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XI

**ВСЕУКРАЇНСЬКА
НАУКОВА КОНФЕРЕНЦІЯ**



СОЦІАЛЬНО-ГУМАНІТАРНІ АСПЕКТИ РОЗВИТКУ СУЧАСНОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА

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Матеріали

**МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ
СУМСЬКИЙ ДЕРЖАВНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ
ФАКУЛЬТЕТ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ ФІЛОЛОГІЇ
ТА СОЦІАЛЬНИХ КОМУНІКАЦІЙ**



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**МАТЕРІАЛИ ХІ ВСЕУКРАЇНСЬКОЇ НАУКОВОЇ
КОНФЕРЕНЦІЇ СТУДЕНТІВ, АСПІРАНТІВ,
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До збірника увійшли наукові матеріали, присвячені актуальним проблемам сучасного перекладу, етнолінгвістики, стилістики, методики та методології сучасних мовознавчих та літературознавчих дисциплін. Складовою збірника є наукові розвідки з питань релігії та культури, соціальних і міжкультурних комунікацій, психологічної теорії та практики, соціологічних досліджень.

Для викладачів закладів вищої освіти, аспірантів, студентів, учителів загальноосвітніх шкіл, гімназій, ліцеїв та коледжів, усіх, хто цікавиться питаннями соціогуманітарного напрямку.

Матеріали друкуються в авторській редакції.

8. Joanne Kathleen Rowling. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's stone. URL: <https://docenti.unimc.it/antonella.pascali/teaching/2018/19055/files/ultima-lezione/harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone>.

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A GLIMPSE OF HISTORY AND TODAY'S PERSPECTIVES

In everyday communication, the onomastic lexicon plays a crucial role in facilitating reference and disambiguation. Whether in interpersonal interactions or written texts, the use of proper names helps individuals identify and track specific entities within a given context. Moreover, proper names serve as markers of identity, allowing individuals to assert their distinctiveness and uniqueness in social settings. The nominations of places, organizations, products, etc. also carry symbolic significance, often reflecting the nation's cultural values and historical legacies.

Paying due tribute to the topicality of researching proper names from the *interdisciplinary* perspective, which constitutes the mainstream of modern scientific research, this paper aims to explore the theory of proper names by delving into its historical development and discussing the key concepts of Onomastics in contemporary debates.

The study of proper names traces back to philosophical inquiries of ancient Greeks (280-207 BC) who initiated the distinction between *proper names* and *common names*, claiming that the Latin term '*nomen proprium*' (= a '*genuine name*') means a name more 'authentic' than other names. Plato and Aristotle developed this idea,

though in different ways. Plato, in his dialogue «Cratylus», discussed the relationship between words and their referents, suggesting that names possess an intrinsic connection to the essence of the named objects. Aristotle, on the other hand, emphasized the conventional nature of names, viewing them as arbitrary labels imposed on entities by social agreement.

The medieval period witnessed further exploration of proper names, with thinkers like Saint Augustine pondering their significance in theological contexts. However, it was not until the modern era that systematic analyses of proper names emerged, notably with the advent of analytic philosophy in the 20th century. In general, *philosophers and logicians* (J.S. Mill, G. Frege, B. Russel, P. F. Strawson, S. Kripke, J.R. Searle, D. Rudenko, Y. Svatko) focus on the *employment* of the name, i.e. reveal the roots of relationship between language and the world, study names as they refer to objects in the world, find out whether a name refers to an object of the world of the senses or one of the world of the imagination.

One of the central debates surrounding the phenomenology of onomastic nomination revolves around the distinction between referential and attributive theories. Referential theories, influenced by the work of Gottlob Frege, propose that proper names function as direct referential pointers to their referents, devoid of descriptive content. In contrast, attributive theories, championed by Bertrand Russell, argue that proper names carry descriptive properties that contribute to their reference [4, p. 153].

Another key concept in the theory of proper names is the phenomenon of rigid designation. According to Saul Kripke, proper names are rigid designators, meaning they refer to the same object in all possible worlds, regardless of the object's properties or attributes in those worlds [2]. This notion has profound implications for our understanding of identity and reference across different contexts.

Contemporary discussions on the nature of proper names extend beyond purely philosophical realms to encompass linguistic, psychological, and computational perspectives. *Psychologists* investigate the cognitive processes involved in proper name recognition and retrieval, shedding light on the mechanisms underlying their salience in memory and perception. *Linguists* focus on *internal relations within*

language, i.e. study how proper names relate to other words; ‘surface’ features of the onomasticon such as the use of a capital letter; examine the role of proper names in syntax, semantics, and pragmatics; explore how they contribute to discourse structure and meaning construction. Additionally, *computational linguists* develop algorithms for proper name identification and disambiguation in natural language processing tasks, highlighting the practical importance of proper names in information retrieval and text analysis.

