
JUDIT TAKÁCS

DEONYMS IN HUNGARIAN DICTIONARIES

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1. Introduction

Dealing with the vocabulary of Hungarian slang will shortly lead the researcher to the phenomenon of appellativisation (Parapatics 2012: 159). Examining this particular way of word formation is indeed a popular and common topic of slang research, onomastic research, and lexicology. The topic is covered by ample literature, even if we highlight only the most recent articles dealing with this topic in part or in full in recent years (see Parapatics 2012; Kemény 2014; Sarhema–Siivonen 2015; H. Varga 2017; Reszegi 2018; Sarhema–Takács 2018).

The process of appellativisation is usually associated with spoken discourse (Takács 2002: 123, Parapatics 2012: 159), and connotation has an important role in it. It is also a fact that the more often we use a proper name and the more associations it has, the more likely it is that an appellative meaning and use will develop (cf. Takács 2003: 605). However, I believe that in addition to the presence of a connotative meaning (meanings) and the frequent use of a single name, a number of reasons contribute to the onset and course of appellativisation as a process of meaning change, the presentation and mapping of which often goes beyond traditional linguistic methods.

In my study, first I briefly present the factors that make it difficult to clearly define the phenomenon of appellativisation, as well as the features of this group of words that may present difficulties when such word forms are selected for inclusion in dictionary entries. Next I examine the appearance of appellativised forms in word publications and dictionaries published so far, and finally I present the most important dictionaries published previously.

2. Appellativisation approached from a traditional and a cognitive aspect

Appellativisation is the process of changing meaning, as a result of which a language element used as a proper name is also used as a common word. If we perceive appellativisation as a change of meaning, this presupposes that we attribute meaning to the initial proper name. Moreover, it is now an accepted fact that the linguistic (semantic and pragmatic) behavior of proper names cannot be explained by anything other than by their more complex and diverse meaning

structure than that of common names. However, opinions diverge as to how this process can be interpreted linguistically and how it takes place.

Two distinct groups of theories emerge regarding the meaning of proper names and their appellativisation. One of them links appellativisation to a change in the relationship of components in semantic structure, and in their respective emphases during use, while the other considers it a phenomenon arising from the general nature of human thinking. In what follows, I briefly present these theories.

Katalin J. Soltész (1979) was the first to discuss the meaning structure of proper names in the Hungarian literature. She mentioned arbitrariness and motivation, information content, denotation, connotation, etymological meaning and the transparency of this meaning as aspects of this semantic structure. Of these, the most important element in terms of change of meaning is connotation, which can be interpreted as an associative value associated with the name. According to J. Soltész (1979: 30), the reason behind appellativisation is an emphasis on the connotative meaning of the proper name, and the fact that associative elements push the conscious image of the primary bearer of the name into the background in the meaning of the proper name used in a metaphorical or metonymic sense.

Mihály Hajdú (2003: 71–72) states that appellativisation has social (when the bearer of a name, be it a person, a place or another object, becomes better known than other similar ones, his/its name is used by more and more people, and slowly, gradually it becomes a concept) and psychological reasons (the proper name becomes a symbol due to the significance of its bearer). The formation of our common words *cézár* 'powerful person' (from Caesar), *király* 'king', *mecénás* 'sponsor' (from Maecenas) is based on social reasons, while, according to him, there are psychological reasons for the formation of the words *júdás* 'traitor' (from Judas), *snejderfáni* 'silly girl' (from the name of a literary figure, Schneider Fanny), *fritz* 'German' (from Fritz), *ádámcsutka* 'Adam's apple'. However, I believe that these cannot be accepted as a general motive for appellativisation.

According to Kiefer (2007: 162), the descriptive interpretation of proper names takes place at a conceptual level, where the everyday knowledge associated with the bearer of the proper name has a decisive role, and the different interpretations are based on the following cognitive principle: certain features of certain parts can characterize the whole. By accepting this, we can also activate some related common-sense meaning content through associations based on similarity or contact by invoking a name during the formulation/processing of what is being said (cf. Reszegi 2010).

3. Publication of the appellativised vocabulary

If we look at appellativisation from a cognitive point of view, it can be considered natural that most dictionaries of Hungarian also contain elements of such origin. In what follows, I present all the publications (first word publication and

papers, and later dictionaries, too) which publish appellativised vocabulary, either incidentally or expressly focussing on it. In my summary, I do not focus primarily on the works that approach the phenomenon from a theoretical point of view, but on those that publish the vocabulary with interpreting and organizing it, and later also arranging it into dictionary entries.

