WUT 2020

10th International Conference "Word, Utterance, Text: Cognitive, Pragmatic and Cultural Aspects"

SPECIAL ASPECTS OF FORMATION OF THE FAMOUS PUBLIC MEN SURNAMES

E. M. Lyapkova (a)*, N. M. Ziazeva (b), V. V. Bachurskaya (c)
*Corresponding author

(a) Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russian Federation, elvira_l@mail.ru
(b) Tayandi Secondary School, Tayandi, Chelyabinsk Oblast, Russian Federation, bukvad@mail.ru
(c) Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russian Federation, nuagette@mail.ru

Abstract

This article examines a special layer of anthroponyms in French and Russian, namely the surnames of famous statesmen of France and Russia. The relevance of the study is due to the fact that the naming of a person, especially a social leader, allows to characterize his/her personality and activities, serves as one of the markers of phenomena occurring in the modern society life, and also reflects the linguistic processes that are inherent in our historical period. The subject of this study is the main ways of formation of the French and Russian political figures surnames. The authors also study the most characteristic for the respective languages trends of functioning of this type of naming in the media. The study of the special aspects of the formation of surnames allows us to trace the motives of choice and the reasons for the preference of some forms over others and, accordingly, to explore different spheres of native speakers life. In addition, the article offers an analysis of the classification of existing surnames, which is based on two criteria: formation method and techniques, on the one hand, and semantic content, on the other. The determination of the frequency of using the surnames with positive / negative connotation in French and Russian languages and the analysis of all the results obtained let us finally get an idea not only about a particular historical period, but also about the linguistic worldview formed at this time.

1. Introduction

People's surnames refer to unofficial anthroponyms, which are one of the most active vocabulary layers in all languages of the world. At the same time, the attention of researchers is drawn rather to surnames created by authors in their literary works. Meanwhile, person's naming, being an important cultural component of the language system, serves to characterize a person and his/her activities, which becomes especially important when it comes to statesment.

2. Problem Statement

Surnames of public personalities of the XX-XXI centuries are one of the markers of phenomena occuring in the modern society's life. In addition to the general characteristics of the individual, they also serve as a reflection of the language processes that are inherent in our times.

3. Research Questions

Surnames are the language tools that make it possible to translate a large semantic and emotional content, which can be both positive and negative, into an extremely concise form.

3.1. Relevance question

This study is intent on proving that surnames are relevant to a particular historical period or social group, and that there may be a connection between the popularity of a politician or public person and the number of his/her surnames.

3.2. Attitude question

Besides, the study of the evaluative connotations of public figures' surnames present in different cultures, for example, in French and Russian, may be the result of different attitudes to the authority in general.

4. Purpose of the Study

The study of the surname creation will help to give an idea of the motives of choice and the reasons to prefer one form over another, so with that we can explore certain areas of people life. In addition, it is useful to make a statistical analysis of surnames used by the media in order to identify patterns of their formation and functioning in connection with their qualitative content. In this article, we focus on the study of surnames of French public men. The study of surnames of Russian famous people will be the next stage of this work.

5. Research Methods

The study analyzed the surnames of the most famous people in France, found in such French titles as "Figaro", "Le Monde", "Libération", "Humanité"and others. A total of 81 units of unofficial names taken from the French press were examined.

6. Findings

Surnames add an element of evaluation to our speech, and emotional connotation can range from humiliating and dismissive to ironic and affectionate.

In all the variety of existing surnames, we can distinguish several of the most characteristic semantic groups (physique, height, facial features, profession, character, mental abilities, social status, etc.) (Matiiv, 2016).

Surnames of public figures are a special class of speech units that perform the function of highlighting, individualizing, and characterizing a person (Guznova, 2016). Their origin, their meaning and connection with the society's life, with all the worldview and beliefs of people, with the nature around us, as well as the metamorphoses that occurred with them during different historical periods, can interest scientists in various disciplines – history, political science, sociology, as well as other researchers of public life of the country, since the surname is a reflection of the situation (cultural, political, economic) that is characteristic of this historical period, and also serves to highlight the features of a particular ethnic group as a cultural form (Koval'chuk, 2016).

6.1. Stylistic and morphological techniques to form surnames

The variety of surnames is determined by the presence of a large arsenal of stylistic and morphological devices and other techniques that help create several bright, accurate, memorable surnames that clearly characterize public figures and not always on the upside (Vishnyakova & Aleksandrova, 2017).

