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NICKNAMES IN THE 21ST CENTURY ENGLISH

Bachelor's thesis
Written by the 4th year student
4th English group
Of Bachelor's programme
“English Philology and Translation
and Two Western European Languages”
Field of science – 03 “Humanities”
Specialty – 035 “Philology”
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«Допущено до захисту»

Протокол засідання кафедри англійської філології
та міжкультурної комунікації

Протокол № 10 від 29.05.2023

Завідувач кафедри _____ проф. Белова А.Д.

Kyiv –2023

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INTRODUCTION

The scientific work is devoted to the study of English nicknames in the 21st century.

Modern linguists are most interested in the motivation of nicknames and specific reasons that lead to the appearance of a person's unofficial name. This approach takes into account the historical aspect of the formation of nicknames of a person or toponymic objects. However, the motivation behind a nickname can be fluid and refined. The reason for the formation of a nickname can sometimes be so accidental that in use an informal name is also considered as unmotivated.

Most of the nicknames are figurative, but this figurativeness is of a generalized nature. Some nicknames really call some kind of character's trait or external sign, while others are vaguely shaped, allow different interpretations, or are not related to the characteristics of a person at all. Investigations of the last 5-10 years confirm that the tradition of dividing nicknames into semantic groups remains unchanged. Such a division is interesting, since the historical aspect of the formation of nicknames is taken into account. This means that the researcher can determine the origins of nicknames, ways of nickname nominations, as well as understand the peculiarities of speech practices and the peculiarities of the life of people from different territories.

A review of the scientific literature on the researched issue, namely the analysis of the works by D. Crystal [16], E. Pulgram [28], A. Room [31], I. R. Searle [33], H. S. Sorensen [34] makes it possible to conclude that there is insufficient attention to this problem in modern linguistics.

The **topicality** of the work is determined by the general focus of modern linguistic research on identifying the structural and semantic features of English nicknames in the 21st century.

The **aim** of the research is to study the peculiarities of English-language nicknames in the 21st century.

To achieve the goal, the following **objectives** have been defined:

- to describe the problem of defining the concepts of ‘nickname’ and ‘anthroponym’ in linguistics;
- to investigate nicknames as a type of anthroponymic vocabulary;
- to consider classifications of English-language nicknames according to various categorical features;
- to describe types of nicknames of the English language;
- to perform a comparative analysis of means of representation of the structure and semantics of toponymic nicknames in the English language.

The **object** of research are English nicknames in 21st century.

The **subject** of the research are the structural and semantic features of English nicknames.

The **data sources** of the research are lexicographic sources, in particular toponymic, explanatory dictionaries and guidebooks, including “The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names” by V.Watts [47], A Concise and Selective Dictionary for the Continental United States of America by G. R. Stewart [48], Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners [49], Longman dictionary of contemporary English [50]. The total number of text fragments for marking nicknames are 200 units.

The **research methods** are determined by the purpose, objectives and analyzed material: the *comparative method*, which consists in the correlation of the means of representing nicknames in the English language; *contextual-interpretive*, which consists in clarifying the specifics of the meaning of words and phrases used to denote nicknames; *descriptive*, with the help of which the use of a certain nickname was justified; *continuous sampling method* and *statistical method*

The **practical significance** of the research work is that the collected and analyzed material can be used in lectures on linguistics, literary studies, translation studies, stylistics, literary theory, comparative studies.

The logic of the research determined **the structure** of the scientific work: it consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusions to them, as well as general conclusions, a list of literature, a list of data sources, appendix.

I. THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE RESEARCH OF NICKNAMES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1.1. To the problem of defining the concepts of “nickname” and “anthroponym” in linguistics

In the course of mastering the objective world, a person learns things and phenomena, gives them names, forms new concepts, establishes certain connections and interdependencies between them. The results of the cognitive and nominative and classifying activity of the language find their expression in the verbalization of lexical units, i.e. in the lexicon of each language. Thus, words serve as a means of representation of the objects of reality reflected in the human mind.

According to G. Barnbrook, the complexity of the semantic content of the word determines the universal nature of the verbal sign and its multifunctionality. The word covers almost the entire volume of language functions: nominative (names), significative (generalizations), communicative (communication) and pragmatic (expressive and emotional impact) [13, p. 67].

Proper names (PN) form a capacious nationally distinctive layer in the lexicon of any language. As its component, they identify paradoxical situations, the analysis of which contributes to the emergence of new, in-depth linguistic concepts. Their specificity has long attracted the attention of researchers in the most diverse fields of science: linguistics, literature, history, archeology, ethnography, philosophy, and the like. By M.V. Dotsenko, linguistic originality of the PN gives reasons to separate them into a separate science that is **onomastics**, which, depending on the aspect under study, is classified into sections (anthroponymy, toponymy, zoonymy, cosmonymy, etc.). In addition, in onomastics, special directions are distinguished for the study of proper names in fiction, oral folk art, in dialects and colloquialisms, in the official business style [4, p. 18].

Anthroponomics is a branch of onomastics that studies proper names of people and their individual components, as well as their origin, evolution, and patterns of functioning. According to Ya.A. Velychko, anthroponyms are proper names, individually assigned to each person as their identification mark. We all have names [2, p. 1]. Traditionally, this is a first name, or first and last name, or first, last name and patronymic. In the official English-speaking environment, binomial anthropoformulas such as *John Brown* are used. Names are different from each other and serve different purposes [2, p. 2].

In the English language, there are the following types of anthroponyms:

1. Personal names;
2. Patronyms (patronymic names). In the English language, the tradition of using patronymics has been lost, since the 17th century, patronymics have become part of a personal name;
3. Surnames;
4. Family names (considered more important than surnames, when a woman marries, she changes her surname, but the family name remains unchanged.);
5. Nicknames, animal names;
6. Cryptonyms (hidden names), anthroponyms of literary works, heroes of folklore, myths;
7. Ethnonyms (names of nations, peoples, nationalities);
8. Technonyms (status names) [20, p. 88].

Symbolic proper names (SPN) are classified in the works by M.V. Dotsenko. She suggested dividing them into three groups:

- 1) SPN – anthroponyms;
- 2) SPN – toponyms;
- 3) SPN denoting objects and phenomena [4, p. 26].

Further classification was carried out within each of the defined groups. M.V. Dotsenko distinguishes individual and group names among anthroponyms. Group anthroponyms have a somewhat limited composition and combine the names of collectives, peoples, ethnic groups, etc. The individual anthroponyms include:

- 1) SPN of nationalities,
- 2) SPN of persons by place of residence,
- 3) SPN of status names,

- 4) SPN of professions,
- 5) SPN-nicknames,
- 6) SPN-substitutes of real names in official oral communication,
- 7) SPN-characteristics [4, p. 26].

The essence of any official or **unofficial proper name/anthroponym** (UPN/UA or nickname) is the internal unity of general, singular and specific features, which are revealed, on the one hand, when proper names are confronted with appellatives, and on the other hand, in the onomastic context when a proper name is combined with by other proper names. In this way, the linguistic and onomastic status of UA [26], which constitute a separate type of anthroponyms and are considered through the prism of the onym/appellative opposition, is substantiated. Having no connection with the concept, UA are used only to identify and designate a person [5, p. 6].

According to their categorial features, UA are onomastic universals, by which researchers understand the general properties specific to proper names in different languages [14, p. 89]. Extralingual universal characteristics of UA unite the following nominative signs: the motives for assigning and the function of the name (minimum set of knowledge about the named denotation), the attitude of the person who names and evaluates the designated object or person. Linguistic characteristics of the studied units refer to the specifics of proper names with regard to linguistic organization: phonetic-phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical features. In this case, a universal sign of UA is their detection at the following language levels: phonetic, lexical, syntactic [5, p. 6].

A separate problem is the specific lexical meaning of UA [23, p. 99], due to their individualizing function within a specific anthroponymic system. UA in the linguistic and cultural as well as semantic spaces have such universal features as repetition of the same names to indicate different denotations (onomastic homonymy) and variation of proper names, that is, the use of several forms of expression for one denotation (onomastic synonymy) [20, p. 89].

The nickname or **network name**, acting as a way of self-representation of a virtual personality in Internet communication, is a relatively new phenomenon in onomastics, which causes the presence of a large number of approaches to the study and definition of this concept, which, however, have many common features [8, p. 49-50].

At the current stage of the development of linguistics, **nicknames** are the object of research attention, as they appear as nominative elements formed according to the laws of language and function in it. Linguistic investigations of Ukrainian and foreign linguists were aimed at studying various aspects of the functioning of nicknames in social networks. Thus, A.V. Popova proposed a semantic classification of nicknames. Studying the language of the Internet, she analyzes the gender aspect of nicknames [8, p. 52]. The structure of onyms in general and nicknames in particular is described in the works by L. V. Shytyk [12] and others.

According to L.V. Shytyk, the study of the structural features of nicknames made it possible to single out monocomponent and multicomponent network names. The most common subgroups of monocomponent names are nomens complicated by additional vowels, and nicknames containing uppercase or lowercase letters or their combination, as well as non-normative signs and symbols. Among the multicomponent network names, productive are nicknames that are an intermediate link in terms of writing between 'together' and 'separately', formed by combining two words; names that contain numbers; nicknames that combine lowercase letters, punctuation marks and/or indents (without numbers); nomens, which have lower underscores [12, p. 23].

A **network name (nickname, 'nick')** as a virtual proper name, conditional or fictitious computer name, an artistic image that users create for personal communication on the network, is a fairly new phenomenon in onomastics, so its status has not been finally determined [24, p. 245]. In the few studies devoted to this phenomenon of nomination, the nickname is given a place in a number of

different units: pseudonym, nickname, sobriquet, sumom, byname, moniker, etc. [26, p. 34].

The term ‘nickname’ is frequent in the scientific literature too (nick; originally from the Middle English *an eke name* ‘another name’, also a network name, i.e. a pseudonym used on the Internet, usually in places of communication (blogs, forums, chats). At the same time, the term ‘nickname’ is used for self-identification of communication participants. It is also the beginning of the name of an email address, a login name or a nickname in a forum, in a chat and any service in which it is necessary to introduce yourself [11, p. 113].

G.V. Khodorenko uses the term ‘**nickonym**’ in her works, which, in her opinion, unites such units as nickname, login, password, represented by words or syntactic constructions. “We call this unit a user name (UN), or nickonym. A nickonym is a fictitious name, a name-nickname (from the English word *nick* ‘a nickname’), adopted by an Internet user to organize work on the network and participate in Internet communication” [10, p. 2].

Together with S.O. Shestakova, we partially support Khodorenko’s opinion and consider the term ‘nickonym’ formed from two roots to be the most appropriate for the names of Internet users: English ‘nick’ and Old Greek ὄνομα according to the traditional onomastic model (anthroponym, toponym, ergonym, pragmatonym, etc.) [11, p. 114]. By this term, we propose to understand both the virtual names of network users, which are necessary for registration and further functioning in the system, and the beginnings of the names of addresses of electronic mailboxes, which, according to our observations, quite often coincide.

