

LEXICAL-PRAGMATIC AND ETHNO-CULTURAL DESCRIPTION OF
TOPONYMS: GREENLAND AND ICELAND

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Abstract:

Although the importance of the toponymy as a major sector of the onomastic space, it represents a particular difficulty for the new researcher, rather than to other types of names. The fact that those toponyms are insufficiently commented onomatically is due to the fact that many of them belong to the most historical lexical layers, but from the role that this onymic type played at the moment of occurrence, which requires the reconstruction of the worldview of people of that time, their cultural picture of the world. The aim of this study is to describe the cultural and pragmatic characteristics of toponyms as Greenland and Iceland by contrasting as parts of the pragmatic linguistics. As a result of the research, conclusions were given from a cultural-cognitive point of view.

Key words: toponyms, Greenland, Iceland, Vikings, onomastics, pragmatics, geographical name, culture

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Introduction. The study of the toponyms is considered to be one of the most well-known field of education, which makes it possible to analyze and show mental representations of the place as a whole. Particular attention is paid to the works carried out in line with the cognitive and functional approaches to the analysis of toponymic material. The subject of this article is to describe pragmatic meanings of Greenland and Iceland.

It has long been recognized that detailed study of the names of places brings an important perspective to history. The serious academic study of place-names began among medievalists, because the geographical and historical record of names can supplement other historical evidence, sometimes in unexpected ways. Place-name scholars collect spellings of place-names (including the names of old places that have been lost) from charters, court records and other ancient documents. The names of small places can be especially important in studying family names of local origin: some families took their name, not from a village but from an individual house in which they lived, e.g. Blakeway or Copplestone (Hanks et. al, 2002).

Toponymy, like any other science, does not stand still and reacts sensitively to changes occurring in the scientific world, including the linguistic world. The subject of our consideration is historical toponyms in the works of geographic scientists of the last decades. The cultural and cognitive characteristics of toponyms deserves

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separate consideration and is the subject of the description of this article. Let us consider in more detail how the problems we have identified are solved. In the new paradigm of scientific knowledge, the problems of toponomination are still relevant. This area of research is dominated by the problem of studying the principles of the formation of toponyms and their cognitive foundations. The process of creating a geographic name is generally no different from the process of creating an appellative derived word. The toponym is also a secondary linguistic unit, and its emergence, according to cognitive scientists, occurs as a result of the interaction of concepts.

Culture, history, geography and linguistic analytical methods have found successful application in place-names studies. The origin and borrowings of geographical names are considered to be cultural heredity. It is supposed that the variability of the linguistic forms of place-names is linked with the history of the country, whether it describes some topographical objects either natural or man-made, which were then transferred to the settlement.

Material and research methods. The pragmatic and linguocultural analysis helped to define greater conceptual connections between a person and the space surrounding him were revealed in the course of studying the toponymy. The data obtained made it possible to interpret the toponymic picture of Greenland and Iceland as a complex formation, which is structured by a system of interrelated pragmatic formations.

The traditions of names giving are specific in each culture. It is closely connected with the history of the country: names and nicknames, place of birth and living, lands owning, family relations, culture personal and labour (Cresswell, 2009; Delahunty, 2006). Individual creative features of the place-names giving are considered in complex with mental cognition and cultural effect (Fauconnier, 1999). Interrelation of languages in the conditions of ethnic contacts initiates existence of territorial universal units, which participate in word compositions.

About 4500 years ago, long before European whalers and explorers set foot on the east coast of Greenland, the entire region had been settled by Inuit (palaeo - eskimos). The Greenlandic Dorset people lived in East Greenland from about 800 BC to 0. About AD 1200 the ancestors of the present day Greenlanders, the Thule culture, reached Greenland, and via North Greenland soon populated the entire coast of East Greenland. They were whale-hunters and possessed skin boats (kayaks and umiaks), but also depended on musk oxen, seals, hares, birds and fish (Larsen 1970).

The Icelandic sagas include accounts of a number of voyages to Greenland, although most of the place names recorded have usually been identified with locations in South or West Greenland (Rafn 1845). Some names have appeared in a variety of positions on old charts which were based partly on interpretations of the sagas (Egede 1818; Steenstrup 1886, 1889; Bjornbo 1911; Trap 1928; see Frontispiece).

Background. Traditionally, research in onomastics has focused on the investigation of place names or toponyms and personal names or anthroponyms. The term toponymy is then used for place names and anthroponymy for personal names. Place names are normally divided into two groups: natural names and cultural names. Natural names are names whose referent is a natural place (e.g., a sea, a mountain, or a forest) and cultural names are names whose referent is a place built or formed by humans (e.g., a field, a road, or a house). Natural names are further typically divided into two groups – those on land and those related to waters: topographic names (e.g.,

the name of a marsh or of a rock) and hydronyms (e.g., the name of a lake or of a ditch). Cultural names are usually divided into settlement names (such as homestead or village names), cultivation names (e.g., names of fields and meadows) and artefact names. The last category includes names of roads, bridges, dams and other structures.

When we talk about the meaning of a name, we often think about the lexical meaning of the morphemes or words that seem to be included in it, in other words, the dictionary meaning of (parts of) appellatives used in name formation. For this original, semantic content of a name, that is, what an expression understood as a name meant at the time of name giving, it can be used as the term etymological meaning, or sometimes also identifying meaning. Etymological meaning is interesting when names are interpreted from the name bearer's point of view, whereas when we think of the context of usage of a name, etymological meaning is largely irrelevant. We will now move on to discuss the pragmatic perspective in onomastics.

