THE ARGUMENT OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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Semantic Change of Given Names

Model of the apellativisation of a proper name type

DE Faculty of Arts
2005

1 Objectives

My dissertation aims at a threefold task. My objctive is to survey the literature on the meaning of proper names from the point of view of appellativisation, that is semantic change of proper names. My second task is closely linked to this: to find a possible model for the appellativisation of proper names which is acceptable for all languages and all types of prper names; I attempt at stressing those factors which contribute to the formation of such semantic change and at exploring the general characteristics of such a change. Finally I show the characteristics of this change on a selected material of given names, that is, 28 Hungarian male and female names. My final objective should have been to process all the appellative derivations of collected appellativised given names in a dictionary but it was not possible for me (although the material was ready) since presenting the appellative derivations of the approx. 400 appellativised given names would surpass the frames of this dissertation. Onomastic material to be analysed now was selected in a way appropriate for the illustration of significant proportions and tendencies.

As regards my choice of topic, the following question might be arised: why is it given names that I use as a model? One of the basic drives for appellativisation is connotation and its becoming more and more stressed in the semantic structure of names which occurs during language use in living speech. We should not forget about use frequency: it is more probable that a frequent type of name will appellativise which type can be linked with associations and moods than a rare and special type of proper name. The more widely a proper name is known and the more frequently it is used by the more people in the more various communication situations and contexts, the more probable is its appellativisation (and the larger number of common meanings it will have). It is beyond doubt that this criterium is met the best by given names. Since my objective is sketching the general characteristics and tendencies of the phenomenon, it was reasonable to choose the type of proper name which has the most typical and most extensive material for data collection. From among the large and variegated mixture of data, I chose given names for the topic of my dissertation since these show the most unified picture, so these serve as the best basis for further analysing work. There were some people who suggested that common names originating from given names are very frequent, really variegated both from semantic and from structural point of view and that these are worth examining (e.g., ÉVA B. LŐRINCZY, BORBÁLA VITÁNYI, ATTILA HEGEDŰS).

2 Motivation and antecedents of the research

My research is justified by three factors. First, much more proper names with appellative derivations seem to be included than it could be thought before and, on the contrary of former opinions, we can note that it is not a new phenomenon and it is not confined to dialects or to a given territory. I consider appellativisation to be a much wider feature which is relevant for the whole of language and which is worth to be examined much deeper. Using given names as common words is a very old phenomenon in Hungarian. First records are from the 16th century (1604: *gábor* 'yellow bird', 1647: *maca* 'lover'). Appellativisation as a linguistic phenomenon cannot be confined to a single part of the language area. The material of those dictionaries which were studied by me cover the whole historical territory of Hungary. This phenomenon cannot be confined merely to sociolects, either, although appellativisation of proper names (and mostly of given names) seems the most dynamic in these language strata. It is mainly slang and student language which provides us with ample examples (e.g., *pali* 'boy, man', *poénjani* 'funny guy', *béla* 'stupid (child)', *szepimatyi* 'boy with freckles'). It is not only the large number of collectable data which refers to the appellativisation of proper names as being a living trend but also the fact that we use such forms every day in our speech; and common forms (or transitional proper names in metaphoric use or indicating a type) are very frequent in he language of media and newspapers which aims at using interesting and surprising forms, e.g., *szolármaca* 'woman obsessed with fashion', *dezső* 'dollar', *szintilajcsizás* 'low level music for synthetizer', *csurkázik* 'mention Csurka' or 'declaring views from the extreme right', *tocsikolás* 'speculation', *macskajancsi* 'petty man'. The spread of appellativised forms in the common usage is further proven by the frequent use of such forms in literary works translated from foreign languages, and it is the case not only with belles-lettres but with pulp fiction aiming at being close to living speech, too. And this refers evidently to that this phenomenon is accepted, considered characteristic of common speech and not the least strange.

I also find it important to examine appellativisation from that point that it may generate new results in particular in judging the semantic change of proper names. Hopefully it will further discussions on the meaning of proper name (or at least the meaning and the semantic change of a type of proper name). The large number of data published can serve for example in many other linguistic fields, e.g., the examination of word formation, research of sociolects and style.