It is characteristic that the criminal world also has its own special “philosophy”, the so-called “concepts” that is the ideas of the thieves’ brotherhood, thieves’ honesty, which contributes to the rallying of criminal groups and the emergence of certain criminal traditions. “The criminal world is also characterized by conventionality, adherence to symbols” [27, p. 67]. A striking example of this is the habit of assigning nicknames (**onomasticons**) to one’s fellows in society as one of the attributes of the criminal subculture. “The thief’s nickname is a kind of sign

belonging to the caste of the underworld. As observations show, criminals in their environment are more willing to respond to a nickname than to a name. The thief, taking this or that nickname, rarely parted with it. Acceptance of a nickname is a necessary act of transition to a thieves' environment. Every thief has his nickname" [27, p. 68].

A significant place among the nicknames is occupied by onomasticons / nicknames, especially those that have a zoocomponent in their structure (the name of animals). A number of zoo-onomasticons known to native English speakers are of undeniable interest, since knowledge of the nicknames that exist in the field of criminal communication is interesting and important for understanding the life of the society using them, its traditions and customs, character, internal relationships of both its representatives and with the world beyond.

Nicknames are included in the category of 'naming names'. The place of nicknames in the classification of naming names is determined by the peculiarities of proper and common nouns. The function and connection with the concept are the fundamental principles of the study of the features of proper names and common nouns [32, p. 432].

Nicknames are secondary names. The typology of nicknames as secondary names is based on the nature of the nominative value and the way of rethinking reality. Based on this principle, three types of secondary nominations are distinguished:

1. Indirect nomination, not based on the trope. This type includes the nicknames of animals, which are anthroponyms.
2. Indirect nomination based on the trope. This includes nicknames, whose linguistic form corresponds to the designated non-linguistic object independently.
3. Indirect nomination proper. This type combines those nicknames that are characterized by an independent nominative function [35, p. 99].

Nicknames refer to pragmatically marked vocabulary, in the structure of the meaning of which the pragmatic component dominates. The creation of the evaluative potential of nicknames is based on such pragmatic factors as

ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice and a negative attitude towards certain social groups, a positive attitude towards certain individuals, manifested in the expression of praise, love, affection, tenderness [34, p. 65].

The main *lexical-semantic* means of forming nicknames are metaphor, metonymy and antonomasia. The formation of the meaning of secondary names occurs due to the simultaneous implementation of the systemic meaning and occasional meaning. As a result of such interaction, a system of two concepts about one subject arises: the properties of the one in question are viewed through the properties of the one whose name it is designated [31, p. 126].

Word-building means of forming nicknames are suffixation, compounding and abbreviation. The study of structural types of nicknames, word-formation models in suffixation and composition, as well as various types of abbreviations allows to identify the structural features of secondary nominations [31, p. 127]. Alliteration, assonance and onomatopoeia are *phonetic* means of creating the emotional and evaluative potential of nicknames. These means are complementary and are used with other naming methods (metaphor, metonymy, antonymy, suffixation) [33, p. 137].

So, let us dwell on the definition of nicknames in a narrow sense as a word, phrase or sentence that is used by a virtual language personality during Internet communication for self-representation and self-positioning. In terms of functions, a nickname is very similar to a pseudonym, but there are a number of features that distinguish them.

1.2. Nicknames as a type of anthroponymic vocabulary

The need for a multifaceted study of onomastic heritage, which is an integral part of the lexical system of every national language, is justified by the fact that onymic lexicon accumulates the material, cultural, and historical experience of the social environment in which it originates and functions [6, p. 2]. In this regard, the

scientific understanding of the peculiarities of the onomastics of the English language is of great importance.

The linguistic features of names and nicknames have always been of particular interest to representatives of linguistic science. Along with this, in recent years, the linguistic aspects of people's names, nicknames have become of particular importance in connection with the formation and development of new social norms and relations. People's names and nicknames are part of the language and are influenced by linguistic patterns. However, being a social fact, a phenomenon of social life, they are to some extent determined by social relations and have the ability to influence them. Onomastics studies the patterns of origin and development of semantics and structure, as well as sociolinguistic, linguocultural and ethnographic features of names, surnames, patronymics, pseudonyms and nicknames [28, p. 23]. In this regard, anthroponymy, as a separate area of onomastics, operates with various methods of analysis and research involving scientific methods from other branches of philological and humanitarian sciences, such as literary criticism, stylistics, ethnography, history, anthropology, geography, numismatics, cultural studies, sociology, psychology and logic.

The **names of people** or names represent the way of thinking of the people in different periods of the development of society, history and culture. This is part of the lexical fund of the language of the people, which helps in the analysis and study of various issues of etymology, word formation, phonetics, grammar and other sections of linguistics. In addition, names are a way of life of people at different times, and all the changes that took place in the political, social and cultural life of the people were reflected in anthroponyms. It is no coincidence that name bearers at all times were interested in knowing the history of origin, development, interpretation, the degree of prevalence of names, rituals and factors for assigning official and unofficial names, pseudonyms, nicknames, etc. [19, p. 234]. These features of anthroponyms led researchers of a number of such sciences as linguistics, literature, history, geography, ethnography and others to the investigation of names in general and separately.

As it was mentioned above, the research of proper names in the language deals with a special section of linguistics, i.e. onomastics. Translated from Greek, nicknames are included in the anthroponymic space and have a number of characteristic features. A nickname is “an additional unofficial name given to a person by people around him in accordance with his characteristic feature, circumstances accompanying his life, by any analogy, by origin and other motives” [14, p. 78-79]. However, there are different approaches to determining the status of nicknames:

- 1) nicknames are common nouns;
- 2) nicknames occupy a border position between onyms and appellatives;
- 3) nicknames are a kind of anthroponym [60, p. 725].

As in the case of geographical names, the reflection of cultural epochs and influences in the **anthroponymicon** seems to be one of the most popular topics at the present time [27, p. 154]. With regard to English material, this turns out to be even more relevant, given, firstly, the relatively recent strengthening of the linguistic aspect in the onomastics in Great Britain. Secondly, in general, the traditional lag of anthroponymic studies from toponymic ones is also inherent in this country.

As an **anthroponym**, the nickname is included in a number of people’s names, represented both by various forms and by separate types, considered from the standpoint of naming resources. Possessing the main features of proper names, first of all, such as the singularity and definiteness of the nomination, the presence of reference, semantic and structural specificity, network names are included in the sphere of “actual anthroponymy” [27, p. 155], i.e. are the result of speech nomination and are used to designate individuals. At the same time, as a phenomenon of artificial nomination, nicknames have a number of properties that allow us to talk about their special place in onomastic lexicon. The singularity and certainty of the nomination of nicknames is manifested in the fact that they are the result of self-nomination as the bearers of virtual names are their authors. The

semantic features of nicknames are determined by specifics that is implied by the communicant himself, based on his own intentions.

The functional feature of nicknames, which consists in self-naming, makes it possible to distinguish them from the byname lexicon, although both of them characterize and individualize an object (person) according to a certain, most often, evaluative attribute and have the property of an open series, i.e. inexhaustible material for their formation. According to its characteristics of a fictitious name that replaces the real name and was invented by its bearer, the nickname can be classified as a pseudonym, but with a certain reservation [61, p. 346]. Their main similarity is based on the signs of individual belonging, self-naming, self-identification, motivation, limited scope of use. The difference lies in the greater explicitness of the pragmatic component, due to the scope of use on the Internet as a special type of communicative space.

So, nicknames perform onymic functions, complemented by a characterizing, concretizing function; have emotionality, expressiveness, appraisal, motivation; are not included in the official structure of naming a person, are not legally fixed and are not fixed in writing. Nicknames are secondary units against the background of other onyms (they have “secondary secondaryness”) [35, p. 35].

A nickname, like a personal name, performs a nominative function, that is, both are naming a person, however, a personal name is associated with the verb “to name”: they call it a name, and a nickname – with “nick”: they are named upon under certain circumstances, for certain ‘merits’. Thus, unlike a personal name, a nickname is a secondary anthroponymic unit and, as such, has expressiveness, emotionality, appraisal, and motivation [31, p. 127].

The individualizing and differentiating functions of nicknames are much more pronounced than that of personal names and other types of official names. Thus, a nickname is used by a certain circle of people (village residents, dialect speakers) in relation to one “named” person, when personal names, surnames and patronymics can be the same for different people. Nicknames differ in a number of

ways: by the principles of nomination, motivational features, by the nature of motivation, by connotation, by methods of derivation, and others.

In our opinion, the nickname is appropriate to qualify as a *microanthroponym*. Firstly, this type of anthroponyms is an individual name referring only to one person, functioning only in a narrow circle of dialect speakers. Secondly, when nicknames appear, there is a partial lack of consistency: a person receives this or that nomination from his environment for some distinctive feature of appearance, character or deed. Moreover, naming can be formed both from an appellative containing a characteristic, and from the onym through its various transformations [28, p. 17]. The essence of the nomination is revealed in the derivative through association and motivation, in the absence of which the true reason for the appearance of the nickname is lost, and with the departure of the dialect speakers, the nickname itself.

Nicknames as *microanthroponyms* have a similar set of differential features:

- locality, a kind of corporateness, i.e. functioning within the same dialect, use on the territory of one settlement in relation to one specific person;
- specific semantics, consisting of nomination, motivation, derivation, connotation (emotionally expressive coloring) and emerging associations; connection with the concept of realia, which gave the nickname;
- proximity to appellatives or to proprietary vocabulary in terms of phonetic design and associative series; it is possible to distinguish between nicknames and appellatives when they are often used in speech of dialect speakers as a nomination of one particular person;
- nonrandomness, i.e. the role of the characteristic-tag as a distinctive sign of the nicknamed [18, p. 78];
- mobility – a person's nickname can become the basis for the formation of nicknames for his family members; a nickname can give life to a street name; it can go away and be replaced by another;
- absentee ('behind the eyes') use is naming a person with a nickname behind the eyes (as a rule), full-time use for positive nicknames or for insulting a

negative nickname in extreme communicative situations (for example, during a quarrel);

– fragility – with the departure of the owner of a nickname, his nomination disappears, as well as with the departure of the dialect speakers of the older generation the motivation for the appearance of the nickname is lost, and then the unit itself;

– structural and grammatical diversity – nicknames can be one word, phrase or syntagma;

– legal looseness: nicknames are not included in the official naming structure, do not have written fixation (fixation for research purposes does not count here) [20, p. 122].

The listed features are concretizing, defining microanthroponym as an independent unit in the onymic space.

Macroanthroponyms, obviously, should include “group naming of certain groups: names of families, clans, dynasties” [20, p. 123]. According to this statement, street surnames, collective nicknames should be considered as macroanthroponyms. However, the listed names function in a limited area, without going beyond its limits. Therefore, their position is closer to the level of microanthroponyms along the ‘micro’ – ‘macro’ line. The prefix *micro-* focuses on the range of use of the name in speech. i.e. within the same dialect [30, p. 127]. However, one should not belittle the role of microanthroponyms in human life: they are indicators of social relations, reveal the derivational mechanism of the language, reflect the culture and life of native speakers. So their study is significant for understanding the life of the whole people.

