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EPONIMI – ŠTO SE KRIJE IZA NAZIVA?

EPONYMS – WHAT IS HIDDEN BEHIND THE TERM?

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SAŽETAK

Eponimni nazivi zapravo su vlastita imena koja su postala opće imenice, te rjeđe glagoli. Česti su kako u općem, tako i u tehničkom engleskom jeziku, npr.: *dizel, makadam, algoritam, mansarda*. Analizom eponima dolazimo do osobe koja je zaslužna za neko otkriće, stoga većina eponima izrasta iz konceptualnih metonimija IZUM JE IZUMITELJ, OTKRIĆE JE OTKRIVATELJ. Cilj je ovog rada izložiti eponime, prvo u općemu jeziku, zatim u tehničkom engleskom jeziku te dati ideje kako se potonji mogu iskoristiti u nastavi. Eponimi obogaćuju jezik struke na način da upućuju na slavne izumitelje razotkrivajući interesantne priče o relevantnim izumima. U nastavi oni na zanimljiv način uvode temu o znanstvenicima i njihovim otkrićima, što motivira studente za učenje tehničkog engleskog jezika.

Ključne riječi: *eponimi, tehnički engleski jezik*

ABSTRACT

Eponyms are frequent in general English as well as in technical English, for instance *diesel, macadam, algorythm, mansard*. Eponyms are proper names that have become common nouns and rarely verbs. The analysis of eponyms leads us to the person with the discovery; therefore, most eponyms arise from the conceptual metonymies INVENTION IS INVENTOR, DISCOVERY IS DISCOVERER. The aim of this paper is to outline eponyms in general and technical English, and put forward ideas on how to use them in the latter. Eponyms enrich language for specific purposes by leading us to famous inventors and unveiling interesting stories behind significant inventions. In lessons, they introduce a topic on scientists and their inventions in an interesting way, which motivates students to study technical English.

Keywords: *eponyms, technical English*

1. UVOD
1. INTRODUCTION

According to the online edition of the Croatian Encyclopaedia, eponym, a word of Greek origin, refers to the person or thing that something is named after. Originally, eponyms were used to refer to persons whose names denote years in Greek chronology, e.g.: the first archon in Athens, the ephor in Sparta, etc. Furthermore, in the Eponymic Lexicon, Mršić [1.] points out that the name-receiver can be a person (*dulcinea*), a thing (*sandwich*), a concept (*chauvinism*), a procedure (*pasteurization*), a people (*Israelites*), a city (*Athens*), an institution (*Oscar*), a religion (*Christianity*), and a period, sect or theory. On the other hand, the name-giver is mostly a mythological character or a real person, a literary character and people, etc.

Eponyms can be classified into historical and geographical eponyms, literary eponyms, mythological eponyms, and eponymous brand names. Eponymous names are actually proper names that have become common nouns and, less commonly, verbs. By analysing eponyms, we arrive at the person who invented a device, discovered a continent, etc., so most eponyms arise from the conceptual metonymy INVENTION IS INVENTOR, DISCOVERY IS

DISCOVERER. In other words, eponyms conceal important discoveries that thus remain recorded in the language, glorifying scientists, inventors, and discoverers.

Eponyms in medical terminology were written by Brdar and Brdar-Szabó [2], in technical sciences by Kereković [3], [4], and Luminița [5]; and in social sciences by Ravlić [6].

The aim of this paper is to present some eponyms in general and technical English and to give ideas on how the latter can be used in teaching.

2. EPONIMI U OPĆEM JEZIKU
2. EPOYNMS IN GENERAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

There are numerous eponyms in general language, such as: *levisice, Achilles' heel, boycott, guillotine, nicotine, volcano, cardigan, atlas, aspirine, Eustachian tube* and *to google*. They were named after celebrities or brands, for instance:

- *America* was erroneously named after Amerigo Vespucci, even though it was Chrisopher Columbus who discovered the continent.
- *Levisice* were named after Levi Strauss.
- *Digitron* is the colloquial name for a calculator, named after the Croatian manufacturer from Buje.
- *Kalodont* was manufactured by Saponia, and this name has been often colloquially used for tooth paste in general. Similarly, *Jamnica* has been used colloquially for sparkling mineral water, *eurokrem* generally for chocolate spread, *labelo* for lip balm, etc.
- *Achilles' heel* refers to a human shortcoming, and was named after the ancient hero Achilees who was wounded in his heel.
- *Atlas* was name after the ancient Greek god of astronomy and navigation.
- *Aspirin* was synthesized in the end of the 19th century. It is a brand, i.e., a drug of the company Bayer, and today it is used for this type of drug in general.
- *Eustachian tube* is a little tube that connects the pharynx and the middle ear, and was named after the Italian anatomist Bartolomeo Eustachi.
- Louis Pasteur, the French chemist and biologist discovered the process of *pasteurisation* by studying wine diseases, and the process was named after him. Also used is the eponymous verb to *pasteurise*.
- The verb *to google* means to search for a query on Google pages.