The pragmatic functions of proper names have mainly been discussed by scholars working within the philosophy of language tradition (cf. Searle 1969; Kripke 1972; Van Langendonck 2007). However, their discussions are typically based on introspective reflections, sound argumentation. But even in studies by ordinary language philosophers, the way speakers actually use proper names in their daily activities is seldom systematically accounted for.

Results. Greenland is actually the world's biggest island – by area – that is not a continent. The total area of Greenland is 2.16 million square kilometres (836,330 square miles), including other offshore islands. Almost 80 percent of the land mass is covered by an ice cap. The ice-free area may be a minority, but it's still around the size of Sweden. With a population of 56,480 (2017 estimate), it is one of the least densely populated countries in the world. Europeans probably became aware of Greenland's existence in the early 10th century, after Gunnbjörn Ulfsson, while sailing from Norway to Iceland, was blown off course by a storm and sighted some islands off Greenland.

After all, Greenland and Iceland are close to each other. However, that isn't the case. The Vikings named both places. Normally, the Vikings named things as they saw them. For instance, when Leif Erikson landed in Canada, the first thing he saw was grapes growing on a vine. Looking at the vine, he named the land "Vinland." So how did they come up with the names for Iceland and Greenland?

In 850 CE, Naddador was the first Viking to land in Iceland. It was snowing when he got there, so he named the island "Snow Land." Later, Flóki Vilgerðarson traveled to the island. On the way there, he lost his daughter. Shortly after reaching the island, all of his livestock died. Sad and unsure what to do, the Viking climbed a mountain to think. From the top, he saw a bay full of icebergs. That's when he renamed the island "Iceland."

The icebergs Vilgerðarson saw weren't common in Iceland. Today, many people think they probably floated over from Greenland. Still, the name "Iceland" stuck. Years later, Iceland was home to many Vikings. Erik the Red was one of the people who lived there. After a bloody feud, they banished Erik the Red from Iceland. He left the island and sailed west.

In 985 CE, Erik the Red landed in the southwest of Greenland — one of the few regions that weren't covered in ice. In fact, the area still holds thriving farms today.

Seeing all the green plant life, Erik the Red named his new home “Greenland.” Erik also chose the name in hopes that it would make more people want to move there.

Discussion. According to all historic information above, if I distinguish the pragmatic side of the names of islands, It is possible say that context meanings and pragmatic meanings of them are different from each other.

Firstly, in context Iceland means the place where is covered with snow or ice.

Iceland = Ice [cold, hard, colourless material] + Land [place, field, ground]

In spite of the fact that in reality, Iceland is a green island with no ice and snow that plants grow barely and people can live. In pragmatic linguistics, as it is clear, the toponym Iceland doesn't fit it's name.

When it comes to saying about Greenland, in context it means beautiful place where is full of flowers, trees and plants just like a ecosystem.

Greenland = green [colour, like a plant] + land [place, field, ground]

However, in the map it is seemed as a winter island that is covered with snow. It actually is gigant Ice that in millions years survived as an island.

Eric the Red obviously knew the view of Iceland, but in order to attract peoples attention and make them visit here, he specially gave the name “Greenland” which means warm and beautiful place. Because of the fact that, Vikings living in the North were quite fond of finding a new land where has several beneficial factors for gathering and saving livestock, Eric the Red wanted other tribes to move here to live with him. As it is not secret, living alone in isolated island is not easy, his idea of calling a new place as “Greenland” was perfect solution.

If I look deeply in the culture of Vikings, I could understand why Greenland is named Green and Iceland is named Ice. For Vikings, to put steps on the ground of Iceland was difficult. In order to arrive the island, they had to meet a lot of problems as shortage of food and water, climate change and colonization. After gathering all facts, it is possibly for Vikings to call the land as Iceland. It is named by its difficulties in that time. In contrast, Greenland is named by taking into account of dreams and views of Vikings several decades after. The reason of that, in northern tribes, green is considered to be eternal youth and wellness additionally it played a great role in their culture.

Conclusion. Onomastics represents a new perspective on a field where scholars have been active for well over a century. It has taken a remarkably long time in onomastics to put more emphasis on name usage and other societal insights into names in addition to focusing on etymology and the typology of names. Fortunately enough, much has happened during the 21st century and is happening just now. In 2016, two edited volumes on names and onomastics (Hough 2016; Puzey & Kostanski 2016) were issued, and there is a multitude of articles dealing with name usage in these volumes.

But even though it may seem as if onomastic research in pragmatics of Greenland and Iceland has finally finished with what is happening in the rest of linguistics, it is important to note that pragmatics of the names of these islands are not only discussion issue in linguistics: names are central ingredients in geography, in history, in anthropology, psychology, etc.; and that pragmatics of toponyms is really a different perspective on communication, a perspective that is solidly grounded in traditional onomastic research with its particular way of tackling issues related to names. It would be a mistake to attempt to merely redefine earlier findings within

onomastics in linguistic terms; it is rather general linguistics that needs to pay attention to a field of origin of toponyms and for what they are named that it has neglected for so long. I believe that the best way to accomplish this coherence is through pragmatics.

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