

DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF TOPONYMS

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Annotation. Given article describes the importance of toponyms, the use of them in the field of linguistics, geography and other sciences. All the materials are given with the scientists' words and quotes.

Key words and expressions. Toponyms, linguistic investigation, spiritual heritage, linguistic richness and diversity, indicator of places, intangible heritage.

We know that place names (toponyms) have long been the object of linguistic investigations, their etymological structural and functional features being always in the centre of attention of the researchers. A clear example of this is the fact that in the current era of globalization, special attention is still paid to place names, especially toponyms.

Everywhere in our life we connect with destination, so it means that toponyms are necessary for living. Languages are the subjects of the science called linguistics. Therefore, anyone handling geographical names needs to have some basic linguistic knowledge, both in general terms and specifically pertaining to the language situation of the area of survey. Learning them or studying is need. People from different professional backgrounds may be allured to some kind of study of geographical names. To linguists specializing either in the historical or genealogical aspects of specific languages, or in the taxonomy of languages in general, toponyms contain a treasure of ancient language elements which allows them to under build their theories or test their hypotheses. Likewise, historians may use toponym research to reveal ancient movements of peoples, or get a hint of cultural exchange patterns in forgotten ages.[5]

The question naturally arises as to why place names are so important in people's lives. The reason is that if we do not name a place, we face all sorts of confusions, misunderstandings, and even problems like losing our way, our destination. Therefore, the phrase "toponym", which is not considered very large, is actually of great value.

Place names help to revive the historical past of each nation, its features, to determine the boundaries of its location, to describe the areas of past distribution of languages, cultural and economic centers. It is no exaggeration to say that place names are the spiritual heritage of every nation. Toponyms can represent one or more toponymic layers too.[7]

David Mills mentions that, "Place names, those familiar but curious labels for places that feature in all their splendid variety on map and signpost, fulfil such an essential function in our daily lives that we take them very much for granted. Yet the place names of the British Isles are as much part of our cultural heritage as the various languages, historical events and landscapes from which they spring, and almost every place name has an older original meaning behind its modern form. Indeed the place names of the countries and regions that make up the British Isles present us with the most astonishing linguistic richness and diversity..."[9]

As V.A. Nikonov said, "Let's imagine for a moment that all geographical names – cities, villages, rivers, seas, mountains, countries, streets – have disappeared from our planet. All the work of the post immediately stopped. Transport is paralyzed: no one knows where he is going, where to change, and where to get off; goods instead of Marseille go to Honolulu. ... This will not happen: it is impossible to "remove" the names; they are inseparable from the whole life of modern society. They can be replaced by putting others in their place, but you cannot do without names. We use them at every step so habitually that we don't even notice them until there is some kind of hitch".[13]

K. Hakimov describes the importance of toponyms as follows: "The world of toponyms is diverse and interesting. Since the appearance of mankind, man has lived in a world of countless and complex names. One can see the connection of

millions of geographical place names belonging to different periods and languages in the world. ... It is especially difficult to imagine atlases and geographical maps without names. Many events that have happened or are happening in life can be understood through geographical names.”[8]

It is not difficult to understand the importance of place names in the following words of S. Karayev: “In general, man cannot live without naming things. Everything in the world has a name. In addition to the local names of plants and animals, there are scientific, Latin names. Any plant or animal can be recognized immediately by experts of different nationalities by its Latin name. So, the names help to distinguish one thing from another. From one place to another, from one valley to another, from one street to another. People also invented names to distinguish mountains, towns, and villages from each other.”[10]

E.M. Pospelov mentions that, we live in a world of names. Names surround us and serve as a reliable indicator of places where something is or something has happened. Studies, residence, work, recreation, routes of any travel, information about other events, etc., all of this is recorded in documents using the names of countries, regions, cities, streets, villages, rivers, mountains, seas, and others objects. The use of names in order to indicate a place is usually called the addressing function.[14]

In a word, I can say that toponyms are the intangible heritage of a nation, which not only provides information about the past and present of this nation, but also one of the means of embodying the culture and spirituality and development of this nation. In short, place names serve as a bridge that carries information from ancestors to generations.

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