

LITHUANIAN EPONYMOUS ANATOMICAL TERMS

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Introduction

There are two major categories of medical terms: descriptive - describing shape, color, size, function, etc, and eponyms, literally "putting a name upon". The latter has been used to honor those who first discovered or described an anatomical structure or diagnosed a disease or first developed a medical instrument or procedure.

Eponym* (gr. *epōnymos* – something is named after a particular person), is the name of a person or a thing, according to which something is named (TŽŽ 2003: 213). Eponym indicates the name of a person after whom something such as a discovery, invention, institution etc. is named usually to commemorate the importance of his/her contribution (Jana et al. 2009 : 9). Romulus (771 BC– 717 BC) is the eponym for Rome; the Emperor Constantine I or Constantine the Great (272–337) is the eponym of Constantinople; Queen Victoria is the eponym for Victorian (Alexandrina Victoria) architecture (Teo 2007: 22).

Eponyms were used in the terminology of biomedicine to denote anatomical structures, syndromes, diseases, medicaments, operations or procedures, equipment or instruments for a long time. Eponyms are used in honour of persons, who were the first to discover anatomical structures or described procedures, diagnosed a disease, originated a medical instrument. In terminologies of anatomy, pharmacy, clinic eponyms are rather frequent (Brunevičiūtė 2001: 111). There are lots of terms used to describe the 5,000 parts of the human body.

V. Skujiņa discusses the principles of Latvian term formation. She analyses the comparison of a proper noun and a common noun. The author speaks about appellatives (Skujiņa 1993: 99). According to M. Bujalkova, in the terminology of macroscopic anatomy eponymous composite terms are impossible. However, in clinical terminology eponymous composite terms are frequent (Bujalkova 1999: 271-2).

In the Baseler congress in 1895 the project of nomenclature was discussed and approved. There are no eponyms in *Nomina Anatomica*. Why are not they included in *Nomina Anatomica*? First, they are imprecise. Where is the *gland of Cloquet*? The *bone of Vesalius*? There is no way to know except through rote memorisation. Eponyms are also redundant, with the same structure often named over and over. *Aeby's muscle* is also called *the muscle of Klein* is also called the *sucking muscle of Krause*. *Poupart's ligament* is the same thing as the *Fallopian ligament*. *Bartholin's gland* refers both to the *greater vestibular gland* and to the *sublingual gland*. There are over 700 English anatomical eponyms**.

The Federative International Committee on Anatomical Terminology (FICAT) has already published two lists of anatomical terminology in an attempt to standardise the usage worldwide. The lists attempt to eliminate eponyms where possible in favor of clearly descriptive terms.

The use of medical eponyms, as in other areas, is often random, inconsistent, idiosyncratic, confusing, and even misleading (Jana et al. 2009 : 9).

Eponyms bear no necessary information, for example: Wirsung duct (pancreatic duct). Typically an eponym bears no apparent association with the disease, procedures, symptoms. For example, the term *Cronkhite – Canada syndrome* gives no indication of what the syndrome is, or who are the people for which it is named? In the 18th century, the great German anatomist, Samuel Thomas von Sömmerring (1755-1830) avoided using eponyms. He asked the question, "Did not Fallopius (Italian anatomist Gabriele Fallopio; 1523-1562) know the *ileocaecal valve* long before Bauhim (Swiss anatomist Caspar Bauhim; 1560-1624)? Bauhim's name was synonymous, the eponym, for the *ileocaecal valve* at that time (Bergman). The great anatomist avoided using eponyms in anatomical terminology as they did not correspond historical facts. In Baseler congress (1895) a project of anatomical terminology was confirmed, where eponyms were avoided. But according to S. Pavilonis, eponyms, related to the names of inventors and the priority of which was difficult to estimate, in anatomical terminology were used frequently (Pavilonis 1984: 35).

*The concept *eponym* in linguistics has synonyms, for example: a personal name, an antroponym. *Antroponyms* (gr. *antropos* „human being“ + *onyma* „name“), personal names are proper names of a person (name, surname, nickname, pseudonym, patronymic etc.) (LKE 1999: 29). In the vocabulary of linguistics the authors indicate, that a *personal name* is an *antroponym* (Gaivenis, Keinys 1990: 27). J. G. Tortora and R. S. Grabowski indicate, that eponymous terms are terms, denominated in the name of smb. (Tortora, Grabovski 1993:). *An eponymous term* and a *personal name* denominate the same concept (Kvašytė 2005: 67).

