

Characters' nomination according to external features in Ilf and Petrov's "12 chairs"

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Abstract. The paper presents the analysis of nomination according to the external features of the characters in the novel "The Twelve Chairs" by I. Ilf and Eu. Petrov. The characters' nomination is understood as the main part of the anthroponymic system of the novel. The system of nominations denoting a person according to different aspects is viewed as a complex of multiple levels including several subsystems or semantic unities. One of them is a unity of nominations denoting characters according to their external features. Due to their semantic meaning the units can be divided into two groups: units denoting a person according to permanent physical characteristics (such as age, sex, appearance) and units denoting a person according to situational physiological state or condition. The nominations in question serve to present a vivid description of personages and to express the esthetic impression based on the analysis of physical, physiological and anthropological qualities and states visually perceived by the author of nomination. The article will also touch upon the ways the nominations are translated into English by native speaking translators.

1 Introduction

Lexical and phraseological units of anthroponymic character form a great part and play an important role in any language system, thus, their study has aroused a number of topical problems in modern linguistics. The anthropocentric approach, still being the basis of the current language studies, contributes a lot to the rapid development of this sphere of philological knowledge. The essence of this approach is to study all the scientific phenomena according to their importance for man who is understood as their reference standard and analyses the phenomena setting up perspectives, prospects and final goals [1].

The analysis of the publications devoted to the study of anthroponominating language units shows that there has been a definite interest in the problem in linguistics for the last two decades. The latest research works are devoted to the analysis of anthroponymic sphere of fiction, as well as to the analysis of language units denoting a person according to their profession and occupation, their social and ethnical status, their family relations, appearance and traits of character [2-10]. To provide a detailed and complete analysis of the whole corpus of nouns denoting a person they should be classified according to the hierarchical structure of their semantic meaning into several subclasses. All spheres of human existence are reflected in names or nominations used to characterize any quality or feature of a person: natural, innate, inherent, or acquired, obtained, gained, or even alleged and attributed by other people or society

[11,12]. Characters in fiction can be named and nominated in different ways: 1) by the author in the course of narration or 2) by other characters in their speech or 3) there can be cases of self-nomination, with the first way prevailing over the others.

The objective of the paper is to present the results of the current stage of our research which, in general, aims at classification and detailed description of lexical and phraseological units and also paraphrases denoting a person in the novel "The Twelve Chairs" by I. Ilf and Eu. Petrov. The survey of the latest research works available at scientific database show that during the last five years there has been a definite increase in number of publications devoted to different spheres of linguistic and philological study based on Ilf and Petrov's fiction, though its literary and historic value being always paid greater attention to. As for the linguistic study, there are a few recent research works that are worth mentioning. A group of scholars from Bashkir State University and Ufa State Petroleum Technological University study the concept of "laughter" and its constituent "smile" as the main categories of emotive vocabulary employed in the humorous discourse using the novel "The Twelve Chairs" by I. Ilf and E. Petrov as an example [13]. Italian linguist Marta Valeri studies acronyms considering them besides being a symbol of the past, also a skill to express irony and sarcasm [14]. Scholars from Southern Federal University study proper names (anthroponyms, toponyms, and ergonyms) and their function in forming the text coherency [15]. Thus, it proves the novelty of our research.

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Our research is based on the semantic approach, thus for all the units denoting a person we are going to use one term, previously introduced by Prof. Ratushnaya in her thesis – “anthroponominations” [16]. This article conveys the classification based on the analysis of the semantic structure and usage of over 1350 anthroponominations in the novel “The Twelve Chairs” collected by means of continuous sampling. They can be divided into three main groups: anthroponominations denoting a person according to social characteristics (80%), to traits of character (12%), and to external features (8%). The predominance of anthroponominations denoting a person according to social characteristics can be explained by the fact that during their life people perform various social functions whereas traits of character and physical features are more or less permanent or at least can remain unchanged for a long period of time. Though not being numerous the anthroponominations denoting people by their physical features play an important role in creating a vivid image of personages and are used as a means of portraying them in the work of fiction.

And there is another remark before we start presenting the results of our research. Our research is based on the text written in Russian, so for better understanding words, word combinations and illustrative sentences are given in Russian, then some words and word combinations, if necessary, are transliterated in square brackets with the stressed vowel marked with a preceding apostrophe, and translated in round brackets. The illustrative examples are all translated into English. The translation is taken from two available works by John Richardson (published in Great Britain in 1965) [17] and by Anne O. Fisher (USA, 2011) [18], so the translations will be marked *JR* and *AF* respectively.

2 Results and Discussion

The group of lexical and phraseological units, which is under analysis in the given research work, counts 114 units denoting a person according to external physiological features. These are the physical, physiological and anthropological features that can easily be perceived by senses.