The third reason that I feel it justified to write a dissertation of such character, processing and systematic and aiming at the exploration of the theoretical background of the phenomenon for since I have no knowledge of a work which analyses such a large material, at the same time examining

the theoretical background of the phenomenon. Former works focused on data publication (and some kind of a grouping of these) or on the exploration of the theoretical background of appellativisation only.

3 Structure of the dissertation and research methods

My dissertation is divided into three parts. First I survey the literature on the proper name, its possible approach and the theoretical and practical ways of approaching appellativisation as semantic change, then the second part examines the collected material from three points of view, and in the third part I publish a part of the dictionary containing the examined data, that is, entries in relation with 28 names.

1. So the first part is dedicated to the survey of the theoretical literature of onomastics. In this part I examine the selected literature (principally the Hungarian one) both in a chronological way, both thematically. The examination begins with the survey of the attempts at defining the meaning of proper names. Chronological survey of Hungarian literature is headed by the relevant findings of ZOLTÁN GOMBOCZ's semantics, then I review certain studies which deal with appellativisation and the views of authors who touched upon this topic within the discussion of some larger subject (FREGE, RUSSELL, ANDRÁS MARTINKÓ, JÁNOS BALÁZS, BÉLA KÁLMÁN, ÁRPÁD SEBESTYÉN, SÁNDOR KÁROLY, KATALIN J. SOLTÉSZ, ANDRÁS BARABÁS – GYÖRGY C. KÁLMÁN– ÁDÁM NÁDASDY, KINGA FABÓ, FERENC KIEFER, ISTVÁN HOFFMANN, GÁBOR TOLCSVAI NAGY, ATTILA HEGEDŰS, MIHÁLY HAJDÚ). I tried to focus on their views on the meaning of proper names in each case. I noted that the definition, the judgment of its morphological structure and its word class is the subject of debate, and that most attempts at the definition of proper name rely on the conditions of name use and on the sociocultural determinedness of proper name.

In the following, I focused on surveying the Hungarian literature of appellativisation. I examined material collection (as from the oldest ones, the collections of KÁLMÁN SZILY, VILMOS TOLNAI and ZSIGMOND SZENDREY), and I touched upon such imprecise, ambiguous and confusing factors which characterise this early period, e.g. difficulties of separating those loan words of proper origin which were borrowed as common names already into Hungarian and that's why such forms as *kaján*, *lincselés*, *aggastyán* and *fukar*, *viganó* are mixed up for some extent.

These works and articles written on the semantic and word class shift of proper names contribute to my intention on defining the factors which play a role in the change of the semantic structure of given names. I used the model of semantic structure created by KATALIN J. SOLTÉSZ focusing on connotation, preliminary knowledge, situation and context from among its elements.

Connotative meaning which is connected to given names has a great influence both on the commencement and on the intensity of semantic change. Its becoming more and more stressed can explain not only the metaphoric and metonymical usage of proper names in the language, but the formation of names indicating region and type, e.g., *matyó* 'man from Mezőkövesd', *piku* 'nickname in Göcsej and Hetés', in Finnish *Maija* 'woman in general', *Matti* 'man in general', *Jussi* 'farmer', in Estonian *häkkinen* 'Finnish person', in French *jeanette* 'stupid girl', in English *dickless tracy* 'policewoman'. Importance of preliminary knowledge can be stressed mainly because experience shows that a speaker or a user of language needs preliminary or surplus knowledge to recognise a name being actually used as a non-name. This has to originate from the onomastic competence of the language user, that is, the speaker (since this change can be generally linked to spoken communication) has to know that the proper name element which has changed in its meaning can be pasted into an existing onomastic system so s/he has to recognise the actual non-name usage, too. If we define appellativisation in such a meaning, then we have to disregard from the transitional phenomena detailed and analysed in former literature: in this case it is not transitions but usage situations and a name's occurrance as common or proper name depends on situation and context. But if we need their help or their interpreting role to define the meaning of any type of proper name, then we cannot speak about a proper name in the given situation. E.g., to interpret an imperative, like *Ne menj át, mert fölír a Lonci!* [Do not cross on red light because Lonci will write your name!], we have to know the speech situation or we have to have preliminary knowledge on the reason and creation of semantic change; in this latter case the expression originates from a humour magazine called Szabad Száj in which the editor made the figure of the policewoman popular under the name *Hekus Lonci*. The polarizing effect of the two factors (situation and preliminary knowledge) reinforce each other in this case. Sometimes we get semantic or morphologic help, too, to recognise a non-name usage. It can be of semantic help to apply metonymy based on similarity, proper name metaphors or puns, e.g., „Vajon hogy lehetett belőle a századvég *Rózsa Sándora?*" [How could the Whisky Robber have become *Sándor Rózsa* of the end of the century?], „A virtigli magyar *Dzsokijuing* ellenben tutira megy" [The Hungarian *Jockey Ewing* goes for certain success] (from newspaper language), „Kapott egy *emesét*" [He got an *emese*] (from living speech); and derivatives, plural and past tense suffixes can be of morphological help, e.g., „Az ott gépelő *mancikák* levették a festett üvegablakokat, mert nem volt elég fény" [*Mancikas* typing there just took the coloured glass windows out because of the lack of light], „Nem *gumimatyik* akarunk mi lenni, hanem egészségesek" [We do not want to be *gumimatyis* but healthy](from living speech)*,* „Egy reggel a feleségecske a zöld víz fölött *berubenskedett* a hosszú pallón a kertbe, … csak úgy ruganyoztak rajta jobbra-balra a lingő-lengő labda gömbölyűségek"