3.1. Early sources

Since the end of the 19th century, a number of studies have collected and analysed proper names with an appellativised meaning in dialects and/or in common language (e.g., Simonyi 1881; Tolnai 1899; Szily 1911; Szendrey 1936; and later, among others, Laczkó 1956; J. Soltész 1959; Kálmán 1967; Vitányi 1985, 1997; P. Csige 1986; B. Lőrinczy 1991; Lakatos 1993; Takács 2000, 2003; Farkas 2003; Hajdú 2003).

Initially, the phenomenon was not processed comprehensively for a long time. Appellativised proper names were published only sporadically in the word publications and name collections of the journals *Magyar Nyelv* and *Magyar Nyelvőr*. From the very beginning, these were primarily first names. This period was not for analysis but for data publication. These articles contain a large amount of data, uncategorized, at most classified only into semantic groups. Some authors also touch on the question of how these data differ from proper names and what formal characteristics the difference has, but their main goal was still the collection and publication of the data.

Data published in this period are characterised by the fact that the authors completely blur the forms that appellativised in Hungarian and those that were loaned into our language, but had appellativised already in the transmitting language. One of the authors of the work that was the first to go beyond data publication, taking also a theoretical approach was Vilmos Tolnai. He defines appellativisation in his dissertation entitled *Személynevek mint köznevek* (Personal names as common names) by claiming that „common use endows personal names with some specific feature, and many times, it gives them an adjective, thus making them common names” (1898: 1).

3.2. Problems with including proper names into dictionaries

Katalin J. Soltész also referred to the problems of adding appellativised common names to dictionaries in the context of the examination of the intersecting areas of proper names and common names (1959). She would clearly exclude proper names from our semantic dictionaries, but if we come across a meaning of the proper name that is already interpretable and is not occasionally but more or less generally used, in her view, „we should not refrain from adding it to the dictionary” (J. Soltész 1959: 470). Therefore, based on this approach, the word *Petőfi* (from the name of Sándor Petőfi, an emblematic Hungarian poet) should not be included in the semantic dictionary, even though it occasionally might refer to a poem, a school or a revolutionary poet, but we should include the completely appellativised *pecsovics* ‘person paid by and serving the actual regime’

as an entry. At the same time, she is right in raising the question of where is the boundary and what objective criteria there are for proper name meaning (J. Soltész 1959: 470). It is also worth examining this issue from a diachronic point of view (although looking back only to some 60 years). J. Soltész concluded from studying newspaper articles that, in 1958, *Moszkvics* (Moskvich) was associated with the concept of the 'car', *Csepel* with the concept of the 'motorcycle' and *Zetor* with the concept of the 'tractor' (1959: 467), that is, in addition to proper name meanings, a new micro-mark with an appellativised meaning was also attached to the said brand names as early as that time. Of these, now only the word *zetor* has an appellativised meaning (although it is not included in any dictionary yet), but its identifiability as a proper name has become limited by now.

So we cannot predict how long an ongoing semantic change is going to be general and prevailing. According to J. Soltész (1959: 468), one of the clearest signs of the generally used appellativised forms is their use with derivational suffixes (citing her examples: *Sidol* 'detergent' > *kiszidoloz* 'scours', *Brunolin* 'furniture polish' > *brunolinozható* 'polishable'), but only a small part of our appellativised proper names is affected by such clearly recognizable morphological changes in addition to the semantic one, so we relatively rarely get such clear help to classify the word as a common name.¹ On the other hand, our dictionaries include only common word data with a clearly classifiable meaning that can be given as a definition as entries.

In general, our semantic dictionaries approach proper names from this theoretical approach. For example, the above-mentioned *pecsovics* is included with both of its meanings in *ÉrtSz.* (old, mocking, 'servile follower of the Habsburg dynasty or the ruling party' and 'devoted to the government'), and its proper name origin is also referred to in the entry (from the name of an estate officer in the town of Szekszárd, István Petsovics). However, etymology (according to expectations attached to a given type of a dictionary) is not always found as part of the word-related information. It is present with well-known appellativised words, e.g., *zeppelin* 'very big airship of the form of a cigar' (from the name of F. Zeppelin, German inventor), *bédekker* '(detailed) travel book' (after K. Baedeker, Leipzig publisher) (*ÉKsz.*). However, such information is not mentioned with words that can be evidently linked to proper names, e.g., *ripacs* 'bad actor using cheap acting effects (rarely lecturer or speaker)' (*ÉrtSz.*, *ÉKsz.*). Providing the origin of a proper name seems to depend on factors other than the word's familiarity and/or frequency (and these are often subjective ones).