In the dialect picture of the world, the nickname nominee is a natural linguistic sign that reflects the relationship of people. Possessing a special expression, motivation and associativity, nicknames are most often of a negative nature, serve as a mocking, offensive naming, ironically representing the bearer.

All nicknames can be divided into two groups:

1. Nicknames that belong to the people.

2. Nicknames that are associated with geographical objects.

According to J. Morgan, a pseudonym is a kind of anthroponym. “An additional name given to a person by people around him in accordance with his characteristic features” [26, p. 13].

The author also identifies the following types of nicknames:

- 1) group;
- 2) school;
- 3) ironic and others [26, p. 14].

Besides, the use of the nicknames of various political figures is a common technique in the modern British and American press, especially in the media. The craving for bright and expressive nicknames is caused by the desire of the newspaper to approach the man of the street and to speak his language. For example, Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of Great Britain, was known as *PeggyThatcher*, *ThatchertheSnatcher* [43], etc.

Nicknames associated with geographical features are called toponyms. Toponyms are an additional, non-primary name of a geographical object coexisting with its official name. **Toponymic nicknames** are very common in English-speaking countries, especially in the United States, where almost no popular publication about cities and regions of the country can do without mentioning well-known nicknames. Nicknames can be divided into two categories:

- a) informally colloquial;
- b) book and literary, which are especially widely and traditionally used in journalism [24, p. 250].

Toponyms-nicknames that are used informally can be known both to a limited circle of users, and vice versa, to a wide one. As an example of literary nicknames, we can cite the traditional nicknames of American states. They differ from official names by a much larger amount of additional information about the named object, including emotional or ideological content.

There are many cases of coexistence of several toponyms-nicknames of the same geographical object. So, in addition to the nickname *BigApple*, New York is

also called *theMetropolis* and *Gotham* [45]. The last sarcastic nickname was given to New York by the American writer Washington Irving. No other country has as many names that are built on colloquial expressions and slang as in the United States.

As we have mentioned already, UA or nicknames are signs of secondary nomination [18, p. 123], which constitute connotative names. The latter not only mark the object, but also reflect its assessment, communicative situation and other pragmatic parameters. UA mostly contain additional information about the communicative status of the interlocutors, their intention, socio-cultural, age and gender characteristics, etc. The semantic basis of UA is a pointer to the external or internal features of the named person in combination with the denotation identification function [23, c. 235].

Nicknames are motivated units conditioned by secondary nomination taking into account emotive-expressive and axiological layering (for ex., *Microbe*). In the system of connotative characteristics, an integral component of the meaning of UA is the associative-cultural microcomponent, where the connection of UA with the culture, traditions and customs of the ethnic group can be traced. UA has inherent gender characteristics, when it correlates with the gender of the denotation. However, quite often the gender sign is violated and UA of the male gender indicates persons of the female gender or vice versa [23, c. 267].

Thus, after a brief review of the most common nicknames and trends in their use in the UK and the US, we can conclude that nicknames reflect the desire not only to describe the real properties of a person or the characteristics of a geographical object, but also to give him or it some social (often derisive) assessment. And the knowledge of various nicknames common in English helps to enrich our knowledge about the history of life, the customs of the peoples of Great Britain and the United States of America.

Conclusions to the first chapter

1. The nickname occupies a special place in the onomastic system of the language as a phenomenon of artificial nomination, having a number of features that bring it closer to pseudonyms and, in certain parameters, to occasionalisms and neologisms. The main features that determine the specifics of the nickname are the certainty of the nomination, the presence of a single reference, semantic and structural features, the greater explication of the connotative and pragmatic components, due to the communicative orientation. To describe nicknames, we applied the level principle (from form to content, from structural-graphic to functional), which makes it possible to compile a complex classification of nicknames that differs from existing ones, most of which are oriented towards alias classes.

2. The structure of a virtual personality, which includes all the features of a linguistic and communicative personality, is a combination of cognitive, psychological, social, pragmatic and verbal-semantic (individual-style) components. Depending on the mental attitudes of the subjects of communication (self-identification or 'decoding'), certain components are combined, forming the basis of the concepts 'Self' or 'He/She'. The nickname is considered as a two-way phenomenon, including encoding and decoding mechanisms. The 'representing' subject implements strategies and tactics of self-identification and influences on communicants through the nickname. The 'perceiving' subject, relying on personal experience and on socio-psychological (evaluative, value, stereotyped) attitudes, thanks to the nickname, identifies its bearer. The result of the cognitive activity of both subjects is the formation of diverse personal images.

CHAPTER 2

CLASSIFICATIONS AND TYPES OF ENGLISH NICKNAMES

2.1. Classifications of English-language nicknames according to various categorical features

This chapter deals with nicknames commonly used in English-speaking discourse. Most of the nicknames that are part of the basic knowledge of native English speakers are of undeniable interest to English learners, since knowing the nicknames that exist in everyday communication is important for understanding the life of the using team, its history, traditions and customs, the nature of relationships between people, etc.

In our work, we have used the classifications of the nicknames by V. Katernyuk [5, p. 5], S. Shestakova [11, p. 114] and L. Shityk [12] and based on them and taking into account the lexical material we selected from Internet sources, in particular from English publicistic texts, lexicographic resources and literary prose, developed our own classification of nicknames according to structure and thematic groups.

All nicknames can be divided into two groups:

1. Nicknames that belong to the people: *Dingdong is a Filipino actor, television presenter, commercial model and film producer; It seems to me that he should have told Bushie; A former Peanut Farmer, buying point operator, warehouseman and seed sheller, Jimmy Carter often proclaims "If you want to live a long and healthy life like me, eat more peanuts!"* [45] In the first fragment, we can observe the use of a nickname formed with the help of onomatopoeia, repetition of consonant sounds. In the second and third excerpts, nicknames are formed by suffixing -ie and syntactically (polycomponent combination).

2. Nicknames that are associated with geographical objects: *The Land of Steady Habits is a 2018 American film written, directed and co-produced by Nicole Holofcener and based on the novel of the same name by Ted Thompson* [45]. The

fragment has a three-component nickname, which leads us to allusion to the meaning of the film, taken after the same novel.

Based on different classifications, the following types of nicknames can also be distinguished:

a) group nicknames: *The Forty Elephants* or *Forty Thieves* were a 19th to 20th century all-female London crime syndicate who specialised in shoplifting. This gang was notable for its longevity and skill in avoiding police detection [42, p. 69].

The fragment presents a two-component nickname for one of the most famous female London gangs of the 19th century, i.e. *The Forty Elephants* gang. The main criminal business of the gang was the robbery of luxury shops, most often department stores. Female bandits were not afraid of anyone. They had a good physique, were strong, and could fight as well as men. They were also clever, well organized, cunning and daring.

b) school nicknames: *Tom Thumb* was the first American-built steam locomotive to operate on a common-carrier railroad [45].

In the text fragment we can see a case of using ironic appeal to tall people like Tom Thumb.

c) ironic nicknames properly: *A hall, a hall! For the venerable Father Howleglass... the Right Reverend Abbot of Unreason!* [51, p. 1] The fragment demonstrates the use of the Scottish archaic 'Abbot of Unreason', which is a humorous nickname for the head of the Christmas merry-go-round.

Without going into details of the classification of nicknames, we will consider some of them that are most typical for the English language. So, nicknames are assigned to an ethnic or other group of people. For example: *The only way out of a difficult situation-to go in search of work, but it's not about Mick; Carr holds both British and Irish citizenship and is a self-described plastic Paddy; Manipulative, amoral... Limey with relatively good teeth* [45]. In the first and second fragments *Mick*, *Paddy* are Irish nicknames, while in the third fragment

Limey is an American slang nickname given to British sailors, then usually to the English.

The collective nickname *Yankee* is typical for residents of the United States. *Yankee* was originally used for New Englanders. In the southern parts of the United States, the nickname is still associated with northerners: *If such a war should break out, it will only be as a result of the yankee empire's congenital adventurism and irresponsibility* [45].

It should also be noted that residents of almost all US states also have their traditional collective nicknames. For example: *Be in your seats early and help us show some love to the first-team All-Big Ten Badger and Big Ten champion!* (NYT); *While studying for her bachelor's degree in elementary education at Indiana University, she was a member of the Singing Hoosiers* [45]. As we can see, *Badgers* is a nickname for the people of Wisconsin, while *Hoosiers* is a nickname for the people of Indiana.

Nicknames are very common among pupils as well. Often a nickname received in childhood accompanies a person throughout his life. So, the school nickname of the English writer D. Sayers is known as *Swanny* meaning "Swan Neck", for example: *She conducted him into the clinic and introduced him to the dark-eyed, smiling Swanny* [45]. The fragment presents a noun expressed by a derivative word, i.e. one that is formed with the suffix -y.

Most school nicknames are overtly or covertly derisive. The most common nickname for tall school pupils is 'Long John Silver', for example: *Long John Silver is the seventh studio album by the American rock band Jefferson Airplane, and their last album of all new material until 1989* [45]. The fragment contains a three-component nickname with a reference to a music album by a famous American group.

Schoolchildren with red hair are often referred to as 'Redhead', for example: *Put two girls on a train and imagine that one of them is a Redhead* [45]. In the fragment, the English-language nickname is formed by compounding (Adj+N model).

The use of pseudonyms, in which their creators tried to reflect certain traits of character, advantages or disadvantages, has a long history. Suffice it to mention here some of the nicknames of the English kings, such as Alfred the Great, Edward the Confessor, John the Lackland and others, for example: *A lot of what we know about Alfred the Great comes from stories that have been written about him; Edward, byname Saint Edward the Confessor, (born 1002/05, Islip, Eng. — died Jan. 5, 1066, London; canonized 1161...; John was the youngest of the four surviving sons of King Henry II of England and Duchess Eleanor of Aquitaine. He was nicknamed John Lackland because he was not expected to inherit significant lands [45].*

Many nicknames of popular personalities, public and political figures of the past, are known in England and the United States in the same way as their own names. For example, the nickname ‘Lady with the Lamp’ was given to Florence Nightingale, a nurse during the Crimean War who started the transformation of hospital care in the UK: *Nicknamed the “Lady with the Lamp,” Florence Nightingale had a lasting effect on ill and injured soldiers and gained a reputation that made her famous across the continent [45].* In the fragment, the multi-component nickname reflects the character traits and moral qualities of its owner.

Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of Great Britain, was known as ‘Peggy Thatcher’, ‘Thatcher the Snatcher’, etc.: *This snapshot of Peggy Thatcher’s life was captured by the 1940 U.S. Census. When Peggy Thatcher was born about 1931, her father, Fred, was 39, and her mother, Agnes, was 32; Thatcher the Milk Snatcher or Saviour of the Nation? [45]* In the first fragment, a two-component nickname is presented, in the second – a three-component one.