[One morning the little wife *rubensed* through the plank into the garden ...] (from Péter Lengyel's Macskakő).

At this point I tried to separate the notion of semantic shift and that of semantic change. Semantic change means that the proper name, together with the change in its semantic structure, becomes part of the periphery of onomastic vocabulary. This change results first in the repression of names, and it was the case with *Muki, Muksi, Manó, Réz, Rézma* and *Pörke*. The designation refers to a mere displacement of stress in the semantic structure, that is, in certain situations or communicational contexts the name has a common usage, too, but in other situations it can be used as a proper name. The two scopes of usage are parallel. In the case that a proper name loses its proper meaning and usage for the users and it occurs only in appellative meaning, we can speak about semantic shift. This phenomenon can happen but it is much rarer than semantic change, that is, synchronous existence of two scopes of usage. A semantic shift occurred in the case of the given name *Lökös ~ Lőkös*. Only few people know today that in the expression *megy, mint a lökös / lőkös* [He is going like a fool] we can find a morphological variant of the shortened, derived form of the given name *Lőrinc* which became independent at the beginning of the 14th century. The following words: *lökös, fél-lőkös* and *türöm-lőkös* meant 'fool person' in dialects. Common meaning of the expression remained in the phraseme *megy, mint a lökös / lőkös* but its proper name origin faded out.

In this part I present the general characteristics of appellativisation. After surveying the literature (that is, principally the monograph of MIHÁLY HAJDÚ) and the data collections I noted that all types of proper names can undergo semantic shift or semantic change: given names (e.g., *atilla* 'special coat', *iván* 'Russian man', *bédekker* 'baedeker', *hárijános* 'lier'), place names (e.g., *panama* 'corruption', *makaó* 'card game', *kánaán* 'rich area'), animal names (e.g., *Nonius Senior > nóniusz* 'horse type'), object names (e.g., *izomkolosszus* 'tall, strong man'), titles or names of works of art (e.g., *biblia* 'book containing all that is important', *utópia* 'ideal world'), trade names (e.g., *walkman > vókmen* 'portable tape player'), even institution names, but rarely (e.g., *Triangel* 'three angels' (name of a German club) > **tangel > tingel-tangel > tingli-tangli* 'popular music'), and names of dates and events (e.g., "Sztalin *termidorja* hosszan elhúzódott a harmaincas években" [Stalin's thermidor was long in the thirties], „Minden diktátornak volt egy *brumaire tizennyolcadikája*" [All dictators had a 18th of brumaire]). I tried to define the basic morphological types of changes. From among the five most frequent types the least typical is when a proper name is used as a common name without any formal change. Such way of formation characterises trade names, e.g., *jaffa, audi,* or jargon words, elements of the metric system, e.g., *watt, volt, ohm* only. A change which means only the pronounced way of writing of a loan name, e.g., *Cardigan >*