Eponyms lack scientific accuracy. Eponyms are often claimed to facilitate learning and provide shorthand reference. Contrary to this intention, signs and symptoms in *aortic regurgitation* carry as many as 31 eponyms. Not surprisingly, some may remember the eponym while being unable to describe its meaning. In a systematic study, only 10 of 92 orthopaedic surgeons were able to give the correct description of *Finkelstein's test* for diagnosing *tendovaginitis* (Woywodt, Matteson 2007: 336).

Judith Whitworth believes eponyms are helpful as they reflect medical history as well as representing medical terms. On the other hand, eponyms bring color to medicine.

Like most areas of learning, anatomy has its own big share of structures or phenomena named after persons who have discovered or described such entities first. Such terms are called eponymous terms. Unfortunately in anatomical and medical sciences the vast number of such terms causes undue burden on the memory of the student. By international convention, eponymous terms are avoided these days, instead, descriptive anatomical terms are used. As the last word it may be said that this certainly helps the student, but we tend to lose the historical perspective by avoiding them altogether (Ronald A. Bergman et al.).

According to Gerard Tortora eponyms should be avoided where possible, since they are totally nondescriptive, often vague, and do not necessarily indicate that the person whose name is used actually contributed anything very original (Tortora 1993: 1-43).

Lithuanian eponymous anatomical terms

Lithuanian composite terms with eponyms occur rarely. Only 8 Lithuanian composite terms and 23 Latin terms with eponyms were found in the *Medicinos terminų žodynas*. In the MTŽ terms with eponyms are presented with the reference žr. (see) to the synonymous term without an eponym. The majority of Lithuanian composite terms with eponyms are presented in the *Atlas of Anatomy* by Trevor Veston (translated by J. Tutkuvienė) and in the textbook *Topografinė anatomija ir operacinė chirurgija* by J. Brėdikis et al. In the *Atlas of Anatomy* Lithuanian eponymous terms do not have Latin equivalents, for example: *Baumano kapsulė* Veston 126; *Goldžio kompleksas* Veston 18; *Faterio – Pačinio kūnelis* Veston 60; *Haverso kanalas* Veston 23; *Henlės kilpa* Veston 126; *Hipokampas (Amono ragas)* Veston 47; *Krauzės kolba (cold receptor)* Veston 33; *Langerhanso salelės* Veston 74; *Lyberkiuno liaukos* Veston 104; *Meisnerio kūnelis (touch receptor)* Veston 33; *Pačinio kūnelis (pressure receptor)* Veston 33; *Renvjė sąsmauka* Veston 42; *Rufinio kūnelis (thermoreceptor)* Veston 33; *Valdejerio (Waldeyer) žiedas* Veston 100.

In Lithuanian anatomical terminology the most frequent are binomial eponymous terms. Multiword (three-component – five-component) eponymous terms are rather rare. They occur in the terminology of topographical anatomy most often. For example, *Adomo obuolys – pomum Adami Topanat.135*; *Garanžo sąnarys – articulatio Govangeot Topanat.79*; *Griunfelgo-Lesgafto juosmens rombas – rhombus lumbalis Gruenfeldi-Lasgaphti Topanat.321*. *Lisfranko sąnarys – articulatio Lisfranci Topanat.79*; *Piragovo kanalas – canalis Pirogovi Topanat.67*; *priekiniai skersiniai smilkininiai Švalbės vingiai – gyri temporales transversii anteriores Schwalbe MTŽ235*; *Riolano laukas – arcus Riolani Topanat.227*; *Vežalijaus kaulas – os Vesalii MTŽ399*.