British Prime Minister G. Macmillan, after the so-called ‘great purge’ of his cabinet, received the nickname ‘Mac the Knife’ (by analogy with the character of B. Brecht’s ‘The Threepenny Opera’), for example: *The Communist Party newspaper, the Daily Worker, thought otherwise and on 21 February published a drawing by its cartoonist ‘Gabriel’ with the title Mack the Knife [45].* In the fragment, Frill imagines Macmillan as an aristocrat in a top hat and an opera cloak

who stabs a worker in the back with a knife and snatches out a paper with the words “Increase in wages received by the workers” that the unfortunate man had just handed to his boss.

The use of the nicknames of various political figures is a common technique in the modern British and American press, especially in the media. The craving for bright and expressive nicknames is caused by the desire of the newspaper to speak the language of man of the street: *Ronald Reagan was known as the Great Communicator* [45]. The fragment is about Ronald Reagan, who was known as a great orator. His speeches illustrate the power of effective presidential communication.

Nicknames associated with geographical features are called toponyms. Toponyms are an additional, non-primary name of a geographical object coexisting with its official name. Toponymical nicknames are very common in English-speaking countries, especially in the United States, where almost no popular publication about cities and regions of the country can do without mentioning well-known nicknames. Thus, nicknames can be divided into two categories:

a) informal colloquial: *Many know that Detroit's nickname, Motor City (or Motown), stems from the early 20th century, when it was the global center of the automotive industry* [45]. The text fragment refers to Detroit, which is indicated in the text itself.

b) bookish and literary, which are especially widely and traditionally used in journalism: *How Reno Became ‘the Divorce Capital of the World’ — And Why That Reputation Faded* [45]. In the fragment, under the multi-component expression, we mean ‘Reno’, which is a French automobile corporation.

Toponyms-nicknames that are used informally can be known both to a limited circle of users, and vice versa, to a wide one. As an example of literary nicknames, we can cite the traditional nicknames of American states. They differ from official names by a much larger amount of additional information about the named object, including emotional or ideological content. For example: *Old Dominion is one of the best-known nicknames for Virginia, along with Mother of*

Presidents and Mother of States; ... whatever you may see in the magnificence of nature, be it River or mountain, lake of fire or high-heaved chain of frost, Idaho stands matchless, peerless and alone as the “Gem of the Mountains” [45]. The nickname ‘Old Dominion’ probably derives from the fact that Virginia was the first and therefore the oldest of the overseas possessions of the kings and queens of England. While ‘the Gem of the Mountains’ metaphorically describes the incredible beauty of the state of Idaho.

In addition, the nicknames of the cities of Great Britain and the USA are traditional in journalistic use: *Athens of the North may refer to one of several cities in Northern Europe that, due to their prominence in science and culture, were likened to Classical Athens [45].* In this fragment, we can speak about Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland.

There are many cases of coexistence of several toponyms-nicknames of the same geographical object. So, in addition to the ‘Big Apple’ nickname, New York is also called ‘the Metropolis’ and ‘Gotham’, for example: *Although the history of Big Apple was once thought a mystery, a clearer picture of the term’s history has emerged due to the work of historian Barry Popik, ...; In 1807, Washington Irving compared the village of fools with New York in the collection of satirical stories “Salmagudi”, from that time the word “Gotham” became one of his nicknames [45].* The last sarcastic nickname was given to New York by the American writer Washington Irving.

It is characteristic that Boston is called ‘Bean town’, for example: *I noticed that Boston is still sometimes referred to as Beantown. Why is this, and can this totally lame nickname ever be replaced? [45]* Beantown refers to a regional dish of Boston baked beans. During colonial times, Boston’s favorite food was beans slowly baked in molasses. Sailors and merchants called it ‘Beantown’, while the locals did not call their city by this nickname.

Thus, after a brief review of the most common nicknames and trends in their use in the UK and the US, we can conclude that nicknames reflect the desire not only to describe the real properties of a person or the characteristics of a

geographical object, but also to give him some social (often derisive) assessment. And the knowledge of various nicknames common in English helps to enrich our knowledge about the history of life, the customs of the peoples of Great Britain and the United States of America.

Through continuous sampling from English-language media and lexicographical sources, as well as literary prose works, we have selected text fragments for designation of LU-nicknames according to the thematic principle, the distribution of which turned out to be quite heterogeneous. The results are presented in the Table (see Appendix 1, Table 2.1).

According to the results of the research, we have selected 14 thematic groups for the designation of English-language nicknames from various industries and spheres of activity. The group “Traits of character; moral qualities” (19.5%) appeared to be the most common. The next second “Appearance, physical background” and the third “Addresses of electronic boxes” thematic groups are represented by almost the same number of LUs – 12.5% and 12%, respectively. The fourth group “Social connections” is also popular and contains 10.5% of nicknames. At the same time, the fifth group is represented by three subgroups “Intellectual evaluation” (6.5%), “Nationality, race” (6.5%) and “Appeals” (6.5%). The sixth group is represented by nicknames to indicate toponymic vocabulary (5%). The seventh thematic group contains two subgroups covering artistic and religious spheres: “Artistic literature” (4.5%) and “Religion, myths, symbols” (4.5%). Finally, the eighth group consists of two subgroups “Invectives” (4%) and “Film industry, animation, music, theater arts, computer games” (4%). The ninth group titled “Gender-role reference” is represented by 2.5% of LU to designate English-language nicknames. Only 1.5% of the selected LU belong to the tenth thematic group “Military equipment, sports facilities”.

2.2. Types of nicknames of the English language

The specific nature of the Internet discourse predicts a change in certain provisions of linguistics and a special form of information presented. This can be a departure from the established rules of spelling, punctuation, syntax, intermediate belonging of texts to written and oral types of speech, a kind of compensation of non-verbal and para-verbal factors. In view of this, there is a need for a comprehensive study of linguistic and non-linguistic features of Internet communication as well as other discursive communicative types and nicknames as a special type of presentation of a communication participant [12, p. 18].

The **structure of a nickname** is a means of implementing its communicative and identification functions, one of the ways to emphasize, attract attention, make a name original, give it an appropriate form, for example: [@deborahspivak1978](#) *Bless you for all your continued rescue work! Good health for your whole family and all the animals rescue Heroes* [43]. In the fragment, the external form of the nicknames, which mainly denote the first and last name, performs a special function, because only it makes the nickname original.

Let us say that the investigated virtual names are heterogeneous in structure. According to the number of components, single-component and multi-component nicknames are distinguished, as we can see in the following fragment: *Did George H.W. Bush, known as Poppy, have a completely hidden side to his life?; James's nickname, Fiery Face, referred to a conspicuous vermilion birthmark on his face, which appears to have been deemed by contemporaries an outward sign of a fiery temper* [45].

Interestingly, the most common subgroups of **monocomponent** names are nomen complicated by additional vowels, and nicknames containing uppercase or lowercase letters or their combination, as well as non-normative signs and symbols, for example: [@lozzmon](#) *The man who makes of himself a friend to*

animal, makes of himself a friend to god [44]. In the fragment, the address of the mailbox name consists of only lowercase letters and is uncomplicated.

Among the **multi-component** network names, there are nicknames that are an intermediate link in terms of writing between together and separately, formed by combining two words, names that contain numbers, nicknames that combine lowercase letters, punctuation marks and/or indents (without numbers), nomen, that have underscores, for example: [@NewEarthWellness](#) *Restful music and a sweet cat. What a perfect combination;* [@burberrynorwegianforestcat394](#) *Sometimes I think if those are real kitties. They're all extraordinarily affectionate and loving they must be out of this planet;* [@user-to3cj7bg6r](#) *Wonderful! Amazing! You give to all of us a Lesson of Kindless! Your cats are lost in You! And sure cats can be big friends if they facing so warm love and care. Wish you health, kind heart Man!* [44]

According to the structure, the most common nicknames are those consisting mainly of **two- and multi-component word combinations**, for example: *'It is better for Britain', declared an M.P. recently, 'to have a few more Billy Bunters than the kind of hunger which was caused to many children before milk in schools' (Times) [51, p. 76]; ...it was an error to judge of him by the standards proper to the everyday Browns, Joneses or Robinsons (Hall Caine, 'Cobwebs of Criticism', Byron) [51, p. 116].*

The second group contains graphic designations of the names of addresses of electronic mailboxes: [@tongpitaktongpitak6388](#) *Thank you, and God bless you. I will never skip your advertisement channel. Greetings from Thailand* [44].

The third group includes abbreviations, as well as shortenings and telescopic formations: *The GI flung down the pen in disgust. "Well, I'll be damned," he declared, "I've fought off those mosquitoes everywhere..." [37, p. 72]; Private Tomson was leaning against the corner of the PX smoking a cigarette when an officer passed. The soldier didn't make a move to salute – just kept puffing away [36, p. 14].* In the passage, *GI* is an abbreviation for an American soldier, mostly an infantryman; a mark used for all items issued to men at public expense, as

distinguished from items paid for by servicemen. Meanwhile, *PX* is short for Post Exchange, a government store (similar to a department store located on a military base that sells goods to military personnel at prices that are generally lower than retail prices elsewhere).

Nicknames formed by affixation, mainly of suffixes and prefixes comprise the fourth group with a slight margin: *“I can,” answered the unit chaplain. “Then pray, mister,” ordered the skipper. “The rest of you put life preservers on; we’re one short”* [36, p. 40]; *Another General protested that the man in question had been through ten campaigns. “General”, said Grant, “so has that mule yonder, but he’s still a jackass”* [36, p. 15]. In the passage, *Jack* is a slang term for ‘corporal’, while ‘skipper’ is slang for company commander. This term, which originated in the navy, was then applied to any officer of the rank of captain, and sometimes even to lieutenants commanding companies.

Finally, the last group equally includes composites formed by word- and root composition and simple or root words: *Harry “The Hunchback” Riccobene was a high-ranking member of the Philadelphia crime family who became a major figure in the Scarfo-Riccobene gang war that followed the 1981 death of boss Philip Testa* [41, p. 289].

Through continuous sampling from English-language Internet sources, journalistic and fiction literature, as well as from lexicographic sources, we have selected text fragments for the designation of nicknames, namely of virtual space, criminal jargon, political figures and other lexicon. The distribution of the investigated lexical units by structure turned out to be rather heterogeneous (see Table 2.1). According to the results of the research, the most productive methods of word formation inherent in this vocabulary of the English language were found (see Appendix 2, Table 2.2).

According to the Table 2.2, the most common nicknames, consisting mainly of two- and multi-componental word combinations and accounting for 120 lexical units (hereinafter LU) or 60% of the total number of selected vocabulary, turned out to be the most common. The second group includes graphic designations of the

names of addresses of electronic mailboxes (25 LU or 12.5%). The third group includes abbreviations, as well as shortenings and telescopic formations (17 LU or 8.5%). Nicknames formed by affixation, mainly by suffixes and prefixes (14 LU or 7%), are the fourth group with a slight margin. Finally, the last group equally includes composites formed by word- and stem-composition (12 LU or 6%) and simple or root words (12 LU or 6%).