The group can be divided into two subgroups: 1) units denoting a person according to biological characteristics, such as age and gender (62 units), e.g. *дитя* [dit'ia] (child *AF*), *древняя женщина* [dr'evnia zh'enschina] (the ancient woman *AF*), *человек в цветущем возрасте* [chelov'ek v tsvet'uschem v'ozraste] (the man in his prime *AF*, a healthy-looking man *JR*), or peculiar features of appearance (39 units), e.g. *толстячок* [tolstiach'ok] (the tubby man, the fat little man *JR*, the fat (little) man, the little fatty *AF*), *гигант* [gig'ant] (a giant *AF*, giants *JR*); 2) units denoting a person according to situational physiological state or condition (13 units). Anthroponominations of each subgroup are characterized by their specific semantic features. Their semantic structure has a specific hierarchy of semes whose manifestation becomes

evident through the realization and functioning of the units in the context of the novel.

2.1 Units denoting a person according to their biological characteristics

The semantic structure of the units of this group includes the integral seme “biological feature” which is specified by realization of miner semes naming the precise feature. They are “gender”, “age”, and “appearance”.

2.1.1 Combination of semes “gender” and “age”

There is usually a combination of two semes to nominate a person according to the features of gender and age. For example:

девица [de'vitsa] or [de'vitsa] (a girl *JR*, a damsel, a young lady *AF*) - a young or relatively young unmarried woman

К гражданину из первого ряда сейчас же понеслась *девица* с квитанцией для получения денег [19, 127].

A young lady with a claim ticket immediately rushed over to the citizen in the first row to take his money (*AF*, 256).

A girl with a receipt book immediately hurried over to the citizen in the first row (*JR*, 145).

женщина [zh'enschina] (a woman *AF*, *JR*) - an adult female person, a man's wife, girlfriend, or lover

На удивление всем приезжим, начальником станции была *женщина* [19, 224].

The station director was a woman, which amazed all the town's visitors (*AF*, 449).

To the surprise of all newcomers, the stationmaster was a woman (*JR*, 247).

старуха [sta'rukha] (an old lady *AF*, an old woman *JR*) - an elderly woman

Альхен мановением руки распустил хор, и *старухи* удалились мелкими радостными шажками [19, 48].

Alkhen released the choir with a wave of his hand, and the old ladies retired with joyful little steps (*AF*, 91).

Alchen dismissed the choir with a wave of his hand, and the old women made off with little steps of delight (*JR*, 51).

мальчуган [malchu'gan] (a lad *AF*) – a boy or young man

Капитан показал на двенадцатилетнего *мальчугана*, сидевшего у поручней и глядевшего на проплывающие берега [19, 202].

The captain indicated a twelve-year-old lad sitting at the handrail, looking out at the banks as they flowed past (*AF*, 405).

мужик [mu'zhik] (a man *AF*, *JR*) – an adult male person

На звуки музыки со всего Бармина сбежались дети, а за ними из яблоневых садов двинулись *мужики* и бабы [19, 199].

At the sound of the music, children came running from all over Barmino. Then peasant men and women came in from the apple orchards (*AF*, 399).

The sound of the music brought children running from the whole of Bramino and, after them, the peasant men and women from the orchards (JR, 223).

старичок [stari'chok] (an old man JR, AF) - an elderly man

Старичок присел к столу, покрытому клеенкой в узорах, и заглянул в самые глаза Остапа [19, 66].

The old man sat down at the table covered in patterned oilcloth and looked deep into Ostap's eyes (AF, 130).

The old man sat down at the table covered with patterned oil cloth and peered into Ostap's eyes (JR, 76).

The lexical units have an integral seme "gender" either female, for the first three units, or male for the rest. The units are semantically differentiated on the level of individual meaning due to their individual differentiating seme, which is "age". The gradation is "young age" – "adulthood" – "old age". The semantics of the units has a complex structure. Apart from the macro-components, such as denotative and significative meanings, there is a connotative meaning that vividly expresses the attitude of the author to characters:

- with a positive connotation: *мальчуган* [malchu'gan] – a lad (AF), *дедушка* ['dedushka] – grandpa (AF), granddad (JR), *старичок* [stari'chok] – an old man (JR, AF), a little old man (AF), *старушка* [sta'rushka] – an old woman, an old lady (JR, AF), a little old lady (AF);

- with a neutral connotation: *мальчик* ['malchik] – a (little) boy (AF, JR), *старик* [sta'rik] – an old man (AF), *женщина* [zh'enschina] – a woman (AF, JR) *бабушка* ['babushka] – a grandmother (AF, JR);

- with a negative or pejorative connotation: *мальчишка* [mal'chishka] – little boy, child (AF), brat (JR), *старуха* [sta'rukha] – an old lady (AF).