In our etymological dictionaries, a great emphasis is placed on revealing any proper name origin in the case of almost all such words. It occurs (taking more known examples) with the entries *aggastyán* 'old man' (from the name *Ágoston/Augustine*), *ádámcsutka*, *pálfordulás* 'ideological switch' (from the conversion of *Paul* the apostle), *pali* 'guy' (from the nickname *Pali*), *panama* 'corruption scandal'

¹ Hajdú provides many examples of forms that are used with formants in Hungarian (2002: 55, 2003: 78).

(from *Panama*), *paprikajancsi* 'clown, Pulchinello' (from the name *Paprika Jancsi*) (TESz., Esz.), however, sometimes even etymological dictionaries miss the link to proper names (e.g., *ripacs*), and in some cases some words that can be associated with widely known proper names do not even appear as keywords; e.g., *bédekker*, *pecsovics*, *zeppelin* (ESz.).

Éva B. Lőrinczy (1991) has already drawn attention to the large number of appellativised proper names in some language variants in connection with the material of the Új magyar tájszótár (she referred primarily to their frequent occurrence in dialects), but the dictionary contains even more words of proper name (predominantly first name) origin than she supposed. Highlighting some examples: *andrásstartó* 'one of the piles holding the roof of the ship on which the beam rests' (from the name *András*), *büdöspanna* 'bedbug' (from the nickname *Panna*), *fiúpista* 'boy pimp' (from the nickname *Pista*), *bőskebab* 'bean variant' (from the nickname *Böske*), *sanyarúfáni* 'miser woman' (from the name *Fanni*).

B. Lőrinczy refers primarily to the large amount of data created from first and nicknames, but of course other types of proper names are also common in this language variant, too, although in much smaller numbers; e.g., *júdásfa* 'Judas tree, Cercis' (ÚMTSz.), *amerikadohány* 'tobacco type produced by Béba tobacco producers' (from the name of America) (SzegSz.), *kanadaranett* (from the name of Canada), *sándorcár* (from the name of Tsar Alexander) and *biszmark* (from the name of Chancellor Bismarck) 'apple variants' (in the entry *alma* 'apple' of SzegSz.), *virginia* 'music' (SzegSz.).

Although it is not a dictionary in the traditional sense, but it can be classified as an encyclopaedic dictionary (cf. Fábíán 2015), still, we have to refer to the book entitled *Hogy hívnak? Könyv a keresztnevekről* (What is your name? Book on first names) (Fercsik–Raátz 1997). The book does not fit into the line of traditional dictionaries, neither into those of traditional first name books. Unlike former publications (partly for similar purposes), it goes beyond the alphabetical publication of first names that can be registered in Hungary, but it also adds a lot of other information of interest about names: it also provides the related ethnographic, cultural historical and linguistic information (cf. Hajdú 1998). The authors write, for example, about the occurrence of personal names in toponyms and foreign languages, their connections with other names and, which was pioneering in such publications at that time, their relationship with the common words, that is, their appellativisation as well.

Given its nature, this book also processes only first names, almost a hundred of them. The fact that this publication, which is basically intended for educational purposes, also connects common word derivatives to names in the entries suggests that the authors consider it important to clearly link common names that already have a dictionary meaning to the proper name. This approach is even more pronounced in the author's publication entitled *Keresztnemek enciklopédiája* (Encyclopedia of First Names) (KnE.), which contains a hundred female and a hundred male names. The structure of the entries follows the pattern of their previous work (publishing many cultural and ethnographic aspects of the

first name in addition to the linguistic one), but it defines certain aspects of the characterization of names much more strongly (also typologically).

Appellativised occurrences are given in the last point of the entries. Reviewing these, we can see that only dialect and (probably) commonly known appellativised data appear in each entry, but we do not find the sources for the data here either. It is also striking that semantic changes that took place in Hungarian and data that came into Hungarian as common words, appellativised in the transmitting language are not separated either.

Of course, the main purpose of this publication was not to accurately specify the source of the appellativised data, but unfortunately this makes it difficult to use the entries for research purposes. For example, the appellativised forms of the name *Ádám*, being the first entry of the publication, are presented as follows (KnE. 39):

Words referring to *Adam's apple* are linked to Adam's name both in the common language (*ádámcsutka*) and in dialects (*ádámalma, ádámbütyök, ádámcsomó, ádámcson, ádámfalat, ádámgége, ádámgombja, ádámgörccs*, etc.)