kardigán, Lynch > lincs, Sandwich > szendvics is not so influential on the body of the word. In some cases it is regular phonetic change, e.g., *Kain > kaján, Ágoston > aggastyán*. The word can be suffixed, generally with a derivative or seldom a plural suffix, e.g., *katás* 'feminine man', *bélás* 'old 2 forint coin', *tamáskodik* 'being sceptical', „Ritkán teremnek egyszerre *petőfik, aranyok* és *tompák* a magyar irodalomban" [It is rare that *petőfis, aranys* and *tompas* are born at the same time in Hungarian literature]. Finally, many proper names appellativise as anterior or posterior constituent of a compond, e.g., *dobostorta* 'cake type', *kandiklára* 'curious little girl'. Probably the second type is most typical for changes of proper name → common word shift.

Phenomenon of appellativisation can be examined from the viewpoint of the meaning and word class of formed common names. The analysis of the 12 groups of meaning formed on the basis of the most frequent meanings and of the forms created is contained in the semantic and in the survey analysis. The fact that general characteristics stated about appellativisation are relevant not only for Hungarian is evidenced by the contrastive analysis of Hungarian appellativised words and Finnish and Estonian data by me.

2. The second part of my dissertation is the analysis. Its three subchapters I examine the collected more than 2000 appellativised given name data in general, primarily approaching from the given names' side, then from structural and semantic aspects, too.

In the overview, first I analyse the change from the initial forms, that is, given names. In this part, the most emphasized part was the taking into account of the aspects of language use. I made a separate analysis for the types of male and female names occurring, their chargedness as well as the relationship between frequency and common derivatives. The word class of common names created was the subject of an individual examination. At this point I laid a great stress on separating the shift in word class from semantich shift in a theoretical way. Shift in word class is the phenomenon when the given name leaves the category of proper names becomes an adjective, a verb or an interjection, or perhaps, less frequently, a pronoun or an adverb (e.g., *katás* 'feminine', *tamáskodik* 'doubt' [verb], *megjakablik* 'deceive', *bizistók* 'upon my word!', '*pityipalkó* 'anybody', *senkipál* 'nobody', *ungon-berken* 'everywhere'), but when it becomes a common word (e.g., *jánosbogár* 'glow-worm', *anna-virág* 'garden flower'), then it is a semantic change.

In the structural analysis, I analyse first the three structural types: occurrences of given name elements individually (e.g., *matyó* 'sparrow', *antal* 'foolish'), in compounds (e.g., *beképzelt maca* 'bigmouthed woman', *kevélygyurka* 'zinnia', *péterháza* 'roadside inn', *jancsibab* 'large-grained bean species') and with derivatives (e.g., *arankás* 'covered with dodder called aranka', *jakabi* 'apple type riping around the day of St James', *palizik* 'going out with boys', *lucál* 'wander') are separated. I examined the characteristic structural types of given names which appellativise the

most frequently and I chose those two female and male names which have the largest number of common forms (*Katalin*, *Máriá*, *János,* and *Péter*).

In the semantic part, I laid down the 12 most frequent semantic groups. According to my experiences, Hungarian usually shows the following meanings in this type of word: denomination and feature of a man (e.g., *lécferkó* 'thin boy'); name of plant (or part of plant) (e.g., *albertlevél* 'bay leaf'); animal name (e.g., *balázsló* 'dragon-fly'); name of object (e.g., *jancsiszög* 'nail type'); notion of action as expressed with a verb (e.g., *beandrásol* 'fixing two beams with a third one at the bottom in the form of the letter A'); name of the part of body (e.g., *ádámkocsány* 'larynx'); superstition, custom (e.g., *balázsolás* 'folk tradition on the day of Balázs'); name of food or drink (e.g., *áronlé* 'pálinka'); name of type of clothes (e.g., *dorkó* 'gym shoes'); name of game (or notion or object in connection with it (e.g., *csókos Kristóf* 'eight of diamonds in cards'); swearing, euphemism (e.g., *istók bárék!*), and I formed a category for forms which could not be grouped into anywhere else (e.g., *péterke* 'stubbornness'). When forming the groups, it seemed to be an important aspect to take the number of given names concerned into account. I further analyzed the given names' participation in the individual semantic groups, and I found typical names for each type. Since it became evident that it is not only the semantic structure or frequency as a given name of the proper name which influences the number and the structural and semantic richness of created common forms but other factors as well, e.g., cults, superstitions, therefore it seemed worth to examine some names from this aspect, too. This was how the given names *István* and *Mária* were taken to examination.