- **Consonance**

The name of a public figure can make play the consonance with the first or second name of a well-known person, both real: *Sarkoléon* (Nicolas Sarkozy) – Napoleon, an Emperor of the french; *Nicolae Sarkuşescu* – Nicolae Ceauşescu, a Romanian communist politician and leader, and fictional: *Petit Nicolas* (N. Sarkozy) - after the hero of the series of books for children by René Goscinny (Schuck, 2015).

This may be a consonance of some political reality: *Tsarko* – (Nicolas Sarkozy) - Tsar, which may reflect the evaluation of the activity of this political leader.

- **Abbreviation and truncation**

In modern French, this method of word formation is one of the most important for adding vocabulary. At the same time, the initial abbreviation: *VGE* (Valérie Giscard d'Estaing), which is neutral in nature, is quite rare. On the other hand, there are diminutive forms - lexical abbreviations - that often have a touch of familiarity, are used much more often. For example, here we are an apocope: *Valy*

(Valéry Giscard d'Estaing); *Suzy*, *Sarko* (Nicolas Sarkosy); *Charly, Charlie* (Charles Pasqua); *Chi* (Jacques Chirac).

In addition, the doubling is used in combination with apocope: *Chichi* (Jacques Chirac); *Mimi* (François Mitterrand).

- ▪ **Wordplay**

The wordplay is a very expressive method of creating a surname, which reflects both the assessment of a person's activity and his/her personal qualities, presented in an ironic form.

Often a surname is formed by using a rhyme: *la Mouche de Bush* (Nicolas Sarkozy); an antithesis: *Courage Fillon* (F. Fillon), based on the word-group "Courage, fuyons!" (Le top 10 des surnoms les plus loufoques des politiques, 2015) and a consonance: *AméricNain, Notre Saigneur* (Nicolas Sarkozy).

There are also cases of deliberate misspelling, when the wordplay is stylistically motivated by the context: *Chirouette* (J. Chirac), where inconsistent economic policy and non-fulfillment of election promises are played out (girouette- weather vane), as well as *Castoipovcon* (N. Sarkozy) - in this case, there is a reflection of the pronunciation using the spelling of his famous phrase "Casse-toi, pauv' con !" (Le dico des surnoms et sobriquets, 2017).

- ▪ **Circumlocution**

The process of paraphrasing is based on the internal property of the language, which is the ability to express the same content in different ways. Circumlocution not only denotes the previously mentioned object (or person), but also characterizes it, highlighting one of its features that is relevant at this point in the story. Various periphrastic expressions are aimed at presenting a new dimension of perception, which is relevant, in particular, for the socio-political text.

Among French surnames, there are two-component circumlocutions: *Herr Blabla*, as well as multi-component circumlocutions: *Le meilleur ami des puissants* (N. Sarkozy) (Le Bart, 2000).

Figurative periphrasis based on descriptive reflection of personality characteristics is more common when creating surnames: *La seule personne du singulier* (N. Sarkozy), *Bête de Vosges* (Ph. Séguin); *Monsieur pièces jaunes* (Fr. Hollande) (Revol, 2013).

There are circumlocutions with the logical character of the nomination, which acquire a pronounced evaluative aspect and ironic color: *Ministre des affaires qui lui sont étrangères* (Ph. Douste-Blazy), *Monsieur Royal* (Fr. Hollande as the companion of S. Royal).

The study identified a fairly large group (6 cases) of periphrastic surnames, based on the principle of using a title to refer to a particular person: *Vicomte* (Ph. Le Villepin); *Prince* (Mitterrand). The same group includes such names as *Son Altesse Sérénissime* (N. Sarkozy) and *Sa Courtoise Suffisance* (E. Balladur) (Top 10 des surnoms des personnalités politiques, 2016). The surnames *Dieu* (Mitterrand) and *Le Saint* (J. Tiberi) are also similar in formation.

In general, surnames formed on the basis of circumlocution are the most numerous group among the studied examples. Most periphrasis perform an evaluation and explanatory function: *Mickey d'Orsay* (Ph. DousteBlazy), *Chouchou de Bruxelles* (N. Sarkozy), *Mister Nobody* (F. Fillon), *Notre-Dame de Paris* (B. Delanoë) («Babar», «tonton», «sphynx»... Ces curieux surnoms des hommes politiques, 2018).

Periphrasis also contributes to the author's self-expression, since it carries a subjective assessment of the object (person) or situation.

▪ **Metaphor**

The metaphor is a fairly frequent stylistic device for forming surnames for French public figures.

We have simple metaphors based on the similarity of some physical characteristics (this includes almost all surnames from the "Appearance" group): *Nain, Golum* (N. Sarkozy); *Menhir* (Fr. Fillon); *le Vieux* (Mitterrand), and we also observe several cases of using an expanded metaphor: *l'obèse en ville* (Ph. Séguin).