A significant place among the nicknames is occupied by lexical units, especially those that have a **zoocomponent** in their structure (the name of animals). A number of nicknames known to native English speakers are of indisputable interest, since knowledge of nicknames that exist in the field of criminal communication is interesting and important for understanding the life of the society using them, its traditions and customs, character, internal relationships of its representatives and with the world outside of it.

We try to differentiate the most specific and characteristic of English criminal jargon speakers. We have studied English-language sociolexicographic publications, media reports, literary works, films and animated films, in which we have defined nicknames that characterize the appearance, moral and ethical qualities of a person, his nationality, physical qualities, status in the criminal hierarchy. So, we have recorded the most famous and common nicknames of American and English bandits: *Railway workers even hired a brigade of hunters led by the famous Buffalo Bill, who personally killed over 4 thousand bison in 17 months* [39, p. 23]. The fragment mentions W. F. Cody. He acquired his nickname 'Buffalo Bill' during an eight-hour shootout with hunter William Comstock.

The following fragment is about Tony Accardo, nicknamed 'Big Tuna'. The appearance of the nickname was facilitated by a family photo of Accardo, which got into the newspaper pages, where he poses in a funny fishing suit. Later, the gangster was called the "Big Tuna" also because he managed to escape court punishment with the help of killing witnesses and bribing a jury: *Big Tuna is a super ambitious guy, you know?* [39, p. 12].

The following fragments are about two representatives of the criminal world, such as Ph. Testa ('Chicken Man') and Joseph Ayuppa ('The Dove'): *Merkert and all the rest – they just about laughed him out of the office when he told them about that – that chicken man [40, p. 99]; Prior to this conviction Aiuppa was never referred to as "Dove"; he was known for almost 40 years as "O'Brien" or "Joey O", as this moniker referred to his old boxing name, "Joey O'Brien" [40, p. 117].*

Bandit and assassin T. Petto was nicknamed 'The Ox' for his massive head and powerful chest: *Tommaso "The Ox" Petto (1879-1905) was a New York mobster and leading hitman in the Morello crime family during the early 1900s [40, p. 56]; Petto acquired the nickname The Ox, because of his physique [40, p. 33].*

A member of the New York gang 'Dawn', operating in the 50s of the XIX century, had the nickname 'Mad Pig': *when the last was 20years old were the most known of "dawn" bandits, and to the first - is one year less. However the great number of other inveterate criminals, among them Dribbling Jim, the Mad Pig, Sam IAC Carti known as the Cow Leg and the Barber Patsi entered into gang [42, p. 67].*

A very 'speaking nickname' was given to the most dashing gang of America at the end of the 19th century called the 'Dead Rabbits': "*Ugly cylinders*", "*Shirts*" and "*Dead Rabbits*" – *these gangs were created and arranged the meetings in other greengroceries [42, p. 68].* The aforementioned gang is one of the most famous and bloodthirsty criminal groups that operated in New York in the 50-70s of the XIX century. The symbol of the gang was the carcass of a dead rabbit impaled on a pole. In the slang of that time, the word "rabbit" meant "hooligan", and "dead rabbit" meant "big bully": *Bricks, stones and bludgeons andflashed in air andflew from windows in all directions, and people rushed on streets, swinging firearms. Wounded men lay on the sidewalk, trampled down them. Here "rabbits" have taken the offensive and have driven the opponents up Bayard Street in Baueri [42, p. 67].*

An active member of the 'Dead Rabbits' was a woman nicknamed 'Devil's Cat': *But were among them and such of which even the most desperate inhabitants of Five corners were afraid. So, in "Dead rabbits" a certain Devil's Cat of Maggie about whom rumors went that she sharpened the teeth a file consisted, and on hands I carried sharply ground copper claws* [42, p. 69].

'The Gopher Gang' ('gopher' means bagged rat) hosted in the area of Manhattan, known as 'Hell's Kitchen'. Everything from Seventh to Eleventh Avenue and from Fourteenth to Forty-second Street was under their control. The bandits hid from the police in basements and cellars, for which they got their nickname: *The Gopher Gang was an early 20th-century New York street gang known for its members including Goo Goo Knox, James 'Biff' Ellison, and Owney Madden* [42, p. 68]. The women took part on equal terms in the battle for power between criminal structures, often surpassing their men in cruelty and ingenuity. Hell's Kitchen still remembers the 'Gopher Sisters', who were the fighting girlfriends and mistresses of the most ferocious Irish gang in the history of New York: *Judging by the game's in-game scripts and illustration data, it seems like the Gofer Sisters are actually the phantom of Gofer himself divided into two pieces: L.B. for "Left Brain" and R.B. for "Right Brain"* [42, p. 68]. It is characteristic that women became the mistresses of brothels, swindlers, thieves and prostitutes. Working for bandits, they acted as guides: they made love with the right clients, obtained valuable information from them and "leaked" it to the gangsters, after which they handed over the deceived victim to their patrons, and the latter killed it.

One of the most dangerous killers of the 60s of the XX century was Joseph Barboza, nicknamed 'The Animal'. He got the nickname after a fight in a nightclub, where he, according to eyewitnesses, bit an opponent on the ear. Interestingly, Bernardo Provenzano, a member of the Carleone clan, which launched its criminal activities in the United States, received the same nickname for his intractability, uncompromisingness and cruelty: *Joseph Barboza Jr., nicknamed "the Animal", was an American mobster and notorious mob hitman for the Patriarca crime family of New England during the 1960s* [42, p. 67].

One of the founders of the Chicago mafia, Johnny Torrio, nicknamed ‘The Fox’, was a true mafioso who believed in three things: honor, revenge and solidarity. He earned his nickname for his diplomatic skills and cunning, which his criminal brethren admired: *Johnny The Fox Torrayo has lived long life. He was careful and kept away from big blood as considered that gangsters have to cooperate with each other and not be at enmity* [41, p. 65].

Ch. Gargotta and V. Coll were nicknamed metaphorically ‘Mad Dog’ for absolute uncontrollability, talent for intimidation and a penchant for murder: *Red line for him-a man nicknamed mad dog was another decision trump* [41, p. 77]. The following fragment mentions the name of Carmine Persico, who gained notoriety in criminal circles as an uncompromising enforcer. He was nicknamed ‘The Snake’ for his resourcefulness and cunning. In addition, he had a brilliant mind and even defended himself in court: *Carmine John Persico Jr., also known as “Junior”, “The Snake” and “Immortal”, was an American mobster and the longtime boss of the Colombo crime family in New York City from 1973 until his death in 2019* [41, p. 234].

S. Gravano was considered one of the most notorious Mafia traitors. But the nickname ‘Bull’ firmly stuck to him not for betrayal, but because of his low intelligence, congenital dyslexia and incredible stubbornness: *Salvatore “Sammy the Bull” Gravano is an American former mobster who became underboss of the Gambino crime family* [38, p. 6]. The carrier of the so-called “black cash” and the mistress of the famous B. Siegel ‘Bugsy’, who earned his nickname due to his unpredictable nature, Hills was considered the Queen of the gangster world. She bore the nickname ‘Flamingo’, which she received for her unusually slender and long legs: *Benjamin “Bugsy” Siegel was an American mobster who was a driving force behind the development of the Las Vegas Strip* [38, p. 126]; *The project for the new posh hotel would be named the Flamingo, the nickname Siegel gave to his mistress Virginia Hill* [38, p. 45].

The most cunning and streamlined Don, C. Gambino, who brought to life the principle: ‘you can’t be too careful on a mountain’ was nicknamed ‘The Squirrel’:

Joe Bonanno called him The squirrel, the servile person. Anastasius used him as errand boy. Once I saw Albert who was so become angry on Carlo who has failed a simple task that Albert has raised a hand and has properly hit him ... Other man wouldn't take out such public insult. Carlo answered with an obsequious smile [38, p. 77]. R. D'alterio led one of the oldest Camorra mafia groups after the death of her husband N. Pianese, a previous mafia boss, and was nicknamed 'Big Kitten': Raffaella D'Alterio, 46, nicknamed the 'big female kitten', was held along with 65 other suspects in a series of dawn raids by armed officers who also used helicopters and sniffer dogs in the operation [38, p. 67].

Thus, the analysis of a selection of substandard lexemes of nicknames allows us to conclude the following: nicknames can be conditionally divided into thematic groups: Appearance, physical background; Intellectual evaluation; Moral qualities; Gender-role reference; Social connections; Nationality, race, etc. The most recurrent in the English criminal jargon are nicknames that characterize the appearance, moral and intellectual qualities of a member of the criminal community, etc.

Based on a brief review of the most common nicknames in the criminal jargon of the English language and trends in their use, it can be concluded that the nicknames of members of the criminal community reflect the desire not only to describe the real properties of a person, but also to give him or her a certain social (often ironic) evaluation. During the research of sources, we also found that in the vast majority of nicknames in the criminal jargon of the English language, a negative evaluative connotation dominates. Thus, they are invective in nature and directly indicate the place occupied by the person in the criminal society.

Conclusions to the second chapter

Traditionally, a pseudonym is defined as a fictitious name used to create a false image of the person, regarding her or his gender, nationality, profession, character, or political preferences. Based on this definition, we can state that the

pseudonym or nickname is focused on special spheres of activity, in which the result of the work of creative consciousness is embodied by means of sign systems (music, theater and film art, literary creativity, etc.). A nickname is designed to play a role that, for one reason or another, cannot be denoted by an ordinary name. Unlike other anthroponyms (names and surnames), a nickname is invented and appropriated by the author as a special means of self-expression.

The nickname contains encrypted information about the user himself: in addition to the personal name, it can be age, gender, profession, hobbies, features of a person's appearance or character, his emotional state, preferences, etc. Due to such a wide range of information embedded in the essence of a nickname, there is a huge number of the most diverse classifications and varieties of names, proposed with the aim of revealing their meaning as accurately as possible.

In this work, we used the classifications of the nicknames by V. Katernyuk, S. Shestakova and L. Shityk and based on them and taking into account the lexical material we have selected from Internet sources, in particular from English publicistic texts, lexicographic resources and literary prose, developed our own classification of nicknames according to structure and thematic groups.

According to the structure, the most common nicknames, consisting mainly of two- and multi-componental word combinations and accounting for 60% of the total number of selected lexicon, turned out to be the most common. The second group includes graphic designations of the names of addresses of electronic mailboxes. The third group includes abbreviations. Nicknames formed by affixation are the fourth group. The fifth group equally includes composites formed by word- and stem-composition and simple words as well. According to semantics, we have selected fourteen thematic groups for the designation of English-language nicknames from various spheres of activity. The group "Traits of character; moral qualities" appeared to be the most common.