3. As the third part of my dissertation, I publish a part of the dictionary of appellativised given names. This is approx. one-tenth of the prepared entries.

4 Findings

The result of Survey Analysis is that relationship between the chargedness of names and their tendency to appellativise was shown: the most frequent names are the most inclined to appellativise both among male and among female names. Most common word derivatives come from the following female names: *Katalin*, *Mária*, *Ilona*, *Luca*, *Anna*, *Erzsébet*, *Borbála*, *Margit*, *Dorottya*, *Júlia,* and as concerns male names, *János*, *Péter*, *István*, *Mátyás*, *Mihály*, *György*, *Ádám*, *László*, *Balázs* és *András* are the most frequent. Names which appellativise most frequently and which have the largest number of derivatives with the largest variation of meaning and structure reflect the name fashion of the 18th century mainly. I stated that there are more male names involved in appellativisation than female names: in my collected material there are 209 male and 187 names.

From among basic and nick forms, the latter are more frequent. Female names are appellativised in their nick forms mainly, but between types of male names we cannot show difference. Dominant word class of common names formed is the noun; so the semantic change is more characteristic than shift in word class.

According to the conclusions of Structural Analysis, the three most typical structural types are the groups of elements of given name origin which occur individually or as anterior or posterior constituents of compounds and which three types occur largely in the same ration. The number of derived forms is negligible as related to these three main types. Within a group of names it is not the basic form but the most frequent nick form which has the most variegated common word family from the structural point of view. From among the 10 most frequently appellativised male and female names it is only *János* and *Pál* make exceptions. Most analysed names occur individually as common words, too. In this structural type, mainly morphologic variants predominate. If the element of given name origin occurs as an anterior or posterior constituent then it very often has a humorously disdainful meaning, these refer to something less valuable or simply smaller (e.g., *laciház* 'small house attached to the main building', *jancsibicska* 'small knife'). The ratio of the two types in which the element of given name origin occurs as anterior or posterior constituent (e.g., *ruhagyuri* 'man in untidy clothes', *emberveron* 'masculine woman') is equal in this corpus. The ratio of forms derived with either nominal or verbal derivative is similarly little. The typical derivatives are *-(V)z* and *-(V)l*, together with *–s* nominal derivative.

Semantic Analysis of the data showed, together with the large number of previous examinations in the literature, that common name forms of given name origin denominate man and some of his characteristics the most frequently. This group is the largest but not only on the basis of the number of data belonging here but as well regarding its variegatedness and the number of name forms. Function of the given name element is, when referring to a man, that it links the quality (referred to in the anterior constituent in general) to gender. Expressions referring to man occur in the meaning of „man or woman of some nature" (e.g., *bócértos vica* 'woman with untidy hair', *naplesi jankó* 'lazy man'). Each semantic type has its typical names. From among the first five types, the following names occur the most frequently as referring to a man: *Kata, Jankó, Pali, Pila, Kati, Jancsi, Pista,* for animal names: *Kata, Bence, Ilona, Katica, Péter, Kató, János,* for plants: *Kata, György, Jakab, Jankó, János, Csilla,* as referring to objects: *Jancsi, Jankó, Laci, Péter, Petike*, and as verbs: *Pista, Antal, Pali, Lukács, Geci* and *István. Katalin* and its nick forms occur in all important semantic type apart from object name or verb. Its most frequent nick form, *Kata* is particularly frequent since it is the name from which most common word forms came both in the category referring to man and in the one referring to animals and plants. The typical name of the

categories mentioned just above is *Kata*, for objects *Jancsi*, and for verbs *Pista*. Forms created by resemantisation (e.g., *alkoholpista* 'alcohol addict', *bálinthal* 'bream', *fülespéter* 'presbyter') are the analogues of the most frequent types of meaning and structure.