Quite often, a public figure is metaphorically called by the name of some other person. This phenomenon reflects the process of understanding and evaluating the activities of a politician, his/her personal qualities, line of policy etc.: *Néron* (Dominique De Villepin); *Brejnev, Sadam Hussein bis* (Jacques Chirac), *Mozart de la finance* (Emmanuel Macron) - in these examples, real political figures of different historical periods served as prototypes (Présidentielle. Les surnoms donnés par la presse étrangère à Emmanuel Macron, 2017).

Along with it, a fictional character can also be used as the basis for a metaphor: *Rastignac* (François Mitterrand); *Al Capone* (Jacques Chirac) (Béraud, 2017).

▪ **Metonymy**

The use of this device is not very frequent and reflects the social and political performances of a public person: *Bouldozer* (J. Chirac); *l'Ex* (Vallery Giscard d'Estaing), or his/her personal characteristics: *le Jardinier* (J. Chirac got this surname because of his hobby), *Alain "Amstrad" Juppé* (Amstrad is the brand of computer, an allusion to some callousness of character), *Le Pingouin* (Fr. Hollande), *Flanby* (this surname of F. Hollande came from the name of the French jelly dessert) (Biffaud, 2018).

Consequently, a wide variety of devices and methods can be used to form surnames for public figures: at the same time, stylistic devices are more popular than morphological ones. A possible reason is the peculiarities of the functioning of this layer of vocabulary in an environment saturated with emotional connotation.

6.2. Content basis of naming

It is also interesting to determine what constitutes the content (semantic) basis of naming. This analysis allows us to understand what exactly the surname contains: an assessment of appearance or political and social performances, an allusion to predecessors or other historical and literary personalities.

In the French press, there are not many surnames formed directly from proper names (16 cases). These names, most often, have a familiar connotation: *Mon Jean* (J. Tiberi), and are a diminutive form of the proper name: *Suzy* (N. Sarkozy).

The most numerous in French is a group of surnames that reflect the evaluation of the personality of a public or political figure (25 cases). Most often, these forms of surnames are mocking, dismissive: *Yoyo* (L. Jospin); *Mickey d'Orsay* (Ph. Douste Blazy), *Capitaine de pédalo* (F. Hollande). They are alsoironic, oftensarcastic*: la Seule personne du singulier* (N. Sarkozy); *le grand Balamoucchi* (Ed. Balladur), *Guimauve le Conquérant* (F. Hollande), whichisoftenexpressed in an forcedrespectfulname: *Le Marquis* (Ed. Balladur), *M. le Dauphine* (J. Tiberi).

Quite a large number of surnames of French personalities (18 cases) includes an assessment of the person's activity: *Notre Saigneur* (N. Sarcozy), those surnames also reflect certain events related to this

person: *Bouldozer* (J. Chirac), *l'Ex* (V. Giscard d'Estaing), features of the line of policy elected by the figure: *la Mouche de Bush* (N. Sarkozy) (De quels surnoms les politiques sont-ils affublés?, 2018).

Not often found among the surnames of politicians is a nomination for appearance: *le Crabe* (Nicolas Sarkozy). A much larger number of surnames contain historical (political) allusions (14 cases). There are also surnames based on the position of a public figure.

7.   Conclusion

So, in general, French surnames have a quite negative assessment of the personality of a public figure, fixed in this type of naming. We can distinguish their very sharp and sarcastic nature. Probably, this is due to the attitude general to the authority.

7.1. Relevance conclusion

Linguistically, one of the features of surname formation characteristic of recent decades is the extensive use of the abbreviation technique, which is likely to be fixed in the language, since it demonstrates a common feature of the language of modern mass media.

One of the main sources for creating surnames in French culture is official naming. At the same time, the surname is similar in terms of functioning to the offensive name, which is caused, perhaps, by the active political and public position of the population of France.

7.2. Attitude conclusion

Changing the attitude to the government as a whole, entails changes in the interpretation of the role of a particular person, a re-evaluation of his/her activities, which should affect the process of formation and functioning of names of public figures. However, for this type of analysis, we should use the most vivid, ambiguous historical persons.

In conclusion, we can say that the study of surnames is of interest not only for linguists, but also for political scientists, sociologists, historians and other researchers of public life of the country, since the surname is a reflection of the situation (cultural, political, economic) that is characteristic of this historical period, and also serves to highlight the features of a particular ethnic group as a cultural entity.