Kardigan was named after Lord Cardigan, i.e., James Brundell. He returned from the Crimean War without so much as a scratch which, according to the legend, prompted tailors to start making military jackets based on the clothes he returned from the war in.

Jean Nicot was a French diplomat who, during his mission in Portugal came upon a tobacco plant that he offered to the French court in negotiating his daughter's marriage. In fact, he presented the plant as medicine, while today we know that nicotine is decidedly harmful.

Even though there are numerous examples of eponyms in general language, they are more frequent in science because the point to different processes, discoveries and inventions. It is well known that units of measurement, such as: *watt, ohm, Fahrenheit,* etc. were named after their inventors, but it is less known that English terminology such as *mansard, macadam, bluetooth* or *mig* are also eponyms. By practicing eponyms in class, students become aware of the way that new names came to be in technical English, and through an array of assignments they expand their general knowledge.

3. TEACHING EPONYMS IN TECHNICAL ENGLISH
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The knowledge of eponyms is part of the general knowledge of an engineer. It is therefore interesting, as part of the course of technical English, to verify their knowledge and get

reminded whom certain concepts were named after. Practicing eponyms in class proved to be a challenge to also discover the historical context in which they came to be, which students find interesting. Below you can find 5 types of assignments for practising eponyms.

To start, students get explanations for an eponym through some examples from colloquial language, as well as through examples of units of measurement that were mostly named after famous engineers or scientists, e.g.: *watt, kelvin, ohm,* etc. Attention should also be drawn to the difference in orthography between English and Croatian. Students should be encouraged to list more examples of eponyms that they know. This is followed by the assignment bellow:

I. Fill in the gaps!

1 The unit of electric current is _____ It was named after the father of _____ André-Marie _____.

_____ is the unit of electrical capacitance. It was named after English _____

Michael Faraday.

2 The unit of frequency - _____, often described as being equivalent to one cycle per _____ was named after Heinrich Rudolf _____.

3 _____ Is the unit of force in the International System of Units. It was named after Sir _____ Newton

4 The unit of magnetic flux density is _____. It was named after _____ _____, the inventor of alternating current.

5 The unit of electric _____ – volt was named after Alessandro Volta, Italian physicist and chemist who is considered the inventor of the _____.

6 The unit of power or radiant flux is _____. It was named after _____ inventor and mechanical engineer James Watt.

7 The unit of energy is _____. It is equal to the amount of _____ done when a force of one newton displaces a mass through a distance of one metre in the direction of that force. It was named after English _____ James Prescott _____.

8 The base unit for temperature is _____, named after William Thomson _____ _____.

9 _____ is a chemical element with atomic number 99. It was named after _____ _____, who was selected as the person of the twentieth century.

After completing the assignment, students state everything they know about famous scientists in English, e.g., biographic details, ways they made the invention, etc.

Next, the students are asked to fill in the following assignment in which they have to guess which invention or discovery it refers to.

II. Guess the inventions or discoveries!

1 It is a type of a virus that downloads onto a computer disguised as a legitimate program. It was named after a wooden horse that was used by the Greeks to enter the city of Troy.

2 It is a sequence in which each number is the sum of the two preceding ones, e.g. 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144. They are named after the Italian mathematician Leonardo of Pisa, who had a nickname _____.

3 The structure that was considered ugly by many artists was defended by the designer with the following words: "*Are we to believe that because one is an engineer one is not preoccupied with the beauty in one's constructions, or that one does not seek to create elegance as well as solidity as well as durability? Is it not true that the very conditions which give strength also conform to the hidden rules of harmony?*"

The structure was completed in Paris in 1889 to celebrate 100 years of French revolution.

4 It is a type of road construction pioneered

by Scottish engineer John Loudon McAdam around 1820, in which crushed stone is placed in shallow, convex layers and compacted thoroughly.

5 It describes a fundamental relation in Euclidean geometry between the three sides of a right triangle.

6 It is a thought experiment concerning quantum superposition. In this experiment, a hypothetical cat may be considered simultaneously both alive and dead.

7 It is the process by which steel was produced without fuel using the impurities of the iron to create the necessary heat, which reduced the costs of steel production.

After this assignment, students are asked to define a term of their own, while other students get to guess which discovery or invention it is.