No matter from what perspective approached, as W.V. Langendonck claims, «... theoretical linguists have often treated proper names as the poor cousin of other grammatical categories», thus admitting their special status in the language system, which is traditionally referred to as ‘marginal position’» [3, p. 182]. And even the basic language opposition of a «proper **name**» vs a «common **noun**» suggests that there exists a huge distinction between onomasticon (*names*) and other *words* in a language.

This is best explained by A. Gardiner who claims that «... we speak of 'proper names', not of 'proper nouns' or 'proper words'. This, therefore, is a fitting opportunity to consider the difference between a 'word' and a 'name'. Of the two terms, 'name' is far the older. It is indeed inconceivable that any human society, however primitive, should have lacked a word for 'name'. This term belongs to the pre-grammatical stage of thought, to a time when people had no interest in words for their own sake, but thought of them solely as a means of speaking about the things of the external world. They never inquired what such and such a word meant, but only by what name such and such a thing was called. Materially a 'word' and a 'name' are identical. But there is this important difference that the direction of thought is opposite in each case. When we speak of a 'word' our minds travel from the sound-sign to whatever it may mean; when we speak of a 'name' we imply that there exists something to which a certain sound-sign corresponds» [1, p. 19].

The above ideas bring us to the point of considering the *semiotic* perspective of a proper name, with all the numerous implications and possibilities it provides to explain the complex nature of the phenomenon under study.

Regarding Ch.W. Morris' triadic semiosis model, every semiotic entity comprises three basic 'ingredients':

- *sign vehicle* - that which acts as a sign
- *designatum* - that which the sign refers to
- *interpretant* - that effect on some *interpreter* in virtue of which the thing in question is a sign to that interpreter.

Given the above considerations, every proper name should be treated as a semiotic entity, i.e. a (linguistic) **sign vehicle** constituted by a unity of form and meaning. *Form*, which is the combination of sounds and a certain morphological pattern/structure, can be simple (e.g. anthroponyms Carl (m.) and Frieda(fem.)) or compound (e.g. anthroponyms Edgar (m.) and Beverl(e)y (fem.)).

Meaning, or the *inner form* of a proper name, is a more complex phenomenon to analyze since it comprises several 'layers' that are neatly interwoven within one form:

- *denotational/referential* – the meaning that is directly ascribed to a certain name bearer, i.e. **designatum** in terms of Morris' model (often referred to as 'referent');
- *etymological/historic* – the meaning that is lexicographically registered. Synchronically, it may(not) be related to a certain name bearer, while diachronically it is always related to a certain socio-cultural context, being its 'mapped' product;
- *connotational/pragmatic* – the meaning that is derived from the associations the referent has acquired through functioning in a certain *socio-cultural* context. It is tightly related to the cognitive activity of an *interpreter* who develops certain associations with the referent as a result of various social contacts;
- *contextual* – the meaning that is derived from the name's functioning in a certain *language context* (literary text, discourse).

Hence, the meaning of a proper name can be defined as a complex information formula which, in terms of Morris' concept, can be classified as an '**interpretant**'. Decoding each of its deep senses enables us to provide *multidisciplinary* research of a proper name as a '*condensed text*' – a phenomenon that by its nature goes far beyond the boundaries of an ordinary word due to its simultaneously being:

- a *language sign*, i.e a semiotic entity (Linguistics and Semiotics perspectives) that exists and performs certain functions in the language system;
- a *social gene* (Social Sciences domain) that keeps and transmits the socially acquired experience of an individual attributed to a certain community where the onomastic nomination is rooted;
- a *phenomenon of culture* (Culture Studies realm) that accumulates the unique ‘cultural code’ of a community’s identity encrypted in the interpretant of a proper name;
- a complex *information pattern* (Cognitive Studies perspective) that retains the collective cognitive efforts taken by representatives of certain ethnic entities.

Conclusion. The theory of proper names encompasses a rich tapestry of philosophical insights, linguistic analyses, psychological and social applications, and cognitive investigations. From ancient philosophical inquiries to contemporary interdisciplinary research, the study of proper names continues to fascinate scholars and practitioners alike. By understanding the theoretical underpinnings of proper names and their practical implications, we gain deeper insights into the complexities of language, cognition, culture, and communication.

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