As seen from the given examples, in Russian there is a greater variety of morphological means – suffixes – to express positive or negative connotative meaning. In the English variant of the novel the connotation is not always evident and can be expressed only with the help of additional lexical units, like *little*, in the structure of word combinations.

There is a group of units denoting a person mainly according to their age without manifesting the biological gender. Among them we distinguish such lexical and phraseological units, as *дитя* [dit'ia] – child (AF), *крошка* [k'roshka] – a little tyke (AF), a mite (JR), *малютка* [mal'jutka] – a tot (AF), a babe (JR), *ребенок* [reb'jonok] / *дети* ['deti] – a child / children (AF, JR), *цветы улиц* [tsve'ty 'ulits], *цветы на асфальте* [tsve'ty na as'falte], *цветы жизни* [tsve'ty 'zhizni] – flowers of the street, flowers in asphalt (JR), flowers on the asphalt (AF), flowers of life (AF, JR). These anthroponominations perform both nominative and evaluative functions. They are used to create a positive connotation as they denote small children whom people adore and tend to take care of. The metaphorical periphrases "flowers of the street, flowers in asphalt" help to create a vivid picture of children left without care, and the phraseological unit "flowers of life" serves to express their importance in our life as well as their fragility and vulnerability.

Одни лишь *маленькие дети*, беспризорные дети, находятся без призора. Эти *цветы улицы*, или, как выражаются пролетарии умственного труда, *цветы на асфальте*, заслуживают лучшей участи <...>. Поможем *детям*. Будем помнить, что *дети* – *цветы жизни* [19, 90].

And only the *little children*, the little homeless children, are left without a home. Those *flowers of the street*, or, as the proletarians of mental labor put it, those *flowers on the asphalt*, deserve a better fate. <...> We will help *children*. We will remember that *children* are the *flowers of life* (AF, 182).

It is only the *young children*, the waifs and strays, who are not looked after. These *flowers of the street*, or, as the white-collar proletarians call them, *flowers in asphalt*, deserve a better lot. <...> We will help these *children*. Let us remember that they are the *flowers of life* (JR, 104-105).

One of the most productive phraseological units used to denote a young male person is *молодой человек* [molo'doj chelo'vek] "a young man". It occurs 63 times in the text of the novel, 19 of which are used to describe the main character – Ostap Bender – especially before we learn his name:

В половине двенадцатого с северо-запада, со стороны деревни Чмаровки, в Старгород вошел *молодой человек* лет двадцати восьми [19, 35].

At half past twelve, a *young man* of about twenty-eight walked into Stargorod from the direction of a village called Chmarovka to the northwest (AF, 65).

Being used in the plural form, it may denote either a group of men or a mix group of men and women (or a couple of a man and a woman as in example):

За всеми манипуляциями советского служащего застенчиво следили двое молодых людей – мужчина и девица [19, 8].

Two *young people*, a man and a damsel, shyly followed all the government office worker's machinations (AF, 9).

All these operations were watched timidly by two *young persons*—a boy and a girl (JR, 18).

The units under study have a meaning of specific quality which implies a possibility to form numerous antonymic pairs and synonymic rows. Antonymic pairs are based on the feature of age that is revealed in the opposition of semes 'young' vs. 'old', e.g. a girl – an old woman, or biological gender that is revealed in the opposition of semes 'female' vs. 'male', e.g. a girl – a boy, a woman – a man, an old woman / lady – an old man. The lexical and phraseological units, as well as periphrases and word combination denoting a person according to the biological features, as age and gender, can be divided into the following synonymic rows:

- with the dominant "an old woman": an old lady, a little old lady, an ancient woman, a grandmother;

- with the integral meaning "an elderly male person": grandpa / granddad, an old man, a little old man; and also, an exceptionally nice little old man / an extremely nice old man, the old farmer, the old monk, an embarrassed old man, a restless little old man, a prim little old man – all of them realize individual semes;

- with a dominant “a boy”: a little boy, a lad, a brat, a chipper lad;
- with a dominant “a girl”: a young lady, a damsel, a young woman;
- with a dominant “child / children”: a (playful) little tyke / a mite, a tot / a babe, a chubby little boy, kids, fellows, flowers of the street, flowers in asphalt / flowers on the asphalt, flowers of life, underage agents, young ragamuffins – through realization of individual semes all of them illustrate the attitude of the society towards children – from love and adoration to resentment and disapproval.

2.1.2 Realization of the seme “appearance”

There have been 39 units denoting a person according to their appearance. They are used to give a description of physiological features of the characters helping to create their vivid image. The anthroponominations realizing the seme “appearance” express basic esthetic impressions made by the appearance of a character. For instance, to give a bright colourful description of Ellochka Shchukina the Cannibal’s appearance a unit *шикарная чмара* [shi’karnaya ch’mara] – a chic bird (AF) is used in the novel. The unit is highly colloquial or even belongs to jargon:

Два стула увезла на извозчике, как сказал другой юный следопыт, “шикарная чмара” [19, 132].