CHAPTER 3

WORD-FORMING AND SEMANTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NICKNAMES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF THE 21ST CENTURY (BASED ON LEXICOGRAPHIC SOURCES)

3.1. Derivative models of nicknames of the English language

The nomination means both the process and the outcome of linguistic categorization. As a result, the nomination can be expressed by a lexeme (a word or a set phrase), as well as a whole sentence [15, p. 23]. Accordingly, from a **structural** point of view, the secondary nomination of nicknames is divided into simple and complex. The basis of semantic modifications in a simple nomination is a word, and in a complex nomination it is a phrase, phraseological unit or sentence [17, p. 56].

Simple toponymic nicknames can be represented by one lexeme: Potatonia (Idaho), for example: *Burfat Potatonia fields. Potatonia to to law a turned up taks come Mire. Urtica caught or those moth on formet tree* [46]; Dakota (North Dakota), for example: *The University of North Dakota (UND) is the oldest and largest college in Dakota, offering 225+ accredited on-campus and online degrees* [46].

Most toponymic nicknames are substantive, and in complex secondary nominations, attributive syntactic relations are observed. Attributive relations can be expressed using various constructions, in particular, different types of lexical and syntactic units can act as a prepositive attributive [22, p. 253]. The prepositive attributive of a noun can be expressed by an adjective, a participle, a noun in the genitive case, a noun in the common case, an adverb, an interjection, and a sentence.

1. The most productive attributive constructions are **non-prepositional** groups. Among non-prepositional constructions, nicknames like ‘Apple State’, ‘Copper State’ are most common, for example: *Apple State. Opens tomorrow at 10:00 a.m.. Shop by drop-in. available. Shop by appointment. available. Reserve a*

shopping session; Copper State is a second-generation family, women-owned, business [47].

Such word complexes are considered as a special type of word combinations built according to the Adj+N model. The first part of such expressions is an adjective, which is formed from a noun by conversion. According to the second point of view, verbal complexes of this type are built according to the N + N model and belong to a specific group of compound words, since the relations between members of such complexes cannot be considered syntactic.

The author of this research adheres to the point of view, considering the first component as a noun, and word combinations as a special kind of compound word N+N. Compound words are the most productive construction when creating secondary toponymic nominations, for example:

Swamp State (South Carolina), for example: *Helen Halsey, or the Swamp State of Conelachita by Simms William Gilmore from Flipkart.com. [47];* Mormon State (Utah), for example: *Utah is a Mormon state. Not officially, of course – strict state and federal laws are meant to keep church doctrine out of government – and not as much as in the past, when practically all Utahns (and definitely all the decision makers) were LDS church members [47].*

Three-component compound words N + (and) + N + N are found as variants of this construction, for example:

Sand Hill State (Arizona), for example: *Find and book camping at Sand Hills State near Medora [49];* Liberty Bell State (Pennsylvania), for example: *The Liberty Bell State is the 33rd-largest by area and ranks ninth among all states in population density [47].*

In some secondary nominations, the adjective Adj + N + N is added to compound words, for example: Tall Corn State (Iowa), for example: *The most likely answer for the clue is IOWA. How many solutions does “The Tall Corn State” have? With crossword-solver.io you will find 1 solutions [47];* Lone Star State (Texas), for example: *Texas is also known as the “The Lone Star State” and there’s a good reason why [48].*

In nicknames of this type, there is a syntactic connection of adjacency, i.e. combining elements form a phrase without expressed forms of their connection. Another quite productive attributive construction with the syntactic relation of adjacency is the adjective + noun Adj+N, for example:

Colorful State (New Mexico), for example: *Colorful State is one of six “majority-minority” states where non-Hispanic whites constitute less than half the population* [48]; Tropical State (Florida), for example: *Find Tropical State stock images in HD and millions of other royalty-free stock photos, illustrations and vectors in the Shutterstock collection* [49];

This construction can include two adjectives + noun Adj+Adj+N, for example: Last Best Place (Montana), for example: *The Last Best Place is an unofficial nickname for the U.S. state of Montana. The phrase’s origin is disputed* [49]; Old North State (North Carolina), for example: *The Old North State is a nickname for North Carolina as well as the title of the state song and state toast* [47].

The adverb Adv+N, Adv+Adj, article Art+N, verb V+pron+N, participle Participle+N or the interjection Interj+N can act as the first element of a two-part secondary name, for example:

Forever West – Wyoming, for example: *Welcome to Wyoming - “Forever West”. Waymarking.com is a way to mark unique locations on the planet and give them a voice* [48]; Up Over – Alaska, for example: *Numerous indigenous peoples occupied Alaska or Up Over for thousands of years before the arrival of European peoples to the area* [49]; La Florida – Florida, for example: *La Florida was the first region of what is now the contiguous United States to be visited and settled by Europeans* [47]; Show me State – Missouri, for example: *Missouri has had many nicknames through the years, but the one most widely known is the “Show Me State.” No one knows exactly when or where the expression originated* [49]; Excelsior State – New York, for example: *Due to its long history, Excelsior State has several overlapping and often conflicting definitions of regions within the state* [48]. The adverb, article, verb, participle and interjection act here as an adjective.

However, such grammatical constructions are extremely rare in this lexical and semantic group.

A separate subgroup related to non-prepositional constructions combines secondary nominations with possessive constructions and has the following grammatical structure: noun in the possessive case + noun N_{poss}+N: Fisherman's Paradise (Louisiana), for example: *Owing to the exceptional fishing, the project later became known as Fisherman's Paradise* [47].

2. In attributive constructions, the second place in terms of frequency of use is occupied by prepositional constructions, among which the lion's share is made up of constructions with the preposition 'of': noun + of + noun N+of+N(+N): Mother of Rivers (Colorado), for example: *There are some street intersections in Mother of Rivers with a different sales tax rate on each corner, sometimes substantially different* [48]; Land of cactus (New Mexico), for example: *In the Land of Cactus is a 1913 silent film short produced by the Lubin Manufacturing Company of Philadelphia* [48].

This construction may include an adjective or a neutral formation:

– noun + of + adjective/N + noun N+of+Adj/N+N: Land of Rolling Prairie (Iowa), for example: *Land of Rolling Prairie was part of a territory known as La Louisiane or Louisiana, and European traders were interested in lead and furs obtained by Indigenous people* [49]; Land of steady habits (Connecticut), for example: *The Land of Steady Habits is ultimately about people pretending not to want things they want: security, companionship, drugs, alcohol, normalcy* [48].

– noun + noun + of + noun Adj/N+N+of+N: Cream Pitcher of the Nation (Minnesota), for example: *Cream Pitcher of the Nation is governed pursuant to the Minnesota Constitution, which was adopted on October 13, 1857, roughly one year before statehood* [49].

In addition to constructions with the preposition 'of', there are constructions with the prepositions to, in, with:

– noun + preposition + noun N+prep+(Adj)+N: America in Miniature (Maryland), for example: *Maryland's nicknames: "America In Miniature", "Old*

Line State”, “*Free State*” Maryland has been called “*America in Miniature*” because so much is packed into its 10,460 square miles of land and water [49].

The most productive component of prepositional constructions is the noun ‘land’. Other attribute components are listed according to productivity: ‘birthplace’, ‘crossroads’, ‘gateway’, ‘heart’, ‘state’, ‘garden’, ‘America’, ‘arsenal’, ‘battleground’, ‘bowl’, ‘lady’, ‘north’, ‘paradise’, ‘republic’, ‘river’, ‘spirit’ [49].

3. The least frequent is the group of secondary nominations, represented by sentences or subordinate clauses that perform an attributive function, for example: What a State! (Arkansas), for example: *Arkansas is nicknamed the Natural State, What a State! a landlocked state in the South Central region of the US. Arkansas borders six other states* [49].

Thus, in terms of productivity, the following models can be arranged as follows: N+N: N+N+N, Adj+N+N, Nposs+N; N+prep+N: N+prep+Adj/N+N, N+N+prep+N; Adj+N; N; Sentence; Adv+N/Adj: Adv+N, Adv+Adj; V+N: V+N, V+pron+N; Art+N; Interj+N.

3.2. Semantic features of English nicknames

Toponymic nicknames are linguistic units of secondary nomination, formed on the basis of an indirect method of nomination, when the motivating feature is indicated associatively, by means of another, already existing word. Initially, all toponyms have a motif of nomination. A significant part of toponyms retains it for a long time, however, some nominations lose their motivation over time. To nominations with the so-called “false” motivation [Matthews, p. 123], which reflect phenomena that do not correspond to reality, one could include nicknames like:

Wonder State ‘state of wonders’ (Arkansas), for example: *Told in two enthralling time lines, The Wonder State is a stunning, immersive follow-up to Girl One* [49]; the Land of Opportunity, for example: *The United States is supposed to*

be *the land of opportunity*, but there's a big obstacle for newcomers: establishing credit [49]; Land of Enchantment (New Mexico), for example: *Taos is the town that truly exemplifies New Mexico's nickname: "The Land of Enchantment"* [48].

As we can see, these toponymic nicknames reflect phenomena that do not correspond to reality, since the states of Arkansas and New Mexico are not famous for the richness and diversity of natural conditions and a developed economic system. However, the motive for the nomination in this case is obvious, since these nicknames show patriotism for their state and the desire to cover up an unsightly picture of chronic unemployment and economic decline in one of the most backward states in the United States.

The evaluative activity of human consciousness and the phenomenon of secondary nomination are closely interconnected. Lexical units, acting in the secondary function of naming, are a special way of expressing evaluative modality [29, p. 45]. As the analysis of the illustrative material shows, among the toponymic nicknames of the American states, neutral nominations prevail (74%), which are used mainly to avoid fatigue from primary forms, as well as to individualize the topoobject and the desire to express its new meanings, for example: Cheese State (Wisconsin), for example: *Wisconsin or Cheese State has a long tradition and history of cheese production and it is widely associated in popular culture with cheese and the dairy industry* [49]; Chemical Capital 'capital of the chemical industry' (Delaware), for example: *Known as the Chemical Capital of the world, Delaware has a commanding presence in the \$4 trillion global chemical industry* [48].

Evaluation of the nomination is closely related to the emotiveness of the nomination, since a positive assessment can only be conveyed through a positive emotion, a negative assessment through a negative one [32, p. 435]. In most cases, emotional registers and functional-stylistic tones are fixed with the help of stylistic marks in the dictionary definition.

Positive and negative evaluation can be expressed through the following positive and negative emotions:

1) admiration: What a State! ‘miracle state’ (Arkansas), for example: *The name of Arkansas or What a State! has been pronounced and spelled in a variety of ways* [49]; Paradise of the Pacific ‘Pacific paradise’ (Hawaii), for example: *In Paradise of the Pacific, Susanna Moore, the award-winning author of *In the Cut and The Life of Objects*, pieces together the elusive, dramatic story of ...*[48].

2) self-praise: Like No Place On Earth ‘the only place on earth’ (Wyoming), for example: *Wyoming or Like No Place On Earth is a dry state with much of the land receiving less than 10 inches (250 mm) of rainfall per year* [48]; The South’s Warmest Welcome ‘the warmest welcome in the South’ (Mississippi), for example: *This personalized wine glass features the state of Mississippi with the saying “The South’s Warmest Welcome”. Show your love for your home state* [49].