We know that persons wearing the *ádámkosztüm* (Adam's clothes) are actually nude. We know the word *ádámbűz* (Adam's smell) from folk tales, denoting human smell mainly in relation to foreigners, and persons who do not belong to the house. But what actually do people do who eat with *ádám villája* (Adam's fork)? It is jokingly said when someone eats by hand, in violation of decency, without cutlery. *Adamita* people were heretics in ancient times and in the Middle Ages. Their name comes from the name of the biblical *Adam*. Rolled roads covered with crushed stone that we call *makadám* roads also recall *Adam*. Such pavements were invented by a Scottish civil engineer, J. L. McAdam at the beginning of the 19th century (the name McAdam meaning 'Adam's son'). Our word *makadám* was created and appellativised by emphasizing his name according to the rules of the Hungarian language.

3.3. Sources and types of the vocabulary of the vocabulary originating from proper names

Earlier, dictionary-based word collections focused primarily on common names that can be easily associated with proper names, and mainly with first names that are more easily recognizable than other name types, and by now, the entire vocabulary of 36 dictionaries have been studied. These include etymological dictionaries (SzófSz., TESz.), semantic dictionaries (ÉrtSz., ÉKsz.), regional and country-level dialect dictionaries (e.g., Tsz., MTsz., BodrSz., FTsz., KiskSz., SzegSz., SzamSz.), slang dictionaries (e.g., Jenő–Vető 1900, Kabdebó 1917, Fazakas 1991, Hoffmann 1996) and smaller dictionaries focussing on the vocabulary of certain language strata or specialised and regional dictionaries (e.g., MNövSz., Vörös

1996). I performed the analysis of the corpus of first name origin in the mentioned dictionaries myself (Takács 2007: 45–97), while appellativised personal names in recent slang dictionaries (Timár–Fazakas 2003, Parapatics 2008, Szűts 2008, Kövecses 2009) have been studied by Andrea Parapatics (2012).

In my experience, dialect dictionaries contain mainly the appellativised forms of first names, while slang dictionaries (especially the most recent ones) feature those of other proper name types (mainly family names and toponyms). To mention some examples: *kádárkolbász* 'policeman's baton' (from the name of János Kádár, communist leader), *zrínyizik* 'runs away without paying the bill' (from the name of Miklós Zrínyi, defender of the castle of Szigetvár who heroically run among the besiegers), *blöki* 'dog', *nyelesdemalgon* 'a bottle of vodka' (from the medicine name Demalgon) (Kövecses 2009); *rákóczitér* 'corridor in the female prison' (from the name of a Budapest square, Rákóczi tér, once famous for prostitutes) (Szabó 2008); *balkán* 'chaos' (from the name of the Balkan) (Parapatics 2008); *antaljózsi* 'LSD blotter, drug' (from the name of József Antall, former Prime Minister), *csikágó* 'dangerous environment' (from the name of Chicago), *dzsuraszszikpark* 'reserved area where people do not work' (from the movie title Jurassic Park) (Kis 2015).

Our recent prison slang dictionary (Kis 2015) is full of appellativised forms that serve as the basis for changes by analogy in many cases as well. Whole families of well-known words were created with a similar or even the same meaning; e.g., *mengele*, *csaucseszku* (from Ceaucescu), *bubó* (from the name of a cartoon hero, Dr. Bubó) 'prison doctor'; *terminátor*, *zsan* (from Jean), *mikrobi* (from the name of a cartoon hero), *kintekunta* (from the name of Kunta Kinte, persona in the TV series Roots) 'abused person on the lowest grade in the hierarchy of the imprisoned, forced to serve his cellmates'; *dzsémszbandi* (from the name of James Bond), *geréb* (from the name of the traitor in a famous youth novel), *júadás*, *matahari*, *donibraszko* (from the name Donnie Brasco) 'traitor'.

I analysed the corpus of different types of proper names also used as common words in prison slang from a semantic and morphological point of view (Takács 2020a), and we studied first names appellativised in Hungarian and Finnish slang by highlighting the main differences between the two word groups (Sarhema–Takács 2018). I believe that further examination of the rich slang vocabulary covering as many aspects as possible is definitely necessary since it can add to our knowledge with essential information regarding the process, the types and the mental background of appellativisation.

3.4. An embryonic Deonomasticon Hungaricum

There is not a single dictionary in Hungarian containing only the collection of appellativised common words, although such dictionaries exist in foreign languages (Italian and German) (Köster 2012, Schweickard 1997–2013; reviewed by Fábrián 2014, Müller 2015). The most extensive Hungarian work of this kind is the name inventory of the (so far only) Hungarian monograph on the said phenomenon, entitled *Keresztnevek jelentésváltozása. Egy tulajdonnévtípus közszóvá válásának modellje* (Semantic changes of personal names. Model of

the appellativisation of a proper name type) (Takács 2007: 97–136). This work presents the change by focusing on one type of proper names. It contains the appellativised derivatives of 28 Hungarian first names and nicknames arranged into entries.