5 The dictionary

The basis of the onomastic dictionary is the data of more than 700 appellativised given names as included in the first three volumes of Új Magyar Tájszótár [New Hungarian Dialectal Dictionary]. Until the finalisation of data collection, it was possible to examine the first three volumes (A–M) of ÚMTsz only. Further collecting work was done by examining dialectal dictionaries, diachronic and synchronic normative dictionaries and finally sociolectal dictionaries, data collections and the word publications of Nyelvőr. Besides the three volumes of ÚMTsz, I procesed the material of mainly 32 sociolectal, jargon and regional dictionary, then I looked up the material found here in other dictionaries and journals.

The dictionary contains the appellativised derivatives of 28 Hungarian given and nicknames from among the 396 ones examined by me. The data collection was ended but not completed since for example the monograph published by MIHÁLY HAJDÚ just recently contains many data which do not occur in my dictionary and which could not be edited into the entries due to lack of time. Since it is a productive way of word formation, our dictionary cannot aim at completeness, only at a wider range data collection and procession than that of former ones.

During the selection of entries it was important that data presented reflect correctly trends which are characteristic of the whole material. That's why, I selected from two types of names: I wanted to present those male and female names which appellativise very often and the forms of which can be detected from many linguistic layers, which have various meanings and among the structural types of which we can find examples for almost all examined forms. The other aspect of selection was to present those names which have little appellative derivations. Features of the given names of the whole material are reflected by the stressed names, too: morphologic variants predominate among these.

The name collection publishes the nominal and verbal forms of the 28 processed given names in entries in alphabetical order. The first point of the entry relates to the name in question, it provides its history and its occurrence as a family name. In the second point, the appellativised forms of the name are provided. The examined names occur very frequently in proverbs (mainly individually but sometimes with adjective, too), but not always in the common word sense, so it was important to present these, too. The basis of classifying appellative forms was the structure of the word: a

separate point was provided for the individual occurrence of the word and for its occurrence as anterior or posterior constituent or in a nominal derivative. The third point of the entry contains verbal forms.

6 My publications in the subject

Studies

1. Istvánok, Istik, Pistik (Egy keresztnév közszói származékainak vizsgálata). *MNyj*. Vol. 41, pp. 603–8

2. Gondolatok a magyar hivatalos személynévhasználatról az uniós csatlakozás tükrében. In: ENIKŐ GRÉCZI-ZSOLDOS –MÁRIA KOVÁCS, eds., Köszöntő kötet B. Gergely Piroska tiszteletére. Miskolc. pp. 182–5. (together with JUDIT SZILVIA VÁRNAI)

3. Az igeképzés egy sajátos esete: a keresztnévből alkotott igék. In: ISTVÁN HOFFMANN – DEZSŐ JUHÁSZ – JÁNOS PÉNTEK, eds.,: *Hungarológia és dimenzionális nyelvszemlélet.* Debrecen–Jyväskylä. pp. 121–26.

4. Keresztnévből származó állatnevek. *MNyj*. Vol. 39, pp. 159–64.

5. Keresztnévi eredetű finn, észt és magyar köznevek összehasonlító vizsgálata. *Folia Uralica Debreceniensia* Vol. 8, pp. 613–18.

3. Bödekata, fagyurka és társaik (Közszóvá vált keresztneveinkről). *MNyj*. Vol. 38, pp. 403–10.

Conference lectures

1. A szituáció és a kontextus szerepe a tulajdonnév jelentésváltozásában. *A DE és a kolozsvári Babes-Bolyai Tudományegyetem Nyelvészeti Konferenciája.* Kolozsvár, 30 May 2003–1 June

2. Köznevesült keresztnevek vizsgálata (Problémák és megoldási lehetőségek). *A DE Magyar Nyelvtudományi Tanszékének Doktori Konferenciája.* Noszvaj, 27–29 September 2001

3. Keresztnévi eredetű finn, észt és magyar köznevek összehasonlító vizsgálata. *V. Nemzetközi Hungarológiai Konferencia.* Jyväskylä, 6–10 August 2001

4. A köznevesült keresztnevek készülő szótáráról. *Nyelvészdoktoranduszok IV. országos konferenciája.* Szeged, 25–26 January 2001