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The problem of functions of names is always present in any scientific study of geographical names. According to I. B. Voronova, a nominative-differential function can be recognized as a hyperfunction of all proper names [1, p. 119]. Names designate objects of the world, but at the same time they distinguish the named objects from all the other identified objects.

This function of proper names which unite them with other words of language is recognized by all. Delimitation from common names is implemented in different ways: by stating the lack of characterization function [2, p. 345], the existence of an individualizing-and-identifying function of a proper name as opposed to a generalizing function of an appellative (K. A. Levkovskaya) or a function of specifying the general concept on the basis of names [3, p. 104]. The function of characterization is usually regarded as inaccessible to the semantics of proper names so far as units functioning at the onomastic level quickly lose their motivation and are transformed into labels incomprehensible for a new generation of people [4, p. 44, etc.]. L. B. Selezneva proceeds from the presence of both nominative and semasiological functions in onyms and in appellatives [5, p. 177–178].

Proper names, according to some researchers (A. V. Superanskaya, V. I. Bolotov, E. L. Berezovich etc.), can store information while functioning in society [6, p. 33–38, etc.]. Hence, an accumulative (storage) function is recognized. In light of the cognitive approach, the gradual accumulation of information about geographic features by humans is of particular interest. The emphasis is increasingly placed on the accumulation of data just in perception (before naming) that precedes both the creation of derivational models and the emergence of semantic markers.

There are more detailed classifications of the functions of proper names. V. D. Bondaletov distributes them to the main (nominative, identifying, and differentiating), and secondary, «additional», «optional» (social, emotional, deictic (indicating), addressing, expressive, aesthetic and stylistic) [7, p. 20–21].

The private functions of place names are distinguished by M. V. Golomidova (location, indexing, naming) [8, p. 68], E. M. Murzaev (addressing, historical, geographical, linguistic) [9, p. 4], V. A. Nikonov (addressing, descriptive, ideological) [10, p. 82], A. V. Superanskaya (subfunctions of an identifying function, which is common for all onyms: distinction, address, differentiating, contrast, description, index) [11, p. 274], etc.

So, the addressing function is the main function of a place name. It predetermines more significant dependence of onyms in a spatial context, more precisely defines historical, social, geographic and ethnic environments of objects. The meaning of a name as an extralinguistic category is broader than the meaning of an appellative because the extralinguistic context of a name is more diverse than the ties of an appellative. Therefore, the semantics of a name is often defined as

«an expanding cone of our knowledge about an object» [12, p. 75]. It results in recognizing toponymy as «a source of etymological and actual information which arouses interest of linguists, historians, geographers, ethnographers to it ... Disclosure of the motivation of names helps to conceive the nature of typical topography» [13, p. 79].

Place names have their own special characteristics. In this sense, an interesting point of view is expressed in the article by Y. A. Karpenko «On Synchronic Toponymy»: «De-etimologization of a common name is opposed by semantic connections of these words; whereas the semantics of place-name is completely replaced with the territory. Within a class of names, in fact, place names have no semantic differences, being delimited by space only ... Syntagmatic oppositions of place names are implemented in the totality of the names of a rather limited area» [14, p. 48–51].

One can hardly accept the statement that there is no semantics at all in names. However, we can agree with Karpenko that noting the similarity of semantic relations in appellatives and in territorial ties of proper names he does not restrict the latter to one class. Any place name appears not in the subsystem of names, but in the integral toponymic space. Rigid walls between subsystems are built only by the researcher.

In this work we will assume that the main function of a place name is an addressing, regulative one, the function of a benchmark. We would put an emphasis on the term «regulative» which implies that man's behaviour is dependent on the form of a name. The appearance of a place name is due, above all, to the necessity to find an object in a single indiscrete space. Historical and cultural information that accompanies the main function is encoded within a name and revealed while systemically studying the place names of the area.

Material and methods. The author's electronic database of Belarusian and American names of swamps (helonyms) totaling more than 7000 units in each language (7041 helonyms of Belarus, 7304 helonyms of the USA) served as research material for this work. The sources of material are Belarusian cadastral plans of each of the six regions of Belarus [15], and internet resources (the official site of the United States Geological Survey [16]).