In some cases Latin equivalents of Lithuanian terms are presented with eponyms and their synonymous terms without eponyms in parenthesis. For example, *akiduobinis raumuo – musculus Muelleri (musculus orbitalis) MTŽ354*; *būgninis nervas – nervus Jacobsoni (nervus tympanicus) MTŽ371,373*; *pleištinis gumburėlis – nodule Wribergi (tuberculum cuneiforme) MTŽ379, 559*; *pogleivinis rezginytis – plexus Meisneri (plexus submucosus) MTŽ443*; *spindulinė dalis – processus Ferreini (pars radiata) MTŽ420,455*; *žandinis antys – sinus Highmori (sinus maxillaris) MTŽ42, 501*; *ančiai – sinus Morgagni (sinus rectales) MTŽ501*; *krūtinkaulio kampas – angulus Ludovici (angulus sterni) MTŽ36*; *sėklidės pavadas – gubernaculum Hunteri (gubernaculum testis) MTŽ233*; *smegenų vandentiekis – aquaeductus Silvii (aqueductus cerebri) MTŽ47*; *žarnų raumeninio dangalo rezginytis – plexus Auerbachi (plexus myentericus) MTŽ442,443*; *didžiųjų smegenų arterinis ratas – circulus arteriosus Villisi (circulus arteriosus cerebri) MTŽ108*; *regos nervo kraujagyslinis ratas – circulus arteriosus Halleri (circulus vasculosus nervi optici) MTŽ108*.

In the *Atlas of Anatomy* by T. Veston eponymous Lithuanian terms are presented in parenthesis. For example, *klausomasis (Eustachijaus) vamzdis – tuba Eustachii (tuba auditiva) Vest.55, MTŽ558*; *pogleivio liaukos (Brunerio) – glandulae duodenales Brünneri (glandulae duodenales) Vest.113, MTŽ225*. Such cases are rare in anatomical terminology.

It can be stated that Lithuanian binomial eponymous terms occur more frequent. There are no Lithuanian and Latin six-component – eight-component eponymous terms. In K. Gaivenis' opinion, specific composite terms, where the subordinate component notes the researcher, who has marked and described a living being or the genus of a plant, generally are binomial (Gaivenis 1969: 188).

In the *Atlas of Anatomy and Physiology* by J. G. Tortora and R. S. Grabowski 61 composite terms with eponyms were found. Having analysed the usage of anatomical terms, J. G. Tortora and R. S. Grabowski state that eponyms are still in frequent use. Eponyms in the atlas are cross-referenced to their current terminology there.

In recent times, the trend has been toward replacing eponyms with descriptive names. However, some things are known almost exclusively by their eponym. Would you recognise "paralysis agitans" as Parkinson's disease? Also, some descriptive terms have been deemed offensive or stigmatising. As examples, "mongolism" is currently called Down's syndrome and "leprosy" has all been replaced with Hansen's disease. Want to bet that AIDS will take on a new name in the future?***

Eponymy in medicine has been used for a long time as a way to identify issues, such as diseases, syndromes, organs, and parts of organs to honor scholars who contributed to the process of science. Eponyms are still widely used in clinical settings. In anatomy eponyms are still in use, but there is a general trend toward eliminating them. In Basle Nomina Anatomica descriptive terms are preferable to eponyms.

Resources

1. MTŽ: Astrauskas V. et al. (1980). *Medicinos terminų žodynas*. Vilnius: Mokslas.
2. Topanat.: Brėdikis J. et al. (1995). *Topografinė anatomija ir operacinė chirurgija*. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų I-klā.
3. Veston: Vestonas, T. (2003). *Anatomijos atlasas* [translated to Lithuanian by Janina Tutkuvienė]. Vilnius.

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LIETUVIŠKI EPONIMINIAI ANATOMIJOS TERMINAI

Biomedicinos mokslo srities terminijoje nuo antikos laikų buvo vartojami eponimai anatomijos struktūroms, sindromams, ligoms, medikamentams, operacijoms ar procedūroms, įrangai ar instrumentams pavadinti.

Asmenvardžiai yra viena iš prieštaringų problemų lingvistikoje dėl savo daugialypės prasmės. Kai kurie mokslininkai teigia, kad vardai neturi jokios leksinės reikšmės, o kiti bando įrodyti, kad juose koduojama svarbi informacija.

Tiek anatomijos, tiek apskritai medicinos, tiek botanikos ir zoologijos terminijos yra lotyniškos, sudarytos pagal tam tikrus tarptautinius kodeksus, klasynus, kurie paprastai būna patvirtinti tarptautiniuose kongresuose. Tais kodeksais vadovaujamosi norminant šių mokslo sričių sistematikos nomenklatūrą. V tarptautiniame anatomų kongrese buvo patvirtinti šios srities terminų tvarkybos principai, kuriuose yra pažymėta, kad oficialioje aprašomosios ir mikroskopinės anatomijos nomenklatūroje nevertotini eponimai (tikriniai pavadinimai).