The volume draws its corpus from the entire material of 32 dictionaries, analysed from three perspectives (general, structural and semantic). The general characteristics of the phenomenon are provided based on about 2,300 appellativised data of almost 400 Hungarian first names that have appellativised forms as well. The monograph contains only examples of first name origin and forms that have appellativised in Hungarian, excluding loan words of proper name origin. However, for reasons of length, only 28 of the 396 first names on which the study is based were included in the name inventory of the book.

Below I present the entry in the directory of the first name *Andor*, a male name that is rarely used as a proper name, and shows only few appellativised forms (Takács 2007: 99).

I. It is the shortened form of the old *Andorjás* form of the name *András* but it might have shortened from the old Hungarian first name *Andornak* as well. *Andornak* is the Hungarian form of the latin *Andronicus* (Ladó 130, Ladó–Bíró 29). We have data about its being used as a family name from 1453 (*Tomas Andor*). According to CsnSz., the family name is a father's name originating from *Andor*, the shortened nickname of the variant *Andorjás* of the old Christian personal name *András*. Its derivatives (*Andorka*, *Andorkó*) also appeared as family names (OkISz.).

II. A folk medicine is called *andortea* 'horehound tea, Marrubium vulgare' (ÚMTsz.).

5. Summary

Appellativised proper names appear in general dictionaries rather accidentally. Their selection and interpretation, as well as the information attached to them (including the exploration of the proper name origin) in many cases depends on the editor's judgment, beyond the type and purposes of the dictionary. In my opinion, it would be absolutely necessary and worthwhile to arrange this vocabulary into a separate dictionary, creating a Hungarian deonomasticon. For this purpose, existing collections based on the material of the previous dictionaries and the inventory part of the monograph discussing the phenomenon can serve as a good basis later on. As regards the Italian and German dictionaries mentioned as a model, I think it would be expedient to follow the German pattern. The Hungarian appellativised vocabulary would be worth processing as a semantic dictionary, from the descriptive aspect, mainly, but it is important to clearly distinguish between loan words and word formation in Hungarian.

It should be noted that since all Hungarian publications that can be used as antecedents mostly contain forms of first name origin, it is very important to include and present the appellativised forms of other types of names (toponyms, family names, etc.). In addition to the introduction of newer types of names, it is also important to expand the range of sources. In addition to traditional, printed dictionaries and collections, it would be worthwhile to open up to online sources (mainly slang dictionaries and blogs, and language use of the social media), since if we link appellativisation to the use of names in living languages, online dictionaries can be excellent sources of the vocabulary created by appellativisation.

The Hungarian deonomasticon developed using these aspects would fit in well with the series of onomastic publications related to first names that aim to popularize science and use scientific methodology, referred to in my study (Kálmán 1967, Fercsik–Raátz 1997, KnE.), which, at the same time, attract the attention of those who are interested in linguistics and also serve as sources for further onomastic research (be it semantic, morphological or lexological).

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Köznevesült tulajdonnevek a magyar szótárakban

Tanulmányomban először azokat a tényezőket mutatom be, melyek a köznevesülés jelenségének egyértelmű meghatározását nehezítik, majd pedig megvizsgálom az appellativizációval létrejött közszóalakok szóközlésekben és szótárakban való eddigi megjelenését, illetve a szócsoport azon jellegzetességeit, melyek az ily módon létrejött alakok szótárba szerkesztésekor nehézséget jelenthetnek. Vizsgálatom alapján úgy látom, hogy a köznevesült tulajdonnévi adatok megjelenése az egyes szótárakban igen esetleges: kiválogatásuk és értelmezésük, illetve a hozzájuk fűzött információk (köztük a tulajdonnévi eredet feltárása is) a szótár típusán és célján túl sok esetben a szerkesztő megítélésétől függ. A magyar köznevesült szóanyagot elsődlegesen leíró szempontból, értelmező szótárként lenne érdemes feldolgozni, ám a korpusz kialakítása során fontos a jövevényszavak és a magyar szóalkotás egyértelmű elkülönítése. Igen lényeges a köznevesült keresztnévi adatfeldolgozásokon kívül az egyéb névtípusok (helynevek, családnevek stb.) közszóalakok származékainak bevonása és felmutatása, továbbá a források körének bővítése is.