Methods typical of a synchronic approach are applied: a method of analyzing the concept, comparative, structural, statistical, and descriptive methods. Feasibility of synchronic view is due to the transparency of the structure and semantics of most helonyms.

The significance of the results is determined primarily by involving big factual material in onomastics – the names of Belarusian and American swamps – and considering them against the names of other objects and from a contrastive viewpoint. For the first time in linguistics names of swamps are considered as a specific subsystem of hydronymy reducible neither to unstable microtoponyms nor to conservative names of larger water bodies (rivers, lakes). The classification of helonyms based on the idea of actual division of a naming unit reveals the main meaningful categories in toponymy and establish the sequence of new meanings in

toponymic signs. The idea also adds much to displaying the peculiarities of the development of regulative function performed by place names.

Findings and their discussion. The function of a place name is naming for the purpose of distinguishing and differentiation. The basis for my classification of helonyms is taking the binary structure of human cognition into consideration: the act of naming must comprise both old and new components of cognizing, that is an onomasiological basis and an onomasiological attribute. The former gives an account of the known classified properties while the latter notes individual features.

The role of a differentiating component was ignored as a result of the initial interest of place names researchers to form. Therefore, it needs rehabilitation.

First, a geographical name performs a function of individualization in society. Appellatives, i.e. common lexis, often define their belonging to a particular class of words by means of suffixes in Slavic languages: *sinij* 'blue', *sinieva* 'blue colour', etc., which can not only classify the items, but also distribute their positions in a sentence, and even convey connotations (*čtec* 'reader, elocutionist, reciter', *čitaka* 'bad, poor reader', *čitatiel'* 'reader'). At the same time proper names in any case function as substantivized members of sentences, that's why their classifying part is surplus: cf. *Kuc'kava Balota*, *Stan'kava*, *Jurkava*. This is equally applicable both to compound and simple names. In place names even a derivative suffix often similarly joins a differentiating part, only reaffirming the substantive status of an onym. Thus, according to A. M. Selishchev, the possessive suffixes *-ov-*, *-in-* «are used in such names which no longer have the meaning of possessivity» [17, p. 73]. The same applies to the rest of toponymic suffixes. Besides there is no unambiguous correspondence of an affix to the nature of an object in Slavic toponymy. The derivative morphemes *-ka*, *-ica*, etc. can be used in creating the names of any toponymic subsystem. The toponym *Kamienka*, for example, may be a proper name of a river, a lake, a swamp, or any other object of the area. Nominally, the suffix component *-ka* confirms the new status of a toponymic unit, but in terms of content the meaning of the derivative morpheme is always the same. It is an ambiguous reference to a name belonging to one of the numerous toponymic subsystems. Materially expressed derivative morphemes may even be absent in the name of an object. If the choice of a suffix was still determined by the nature of a derivative basis in old Slavic models, or later by the type of a named object [14, p. 53], the analysis of current material indicates that as a functional unit a place name is to a very little degree connected to the presence or absence of its derivative formants. In the American system of place names apparent uniqueness of a classifier also does not always reflect the true circumstances of naming: AmE. *Dinkins Bay*, *Greenbriar Pond* (names of swamps).

Secondly, taking into account the peculiarities of transition from a classifying to a differentiating component makes it possible to distinguish schemes of names that are different both in function and sense to study the sequence of emerging new meanings in the names of objects. A differentiating component takes the leading role in place names as functional units. Some linguists noted that only the descriptive part function as a place name [18, p. 145].

Defining the motivation of a place name starts structural and word-formative analyses. Application of word-building in a narrow sense, as the identification of materially expressed morphemes which were used as a means of forming a new unit, is unable to fully show the specificity of the reflection of reality in human consciousness. This objective may be attained by turning to an onomasiological analysis which means more than just creating a grid of models. Such an analysis is almost commonplace in any structural-and-semantic research. Instead we should turn to the modelling of a toponymic sign by studying the sequence of objectification of its ideal content .