3) affectionate tone: Little Ida (Idaho), for example: *Idaho or Little Ida shares a border with six U.S. states and one Canadian province* [49]; Little Rhody (Rhode Island), for example: *Little Rhody is an unofficial nickname for the state of Rhode Island in the United States of America* [48].

4) playfully ironic tone: Badger State (jokingly) (Wisconsin), for example: *The state of Wisconsin is called the “Badger State”, although not for the reason you probably thought, or expected* [47]; Yankee State (jokingly) (Ohio), for example: *Seven presidents of the United States have come from Ohio or Yankee State* [47].

5) contempt / neglect: Sucker State (contempt.) ‘State of simpletons, dupe’ (Illinois), for example: *Probably the most popular explanation of how Illinois came to be known as the Sucker State involves the state’s first lead mine, which was opened in 1824 near Galena* [47].

6) rudeness / vulgarity: Puke State (rude, vulg.) ‘vomit state’ (Missouri), for example: *Other nicknames for Missouri include “The Lead State”, “The Bullion State”, “The Ozark State”, “Pennsylvania of the West”, “Puke State”* [48].

It should be noted that rude and vulgar toponymic nicknames are used in discourse with an eye on the communicative environment, with an expression of embarrassment, a feeling of awkwardness, and discomfort. They are pronounced

with a decrease in tone, speeding up the pace to a tongue twister, accompanied by a chuckle or laughter.

As a result of the analysis of the main features of the toponymic nicknames of the US states, 12 thematic groups (hereinafter referred to as TG/LSG) were identified:

1. Group “Space”: *Mainland State* ‘continental state’, Alaska is part of ‘the continental US’, but not ‘the contiguous US’ [48]; *Spectacular peninsulas* ‘scenic peninsulas’, Michigan is located on two peninsulas: Upper and Lower (SCSD); *Canada’s Florida* ‘Canadian Florida’ [48], Maine is similar in location to Florida; *Last Frontier* emphasizes the remoteness of the state of Alaska from the mainland of the United States [47].

As can be seen, spatial characteristics become a favorable basis for human linguistic creativity. All spatial nicknames have a full motivation, since the extralinguistic factor of naming is reliably known, and geographical information about the toponymic object makes it easy to understand the motivation for its secondary nomination.

It should be noted that only the unusual location, non-standard shape and outstanding size of the state are recorded in its nicknames. So, among all the nicknames that reflect spatial characteristics, some of them indicate the location of the state, others indicate the size of the state, and still others – its shape.

2. Group “Landscape”: In some nominations, the mountains of the state are compared with mountainous regions located in other countries of the world, for example, the state of Arizona is called *Italy of America* ‘American Italy’ [48], and the nickname *Switzerland of America* ‘American Switzerland’ [47] refers to five US states (West Virginia, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey and Colorado), which, like Switzerland, are famous for their picturesque mountain landscapes; Alaska’s nickname *Seward’s Ice Box* [48] refers to the state’s vast glacier-covered areas and US Secretary of State William Seward, who negotiated with the Russian government to purchase Alaska.

There is no doubt that the terrain leaves a certain imprint on the toponymy of the region as a whole, and on the system of secondary toponymic nominations in particular. The peculiarity of the relief and water resources is one of the most productive motivations for the secondary designation of American states. So, water resources are a little more common in nicknames (72%) than terrain features (28%). As the analysis showed, the most productive are nicknames containing the names of water bodies, namely: rivers, lakes, followed by oceans and their bays, then swamps, groundwater and glaciers.

3. Group “Climate”: *The climate of Minnesota indirectly influenced the appearance of the nicknames State of Hockey and Playground of the Nation ‘nation’s sports ground’* [47]. Minnesota is famous for its traditions and interest in hockey from its inhabitants. The climatic factor, or rather a huge amount of natural ice in winter, motivates children to play hockey. The ideal climate, created by New Mexico’s location between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean, has become one of the motivating signs of advertising nominations *Land of Heart’s desires*, *Land of Enchantment*, and *Land of opportunity* [48].

4. Group “Phytotoponyms”: The state of Idaho is famous for growing potatoes, which has spawned several secondary nominations: *Spud State* ‘potato state’, *Potatonia* ‘potato country’, *Famous Potatoes* [48]. The New Jersey state vegetable is the tomato. It even hosts the annual *La Tomatina* tomato festival; hence the nickname: *Tomato State* [48].

The best land in Hawaii is occupied by plantations of export crops, especially pineapples. Hence the toponymic nickname of this state *Pineapple State* [48]. *Citrus State* or *Orange State* [49] refer to Florida, which is the leader among US states in the production of citrus fruits [47].

Linguistic and cultural analysis of the studied units showed that most often it is developed agriculture that becomes the basis for the secondary nomination of a state. Most of the cultivated plants grown in the United States are recorded in the toponymic nicknames of the states. Among agricultural plants, the most common crops are cereals, other cultivated plants (sunflower, hemp, cotton), fruit crops,

walnut crops and nightshade plants. Toponymic nicknames containing a floristic component are fully motivated, since the facts underlying the secondary nomination are almost always known.

5. Group “Zootoponyms”: Maryland’s official state reptile is the tuberos turtle, which is why the state is referred to as the *Terrapin State* ‘Water Turtle State’ [49]. Florida has a secondary toponomination *Alligator State* [48] due to the fact that in the swamps of Florida at one time there were many alligators. *Antelope State* (archaism) is an obsolete nickname for the state of Nebraska, which was used in the 70-s of the XIX century, when these steppe animals (such as saigas) were really abundant in the state [49].

As a result of the analysis, it was found that the most typical, widely used in the secondary nominations of the American states are the names of vertebrates, arthropods, and also mollusks. As connotative analysis shows, it is in toponymic nicknames with a zoocomponent that a large number (52%) of units with a negative evaluative connotation is observed. Negative connotations are represented by playful, ironic, dismissive and even contemptuously insulting shades.

A large percentage of negative evaluative connotations is explained by the high evaluative potential of zoonyms. This potential is due to their internal form, which contributes to the creation of imagery as the basis of evaluation. Some zoonyms, being part of a toponymic nickname, reflect the character traits of a person, his properties and qualities, for example, ‘bear’ (rude and tactless when talking about Arkansans, ‘beaver’ (smart, hardworking when talking about Oregonians).

6. Group “Anthrotoponyms / Topotoponyms”: North Carolina is nicknamed the *Rip Van Winkle State* (named after the hero of the story by Washington Irving) [49]. *Holland of America* or ‘American Holland’ [48] is a promotional nickname for the state of Louisiana, which is full of rivers, arms, canals, and dams. In *The Italy of America* nomination [49] it is compared the beautiful and scenic mountainous regions of Arizona to the mountains of Italy.

7. Group “History”: The *Puke State* ‘Vomiting State’ (Missouri) [48] designation came about because of the large gathering of Missourians at the Galena lead mines.

The results of the analysis of the historical nicknames of the American states show that the most productive motivation for toponymic nicknames of this kind is the discovery and colonization of America by Europeans as the most important period in the history of the United States. The second most productive motivational feature is the events associated with various wars. Next, mention should be made of nicknames that reflect the circumstances in which the state entered the United States, as well as achievements in a certain area; nicknames associated with the status of American political figures, as well as with significant historical events and facts.

8. Group “Production”: The secondary nominations of the US states, reflecting manufacturing characteristics, make it possible to determine the geography of the development of the industry of a certain region, not only at the present moment, but also at any period of its historical development, since obsolete nicknames retain information about faded into the background or completely extinct industries, for example, *Bonanza State* (Pennsylvania) [48]; *Oil State, Steel State* (Montana) [49].

Among all the nicknames, the motivating feature of which is industry, there are nominations that characterize the material-producing complex. Further, it should be noted the production of consumer goods, the connection of nicknames with the machine-building complex, which includes the military industry. Whereas the smallest number of nicknames-toponyms is motivated by fuel and energy production.

9. Group “Social and political aspects”: Oklahoma is the *Land of the Red Man* [48]. The name of the state itself comes from the language of the Choctaw Indians, in translation from which *okla* means ‘people’ and *homma* is ‘red color’. More Indians live here than in any other state. It is here, on the site of a former reservation, that the city of Tahlequah is located, the tribal capital of the Cherokee.

In addition, there are ‘headquarters’ of 39 Indian tribes in the state. *Native America* [50] is currently used on state license plates.

10. Group “Literature”: A small number of nicknames appeared thanks to the literary works of authors from around the world. For example, due to extreme ‘patriarchy’ and unwillingness to change, North Carolina received the nickname *Rip Van Winkle State* [49] after the hero of the story by Washington Irving, who slept for twenty years and hopelessly lagged behind progress.

11. Group “Quotes”: In the scientific linguistic literature, there are quite a few interpretations of a quotation as a phenomenon that has its own set of properties. The nickname of the state of New York *Empire State* ‘imperial state’ [50], is associated with the statement of the first US President George Washington: “The state of New York will be the base of our empire” [48].

It should be noted that although there are few nicknames whose motivating feature is quotations, they are of particular interest for linguistic analysis. Knowledge of extralinguistic information evokes a number of historical and cultural associations, which helps to reveal the meaning of the nomination and better understand the scope of its application. The absence of such information may cause difficulties in understanding the content of the quote and the entire nickname as a toponymic secondary nomination.

12. Group “Advertising nicknames”: States advertise with their nicknames or slogans: their natural beauty, for example, *Colorful Colorado* [49]; *Spectacular peninsulas* ‘scenic peninsulas’ (Michigan) [48]; an abundance of entertainment and attractions, such as *Entertainment State* (California) [48]; *Vacation State* (Nevada) [49]; excellent living conditions (limitless opportunities and favorable climatic conditions), for example, *Land of opportunity* (New Mexico, Arkansas) [49].

The group we are considering includes explicit advertising toponymic nicknames. However, it should be noted that almost all names are aimed at creating a positive image of the state and in this sense are advertising. The advertising function of nickname toponymic nominations is one of the most important and characteristic features of American toponymy. Very often, advertising nicknames

are placed on car license plates and signs. One and the same toponymic nomination can refer to different groups at the same time, depending on its motivating features.

3.3. Comparative analysis of structural and semantic features of nicknames in English

A characteristic feature of the US toponymic system is the widespread use of secondary nominations, among which official and unofficial ones are distinguished. The **official nickname** is a descriptive name of a US state used as an addition to the main name [31, p. 90]. This is a nickname that is officially approved by the state legislature along with the official motto of the state, its flag, song, bird, animal and plant (relevant information can be found in reference publications). An **informal nickname** is a descriptive name of a US state used as an addition to the main name, not approved by law and used mainly in colloquial speech, the press and fiction [31, p. 92]. Official and unofficial secondary nominations are widely used in everyday life, in particular on car license plates.

Through continuous sampling from English-language lexicographic sources, we selected 50 toponymic nicknames of American states, which were classified according to the **structural** principle. The results of the conducted research turned out to be rather heterogeneous. Statistical data are displayed in the Table (see Appendix 3, Table 3.1).