References

«Babar», «tonton», «sphynx»... Ces curieux surnoms des hommes politiques [«Babar», «tonton», «sphynx»... These curious surnames of politicians] (2018, October 17). Retrieved from https://www.lefigaro.fr/langue-francaise/expressions-francaises/2018/10/17/37003-20181017ARTFIG00044-babar-tonton-sphynx-ces-curieux-surnoms-des-hommes-politiques.php

Béraud, A.-L. (2017, November 29). Jacques Chirac fête ses 85 ans: Connaissez-vous ces cinq anecdotes sur l'ancien président? [Jacques Chirac celebrates his 85th birthday: do you know these five anecdotes about the former President?]. *20 minutes.* Retrieved from https://www.20minutes.fr/politique/2177683-20171129-jacques-chirac-fete-85-ans-connaissez-cinq-anecdotes-ancien-president

Biffaud, O. (2018, October 16). Juppé, du «meilleur d'entre nous» au plus mal aimé d'entre eux [Juppé, from the «best of us» to the most unloved of them]. *Slate.* Retrieved from

http://www.slate.fr/story/156374/politique-juppe-meilleur-entre-nous-mal-aime-droite-rpr-ump-les-republicains

De quels surnoms les politiques sont-ils affublés? [What surnames are policies adorned with?] (2018, October 23). Retrieved from https://www.bfmtv.com/diaporama/de-quels-surnoms-les-politiques-sont-ils-affubles-3138/le-point-godwin-pour-le-fur-1/

Guznova, A. V. (2016). Prozvishcha kak mikroantroponimy: differencial'nye priznaki [Surnames as micro-anthroponyms: differential features]. *Baltijskij gumanitarnyj zhurnal, 3*, 36-39. Retrieved from https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/prozvischa-kak-mikroantroponimy-differentsialnye-priznaki

Koval'chuk, S. S. (2016). Harakternye osobennosti frazeologicheskih prozvishch obshchestvenno-politicheskih deyatelej v anglijskom i nemeckom yazykah [Characteristic features of phraseological surnames of public and political figures in English and German]. *Vestnik Severnogo (Arkticheskogo) federal'nogo universiteta, 5*, 108-115. Retrieved from https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/harakternye-osobennosti-frazeologicheskih-prozvisch-obschestvenno-politicheskih-deyateley-v-angliyskom-i-nemetskom-yazykah

Le Bart, Chr. (2000). Nommer les hommes politiques : identités prescrites, stratégiques, polémiques [Naming politicians: prescribed, strategic, controversial identities]. *Mots*, *63*, 127-133. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.3406/mots.2000.2210

Le dico des surnoms et sobriquets. (2017). Hatier: Paris.

Le top 10 des surnoms les plus loufoques des politiques [Top 10 most wacky political nicknames] (2015, October 25). Retrieved from https://www.closermag.fr/politique/bernard-cazeneuve-francois-hollande-le-top-10-des-surnoms-les-plus-loufoques-des-politiques-569169

Matiiv, T. Z. (2016). Termin prozvishche i ego primenenie v onomasticheskih issledovaniyah [The term surname and its application in onomastic research]. *Izvestiya VGPU, 8*, 116-119. Retrieved from https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/termin-prozvische-i-ego-primenenie-v-onomasticheskih-issledovaniyah

Présidentielle. Les surnoms donnés par la presse étrangère à Emmanuel Macron [Presidential election. Nicknames given by the Foreign Press to Emmanuel Macron] (2017, May 07). Retrieved from https://www.courrierinternational.com/article/presidentielle-les-surnoms-donnes-par-la-presse-etrangere-emmanuel-macron

Revol, M. (2013, April 10). De Flanby à Pépère : tous les surnoms de Hollande [From Flanby to Pépère: all the surnames of Hollande]. *Le Point.* Retrieved from https://www.lepoint.fr/politique/de-flanby-a-pepere-tous-les-surnoms-d-hollande-10-04-2013-1653042_20.php

Schuck, N. (2015, October 25). Les petits surnoms des politiques [Small nicknames of politics]. *Le Parisien.* Retrieved from http://www.leparisien.fr/politique/les-petits-surnoms-des-politiques-25-10-2015-5216825.php

Top 10 des surnoms des personnalités politiques [Top 10 nicknames of political figures] (2016, March 11). Retrieved from https://www.linfo.re/magazine/people/650204-top-10-des-surnoms-des-personnalites-politiques

Vishnyakova, O. D., & Aleksandrova, V. A. (2017). Antroponimicheskoe prozvishche kak indikator ocenochnosti v politicheskom diskurse [An anthroponymic surname as an indicator of evaluation in political discourse]. *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta, 2,* 70-81. Retrieved from https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/antroponimicheskoe-prozvische-kak-indikator-otsenochnosti-v-politicheskom-diskurse