

SUFFIXAL WORD-FORMATION IN ENGLISH FAMILY ONOMASTICS AS A STYLISTIC BASIS FOR ANTONOMASIA

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Annotation: This article examines the structural and semantic functions of suffixes in English family onomastics and their role in the formation of antonomasia. Particular attention is given to productive suffixes such as -er, -s, -kin, -ley, -ette, -itt, which not only serve genealogical or professional functions but also contribute to the creation of expressive and meaningful character names in English literature. The study highlights how the reinterpretation of suffixes enables the transformation of common nouns into stylistically charged antonomasia. Special emphasis is placed on the expressive potential of diminutive, evaluative, and semi-affixal elements, which enrich the emotional coloring of character names.

Keywords: antonomasia; English onomastics; suffixation; stylistic devices; family names; character naming; morphological expressiveness.

The majority of the nouns with a single thematic suffix repeat the well-known models of English family onomastics: the subject + the most productive suffixes of English surnames: -er, -s, -y, -ley, -kin. For example: Mr. Snapper (“snap”), Spiller (“spill”), Rabbits (“rabbit”), Figs, Airy, Crawley (compare with the surnames given in Kelly's Commercial and Industrial Directory: Simkins, Teachers, Hunter, Fisher, etc.).

The predominance of the nominative meaning in nouns of this structural type is absolutely undoubted. Moreover, the objective-logical meaning of these words completely disappears in isolated use and reappears only in a broader context.

In our opinion, the genealogical suffix -s and the professional-positional suffix -er, which retain their great productivity in the formation of antonomasia in English family onomastics, deserve special attention. Along with authorial neologisms of the type Major, Slasher, Piddler, Hulker, derivatives with these suffixes that already existed in the language are used, for example: Marker, Porter, Slapper, Punter.

In this case, it is assumed that the word-forming suffix of the agent -er corresponds to the family (generational) suffix -er. The very similarity of the formal structure in both cases makes it possible to widely use generic nouns with the agentive suffix -er as “meaningful” nouns - antonomasia. Such a reinterpretation of the form is observed in the nouns Bowls, Glanders, Rickets /each of which belongs to the pluralia tantum group of nouns/ by analogy with Baggs, Peas, Buffs, where -s is a family (generic) suffix.

Nouns that “have a certain meaning” are distinguished into a separate group, the expressiveness of which is manifested in the peculiarities of the base and the expressive suffix that gives the noun an emotional color. For example, Dr. Pilkins - from “pill”.

The suffix -kin/kins is at the same time a word-forming suffix of English surnames and an adjective-valuing suffix with a diminutive meaning. The dual function of the suffix leaves a unique mark on the character of the noun. On the one hand, the suffix -kin, being a word-forming suffix of English surnames, helps to bring the nominal meaning of the word to the fore, on the other hand, being a suffix of qualitative value, not only prevents the loss of the objective-logical meaning introduced into the subject of the word, but also gives an additional subtle difference to the whole meaning of the name.

The same thing is observed in the name Sir Clupkins (if we take into account the change in the spelling of the word).

The subjective value suffixes -u, -eu, which are extremely productive in modern English, added to the stem of a noun or adjective, are also one of the typical suffixes of English genealogical onomastics. For example: Miss Hawky (a girl who preys on others, a sharper or cheat), Mr. Swandey (a swaggering person, a dandy a fop), Mrs. Gorney (Mr. Bumble's wife who acts with consistent hardness of hand in her treatment of the unfortunate creature in the poorhouse).

The suffix -ley, which has the same emotional color, forms the stem of the verb. For example: Gramley from the verb to cram (sl. - to prepare (a person) or get up (a subject), hastily for an occasion, by stuffing the memory with facts), Miss Scratchley from the verb "to scratch" (to wound superficially by dragging the claws or finger-nails over the skin), Wagley from the verb "to wag" (to keep the tongue moving in chatter or gossip).

The suffix -ette (-et), -itt forms the base of the noun. For example: Mrs. Catchet, Clackitt, Miss Leggit, etc.

Semi-affixed nouns that have some meaning in terms of the morphological structure of the word seem interesting [1]. As is known, semi-affixes stand on the border between a word and a suffix. From the former they are distinguished by semantic weakening and some abstraction of meaning, and from the latter - by semantic independence, which to a certain extent brings them closer to the word. Such a characteristic instability of semi-suffixes can be used for certain stylistic purposes. So, for example, Miss showman and Miss Knowman can be considered both as single-theme suffixed nouns, and as two-theme nouns, repeating the well-known model of the "Showroom" type originating from the Romance languages.

But Adeline determined Juan's wedding,

In her own mind, and that's enough for woman:

But then, with whom? There was the Miss Reading

Miss Raw, Miss Flaw, Miss Showman, and Miss Knowman.

Byron. Don Juan.

To summarize from the article, we can say that suffixal word-formation plays a central role in shaping English family onomastics and provides fertile ground for the stylistic device of antonomasia. Productive suffixes such as -er and

-s demonstrate continuity between genealogical and professional meanings, while diminutive and evaluative suffixes like -kin and -ley enhance the expressive potential of character names. The study of semi-affixes further reveals the fluid boundaries between lexical and morphological elements, which writers actively exploit for stylistic purposes. By analyzing examples from literary texts, it becomes clear that suffixal creativity not only typifies English surnames but also allows authors to imbue names with nuanced emotional, social, and characterological meanings. Thus, antonomasia rooted in suffixal structures occupies an important place in the stylistic system of English literature, serving as a powerful means of characterization and narrative enrichment.

References

1. Marchand H. The Categories and types of present-day English word-formation, ch. IV, p 80, 290.