The following assignment aims at checking the level of students' knowledge of the following eponyms:

III. Circle the correct option!

1 In Croatian language it is correct to say:
Diesel motor dizelski motor Dieselov motor

2 In Croatian language, it is correct to write:
wat vot vat

3 Euclidean geometry is named after Euclid, the ancient Greek mathematician whose collection of definitions, postulates and propositions can be found in the book
Geometry Postulates Elementa

4 Mig is … named after Mikojan and Gurevič.
a car a bike an airplane

5 Who formulated Simson's theorem?
Robert Simson William Wallace
Gaspard Monge

6 Bernoulli's principle is a key concept in … that relates pressure, density, speed and height.
fluid mechanics dynamics of rigid bodies
fluid dynamics

7 Bluetooth was named after Danish king Harald the Bluetooth who united parts of…
Germany and Denmark Norway and Denmark
England and Denmark

8 Mansard, a type of roof, was first used by the architect François Mansart in the 17th century, but it was invented by…
Pierre Lescot Gustave Eiffel Frank Gehry

9 The year is 1963. Ferruccio Lamborghini, a successful tractor manufacturer, is unhappy with his Ferrari. He thinks the car's … breaks too easily. He drives to the neighbouring village of Maranello and knocks on the door of none other than Enzo Ferrari.
gas brakes clutch

10 Wankel engine, invented by Felix Geinrich Wenkel, is a…
two-stroke engine three-stroke engine
four-stroke engine.

In the last assignment the students are asked to name famous inventors based on the description of the invention. This assignment can also be prepared as a quiz – students can be divided into two groups and they compete by collecting points. The quiz can be an introduction to eponyms, but also an assignment for material recap.

IV. Whom was the invention named after?

1 M_____ planned an elaborate tomb for himself. When he died the project was continued by his siblings, resulting in a number of mausoleums.

2 G_____ curvature is an intrinsic measure of curvature. It was named after Carl Friedrick G_____.

3 Algorythm was named after Iranian mathematician al- K_____.

4 Coriolis force was named after French mathematician Gaspard- G_____ de Coriolis.

5 Pegasus _____ was named after mythical horse P_____.

6 Leica camera was named after Ernst L_____. In 1986, the Leitz company changed its name to Leica (LEItz CAmera).

7 Otis elevator was named after E_____ Graves Otis. He introduced the first safety passenger elevator at the Crystal Palace Convention in New York City in 1853.

After that, the students are asked to recollect everything they know about the aforementioned famous people or mythical creatures. Finally, each student should write one example of this assignment, while other students guess which inventor it refers to.

In the fifth task, inspiring quotes from 4 scientists are being read out loud, and students guess whose they are.

V. Guess who said what?

1 *Genius is one per cent inspiration, ninety-nine per cent perspiration.*

2 *Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous.*

3 *If your hate could be turned into electricity, it would light up the whole world.*

4 *Any man can learn anything he will, but no man can teach except to those who want to learn.*

5 *Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently.*

6 *I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.*

7 *I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious.*

8 *I don't care that they stole my idea… I care that they don't have any of their own*

After that, students work in pairs and express their agreement/disagreement with the quotes, so they need to complete the following sentences:

- *I completely agree because…*
- *I agree up to a point…*
- *I totally disagree because…*
- *I'm afraid I disagree with this because…*

Finally, students are reminded that famous car brands are also eponyms, e.g.: *Suzuki, Honda, Toyota, Yamaha, Kawasaki, Ford, Chrysler, Ford, Audi, Porsche, Peugeot,* etc. If they know an inspiring story related to this topic, students now present it. They can also find inspiring quotes, while the rest of the group guesses which engineer it is.

Finally, students are asked to each choose one invention and explain how that invention changed our way of life. They can be offered the following sentence starters:

- *Before …, people used to…*
- *If it weren't for …, people would still…*
- *In my opinion, the greatest invention is …, because…*
- *If you ask me, I think … has drastically changed our lives because…*

Students can prepare and give a presentation on this topic in pairs.

From all of the above, it is clear that eponyms are discussed in class in order to introduce students to the historical context and significance of a particular invention, discovery or innovation. The class discusses the way in which a particular invention changed the way of life up to that time. Famous inventors and the way in which important discoveries are made are discussed, which highlights the importance of scientific knowledge in the process of creating new inventions. Students also learn how to express their opinion, agreement or disagreement with a particular statement.

4. ZAKLJUČAK
4. CONCLUSION

Eponyms are common in technical English. They glorify famous scientists who have changed the world. Eponyms enrich the language of the profession by referring to important inventors and revealing interesting stories about relevant inventions. In teaching, they introduce the topic of scientists and their discoveries in an interesting way, which motivates students to learn technical English. Through the different types of tasks

presented in the paper, professional knowledge in English is expanded in an interesting way, and the correct form of eponyms in Croatian is also taught. Since the eponyms listed in this paper are part of the general knowledge of an engineer, students participate in the class with motivation.

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5. REFERENCES

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