world and the forces of nature beyond the control of ancient man. Their semantics characterize the appearance, behavior, habits, temperament and partly the loci of these fabulous characters. The nomination of dragons is usually limited to the use of common names knucker, dragon, worm, sometimes in combination with a toponym – its habitat (The Knucker of Lyminster) – or an attributive associate (Laidly Worm). Appellative knucker / Nucker goes back to D.A. Nicor "the dragon; the water monster" . The noun worm has the meaning "snake; serpent; dragon" characterized as obsolete. Mythonyms are the names of will–o'-the-wisps, like most of the previous examples, by their origin they are common names. The text material contains several dialect variants of IS: Jacky-my-Lantern, Jackwith-the-Lantern, Will-o'-tha-Wyke. The composition of the mythological name includes the nouns lantern and wyke (the latter is probably a geographically limited version of LES wisp "a bunch, a clump (of straw, hay)" [10]), reproducing folk ideas about a will-o'-the-wisp as a creature with a twinkling light in his hands, calling tired travelers after him. The fairy tale depicts a stray light as one of the household spirits living on the roof of a sheepfold and feasting on fresh milk. As can be seen from the above, the names of household spirits, fairies and giants are most fully represented in the fabulous onomasticon. The frequency of occurrence and the methods of nomination of the listed groups of characters vary depending on the area of distribution of the folklore source. In particular, a pronounced tendency towards the individualization of giants is typical only for text materials belonging to counties bordering Wales. The most traditional way to form mythonyms is to use common names in the individualizing function, accompanied by an additional feature indicating the location of the creature or any distinguishing characteristics. The widespread use of euphemistic or descriptive names indicates deeply rooted prohibitions and taboos in the popular consciousness, primarily related to animistic beliefs.

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