A quantitative analysis of the productivity of grammatical constructions of the actual material showed the unconditional predominance of non-prepositional constructions (78%), among which the construction represented by compound words N + N (64%) turned out to be the most productive. The second most productive are prepositional constructions (10%), among which the most common is N + of + N (7%). One-component toponyms represented by nouns make up 6%; secondary nominations represented by sentences make up 3%. The least productive are verb, adverbial and interjectional constructions (3%).

Through continuous sampling from English-language lexicographic sources, we selected nicknames-toponyms of American states, which were also classified according to the **semantic** principle. The results of the conducted research turned out to be rather heterogeneous. Statistical data are displayed in the Table (see Appendix 4, Table 3.2).

When conducting a quantitative analysis of toponymic nicknames behind the **semantics**, it became clear that the most productive motivating feature of US toponymic nicknames is the socio-political component (20%). The second place in terms of productivity is occupied by nominations based on historical facts and events (16%). Next in terms of productivity are: phytotonyms (12%), landscape (12%), spatial (10%), industrial (8%) nicknames. Then come advertising nicknames (4%), zootonyms (4%), climatic (4%), toponymic and anthroponymic (4%), literary (4%) nicknames. The least productive is the group of nicknames-quotes (2%).

Summing up the above, it should be noted that, despite the diversity of states, their originality and uniqueness, the same secondary nominations of nicknames sometimes unite states that do not even border on each other. The presence of thematic polysemy of secondary nominations of nicknames indicates the similarity of geographical objects on some basis. Similarities can be traced in the leading industry and mineral resources of the states, in historical facts, in the features of the relief and climatic conditions of the states, in their flora and fauna, in agriculture and animal husbandry.

Conclusions to the third chapter

In terms of productivity, the structural models of toponymic nicknames can be arranged as follows: Noun+Noun; Noun+Noun+Noun, Adjective+Noun+Noun, Noun possessive+Noun, Noun+preposition+Noun, Noun+preposition+Adjective / Noun+Noun, Noun+Noun+preposition+Noun, Adjective+Noun, Noun, Sentence, Adverb+Noun, Adverb+Adjective, Verb+Noun, Verb+pronoun+Noun,

Article+Noun, Interjection+Noun. The functions of toponymic nicknames are inextricably linked with the emotional, evaluative and stylistic components of their semantics, which create content that is traditionally correlated with the concept of expressiveness or the expressive function of a language. The expressiveness of nicknames can be represented as their ability to produce a certain pragmatic effect on the recipient. It is closely related to the emotive and evaluative component. Secondary nominations have a high level of expression.

It has been noticed that among the anthroponymic secondary nominations, nicknames with positive semantics (human behavior, description of his appearance, intellectual and physical abilities) are much less than nicknames with negative semantics. Among the toponymic secondary nominations, the opposite situation is observed. There are far more positive nicknames than negative ones. This can be explained by the advertising function of many toponymic nicknames, which are created in order to form a positive attitude of a person towards the state itself and attract tourists to this region. As the analysis of the factual material showed, neutral nominations predominate among the nicknames of American states (74%). However, it should be noted that the secondary nomination can acquire a stylistically marked symbolic representation in the context. Among evaluative names, the most frequent are units with positive subjective semantics (20%); nominations with a negative connotation occur in 6% of cases.

CONCLUSIONS

Traditionally, a pseudonym is defined as a fictitious name used to create a false image of the person, regarding her or his gender, nationality, profession, character, or political preferences. Based on this definition, we can state that the pseudonym or nickname is focused on special spheres of activity, in which the result of the work of creative consciousness is embodied by means of sign systems (music, theater and film art, literary creativity, etc.). A nickname is designed to play a role that, for one reason or another, cannot be denoted by an ordinary name. Unlike other anthroponyms (names and surnames), a nickname is invented and appropriated by the author as a special means of self-expression.

The nickname contains encrypted information about the user himself: in addition to the personal name, it can be age, gender, profession, hobbies, features of a person's appearance or character, his emotional state, preferences, etc. Due to such a wide range of information embedded in the essence of a nickname, there is a huge number of the most diverse classifications and varieties of names, proposed with the aim of revealing their meaning as accurately as possible.

In this work, we used the classifications of the nicknames by V. Katernyuk, S. Shestakova and L. Shityk and based on them and taking into account the lexical material we have selected from Internet sources, in particular from English publicistic texts, lexicographic resources and literary prose, developed our own classification of nicknames according to structure and thematic groups.

According to the structure, the most common nicknames, consisting mainly of two- and multi-componental word combinations and accounting for 60% of the total number of selected lexicon, turned out to be the most common. The second group includes graphic designations of the names of addresses of electronic mailboxes. The third group includes abbreviations. Nicknames formed by affixation are the fourth group. The fifth group equally includes composites formed by word- and stem-composition and simple words as well. According to semantics,

we have selected fourteen thematic groups for the designation of English-language nicknames from various spheres of activity. The group “Traits of character; moral qualities” appeared to be the most common.

The nickname occupies a special place in the onomastic system of the language as a phenomenon of artificial nomination, having a number of features that bring it closer to pseudonyms and, in certain parameters, to occasionalisms and neologisms. The main features that determine the specifics of the nickname are the certainty of the nomination, the presence of a single reference, semantic and structural features, the greater explication of the connotative and pragmatic components, due to the communicative orientation. To describe nicknames, we applied the level principle (from form to content, from structural-graphic to functional), which makes it possible to compile a complex classification of nicknames that differs from existing ones, most of which are oriented towards alias classes.

The structure of a virtual personality, which includes all the features of a linguistic and communicative personality, is a combination of cognitive, psychological, social, pragmatic and verbal-semantic (individual-style) components. Depending on the mental attitudes of the subjects of communication (self-identification or ‘decoding’), certain components are combined, forming the basis of the concepts ‘Self’ or ‘He/She’. The nickname is considered as a two-way phenomenon, including encoding and decoding mechanisms. The ‘representing’ subject implements strategies and tactics of self-identification and influence on communicants through the nickname. The ‘perceiving’ subject, relying on personal experience and on socio-psychological (evaluative, value, stereotyped) attitudes, thanks to the nickname, identifies its bearer. The result of the cognitive activity of both subjects is the formation of diverse personal images.

SUMMARY

The scientific work is devoted to the study of English nicknames in the 21st century.

Modern linguists are most interested in the motivation of nicknames and specific reasons that lead to the appearance of a person's unofficial name. This approach takes into account the historical aspect of the formation of nicknames of a person or toponymic objects. However, the motivation behind a nickname can be fluid and refined. The reason for the formation of a nickname can sometimes be so accidental that in use an informal name is also considered as unmotivated. A review of the scientific literature on the researched issue, namely the analysis of the works by D. Crystal, E. Pulgram, A. Room, I. R. Searle, H. S. Sorensen makes it possible to conclude that there is insufficient attention to this problem in modern linguistics.

The **topicality** of the work is determined by the general focus of modern linguistic research on identifying the structural and semantic features of English nicknames in the 21st century.

The **aim** of the research is to study the peculiarities of English-language nicknames in the 21st century.

To achieve the goal, the following **objectives** have been defined:

- to describe the problem of defining the concepts of 'nickname' and 'anthroponym' in linguistics;
- to investigate nicknames as a type of anthroponymic vocabulary;
- to consider classifications of English-language nicknames according to various categorical features;
- to describe types of nicknames of the English language;
- to perform a comparative analysis of means of representation of the structure and semantics of toponymic nicknames in the English language.

The **object** of research are English nicknames in 21st century.

The **subject** of the research are the structural and semantic features of English nicknames.

The **research methods** are determined by the purpose, objectives and analyzed material: the comparative method, which consists in the correlation of the means of representing nicknames in the English language; contextual-interpretive, which consists in clarifying the specifics of the meaning of words and phrases used to denote nicknames; descriptive, with the help of which the use of a certain nickname was justified; continuous sampling method and statistical method.

Summing up the above, it should be noted that, despite the diversity of toponymic nicknames, their uniqueness, the same secondary nominations of nicknames sometimes unite states that do not even border on each other. The presence of thematic polysemy of secondary nominations of nicknames indicates the similarity of geographical objects on some basis. Similarities can be traced in the leading industry and mineral resources of the states, in historical facts, in the features of the relief and climatic conditions of the states, in their flora and fauna, in agriculture and animal husbandry.

According to the structure, among anthroponymic nicknames, the most common nicknames, consisting mainly of two- and multi-componental word combinations and accounting for 60% of the total number of selected lexicon, turned out to be the most common. The second group includes graphic designations of the names of addresses of electronic mailboxes. The third group includes abbreviations. Nicknames formed by affixation are the fourth group. The fifth group equally includes composites formed by word- and stem-composition and simple words as well. According to semantics, we have selected fourteen thematic groups for the designation of English-language nicknames from various spheres of activity. The group "Traits of character; moral qualities" appeared to be the most common.

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APPENDIX 1

Table 2.1

Distribution of English nicknames based on the material of English-language sources (thematic principle)

Type	Amount	%
1. Character traits; moral qualities	39	19,5
2. Appearance, physical background	25	12,5
3. Email addresses	24	12
4. Social connections	21	10,5
5. Intellectual assessment	13	6,5
6. Nationality, race	13	6,5
7. Appeals	13	6,5
8. Toponyms	10	5
8. Artistic literature	9	4,5
10. Religion, myths, symbolism	9	4,5
11. Invectives	8	4
12. Film industry, animation, music, theater arts, computer games	8	4
13. Gender-role reference	5	2,5
14. Military equipment, sports facilities	3	1,5
Total:	200	100

APPENDIX 2

Table 2.2

Frequency indicators of use of different methods
of formation of English nicknames

Type	Amount	%
1. Polycomponent phrases	120	60
2. Graphic designations	25	12,5
3. Abbreviations (shortenings, telescopisms)	17	8,5
4. Affixation	14	7
5. Composition	12	6
6. Simple (root) words	12	6
Total:	200	100

APPENDIX 3

Table 3.1.

Distribution of toponymic nicknames by structure in English-language discourse (based on lexicographic sources)

The type of construction	Quantity %
1. Non-prepositional constructions	78
2. Prepositional constructions	10
3. One-component toponyms	6
4. Nicknames in the form of sentences	3
5. Verb, adverbial and interjectional constructions	3
Total: 50	100

APPENDIX 4

Table 3.2

Distribution of toponymic nicknames according to semantics in English-language discourse (based on lexicographic sources)

TG	Quantity %
1. Nicknames of a socio-political nature	20
2. Historical nicknames	16
3. Nicknames-phytotoponyms	12
4. Landscape nicknames	12
5. Spatial nicknames	10
6. Manufacturing nicknames	8
7. Advertising nicknames	4
8. Zootoponyms	4
9. Climatic nicknames	4
10. Topotoponymic and anthrotoponymic nicknames	4
11. Literary nicknames	4
12. Nicknames-citations	2
Total: 50	100