Word-formation proper separates the significance of root and affixal morphemes) while onomasiology equalizes them in their rights. This is true because a derivational basis does not always take the role of a differentiator, and the semantics of the means of naming can be far from interchangeable. Derivational formants can change the meaning of derivatives as well as only specify them in appellatives. In papers based on the psychological foundation of human activity the development of suffixing is considered to be the result of successive contraction of a combination first to a compound word and then to a one-word condensation [19, p. 32]. In place names, a suffix performs as a compression to a geographical appellative-substantive of a minimal size. Confirmation of this fact is found in diachronic studies: there are only toponymic equivalents at a pre-toponymic stage, i.e. descriptive constructions that precedes the name. And although the «repetitive mental processes begin to take place automatically» [19, p. 28], the appearance of a formative means indicates the dismemberment of the original syncretic perception of an object / phenomenon.

The nonequivalent sense of different morphemes makes me apply not only to the semantics of specific helonymic roots, but to the meaningful structure that shape information on a non-verbal level, to the conceptual structure created at the level of onomasiology. A criterion for its defining is the nature of interaction of an onomasiological basis and an onomasiological attribute within a nominative unit. It is different in different names: AmE. *the Bog, Beaver Bog, Jones Big Swamp*; Blr. *Balota, Turaŭskaje Balota, Maloje Galynskaje*, etc. So a special onomasiological level is to be singled out which is free from direct influence of semantics or syntax.

This step lets us see not only the separate existence of root and auxiliary morphemes, but the relations that exist between a classifier and a differentiator of names at a categorical level. Thus, if the object of studying the etymology of names of water bodies is determined as a specific meaning of a hydronym which it has at the time of its formation, the onomasiological analysis of toponymy can be defined as the identification of types of semantic structures that carry out a link between the two representations of the object. On the one hand, the old and undivided one and on the other hand, a new discrete one.

This differentiator discusses a place name as an independent language sign which is capable of distinguishing one object from another. However, even within «single-functional» proper names differentiation is carried out differently both in terms of expression and in terms of content, and «in respect of system relations not

purely formal, but categorical changes are probably the most important» [20, p. 35].

Undoubtedly, the significant formal distribution of helonyms corresponds to clear gnosiological and functional reasons (subfunctions): 1) a new onym is able to orientate man even while not announcing the status of this new object designated by the name, e.g. names of swamps AmE. *Flynns Lake, Buckhorn Savanna, Fish Hill*, etc.; Blr. *Buslaû Barok, Dziehcieû Luh, Vostraû Brumaraûščyna*, etc. (the appellative part of a name include a word which denote other type of objects than a swamp). I call this subfunction of a toposign **an indirect regulation**; 2) it expresses the idea of an individual object without applying to peculiar features of an object (**a zero-regulation**): AmE. *the Bog, la Cienega, the Marshes, the Slash, the Swamps*, etc.; Blr. *Alies, Tapila, Uzduchavina, Biel', Bahna* (correspond to Belarusian appellatives with the meaning 'swamp'; 3) it can single out new features of a new object within all types of names in the system (**a system regulation**): AmE. *Church Swamp, Abe Emerson Marsh, Cypress Bog, Fivemile Swamp*, etc.; Blr. *harodnia* 'artificial mound on the place of an ancient populated place' > *Haradnianski Moch, biaroza* 'birch-tree' > *Biarozavaje Balota*, etc.; 4) a proper name identifies the differences of one unit of a subsystem from the other (**a subsystem regulation** – here: *intrahelonymic coordination*): AmE. *Bluff Swamp* > *Little Bluff Swamp, Shoal Marsh* > *White Shoal Marsh, Juniper Bog* > *Juniper Knee Bog*, etc.; Blr. *Niaznanava* > *Bal'šoje Niaznanava, Vialiki Moch* > *U Hary Vialiki Moch*, etc.

Conclusion. Thus, names perform a number of significant functions in language (regulative, accumulative, nominative, etc.). Nominative function allows to designate an object of the world and separate it from other objects. The accumulative (storage) function is reminiscent of those events and phenomena that are reflected in the basis of the name. The central role belongs to the regulative (addressing) function. Specificity of the regulation of geographical proper names is clearly manifested in the correlation of the types of connections between the classifier and the differentiator of names with their denotative characteristics. A single orientation function of a place name varies and gives four different ways of forming the content (intensional) of the names of swamps.

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