Two chairs had been taken away by a “chic bird”, as another young tracker put it, in a horse-cab (AF, 266).

To describe good-looking women the following units are used:

земные и неземные создания [zem’nye I nezem’nye soz’daniya] - earthly and unearthly creatures (AF), *королева* [koro’leva] – the queen (AF, JR), *красавица* [kra’savitsa] – a beautiful woman (AF), *красотка* [kra’sotka] – a beauty (JR), a pretty little thing (AF), *небесное создание* [ne’besnoye soz’daniye] – a heavenly creature (AF, JR), *фея* [’feya] – the fairy (AF). The lexical unit “queen” is used figuratively in the novel either to describe a beautiful slender woman or to name a chess figure:

“<...> Вы – королева Марго.

Ничего этого не понимавшая королева из предместья с уважением смеялась [19, 156].

“<...> You are Queen Margot.”

The queen from the suburbs laughed respectfully, though she understood nothing (JR, 181).

Авессалом поцеловал у королевы руку и, наклонив голову, побежал за строгим судьей [19, 157].

Absalom kissed the queen’s hand, tilted his head, and ran after the stern judge (AF, 318).

Остап проанализировал положение, позорно назвал “ферзя” “королевой” и высокопарно поздравил брюнета с выигрышем [19, 216].

Ostap analyzed the situation, embarrassingly called the queen “Her Highness,” and loftily congratulated the brown-haired man on his victory (AF, 434).

To describe handsome men the following units are used in the novel:

красавец [kra’savets] - a man as courageous and handsome (AF), a handsome he-man (JR), *красавец мужчина* [kra’savets muzh’china] – a handsome fellow (AF), a fine-looking fellow (JR), *красавец с черкесским лицом* [kra’savets s cher’kesskim li’tsom] – a handsome / good-looking man with a Circassian face (AF, JR), *красавец-гусар* [kra’savets gu’sar] – the handsome husser (AF). Some anthroponominations also have individual differentiating semes of nationality, social position or profession:

– Скажите, товарищ, – остановил его в коридоре *красавец с черкесским лицом*, – где здесь редакция газеты “Станок”? [19, 151]

In the corridor, he was stopped by a handsome man with a Circassian face who said, “Tell me, comrade, where’s the office of the newspaper The Lathe.?” (AF, 303).

He was stopped in the corridor by a good-looking man with a Circassian face. “Say, Comrade, where’s the editorial office of the Lathel” (JR, 175).

Очень часто на страницах иллюстрированных журналов появлялся фотографический портрет *красавца-гусара* – куртка, расшитая бранденбурами и отороченная зернистым каракулем, высокие прилизанные височки и короткий победительный нос [19, 74].

The pages of illustrated journals often sported photographic portraits of the handsome husser: a jacket embroidered with Brandenburg loops and trimmed in Astrakhan fur, glistening like caviar; a Caesar cut with the hair smoothed down at the temples; and a short victorious nose (AF, 148).

Among the anthroponominations with the integral seme “appearance” we can distinguish a number of units denoting a person according to their constitution or body type. As a rule, these units render the quality which is different from the normal state, so such units are characterized as having a colloquial or ironical shade of meaning:

верзила [ver’zila] – a hulk of a man (AF), *гигант* [gi’gant] – a giant (AF), giants (JR), *здоровяк* [zdoro’viak] – big fellows (AF), the toughs (JR), *сдобный мужчина* [s’dobniy muzh’china] – a man (AF) a well-fed man (JR), *скелетик* [ske’letik] – little skeleton (AF), *толстунчик* [tols’tunchik] – a little fatty (AF) a tubby man (JR), *толстяк* [tols’tiak] - a fat little man (AF), a fat man (JR), *толстячок* [tolstia’chok] – a fat little man (AF), fatty (JR).

В маленьких квадратных комнатах, с такими низкими потолками, что каждый входящий туда человек казался *гигантом*, – Лиза бродила минут десять [19, 108].

She wandered around for ten minutes in small square rooms with such low ceilings that every person who went in them felt like a giant (AF, 219).

For ten minutes or so she sauntered through small square rooms with ceilings so low that people entering them looked like giants (JR, 122).

После завтрака к корме, одновременно с двух сторон, направились *здоровяки* с медными трубами и худые рыцари эсмарховских кружек [19, 207].

After breakfast, at precisely the same time, *the big fellows* with brass horns and the thin knights of the Esmarch's irrigators both headed for the aft deck from opposite directions (AF, 416).

After breakfast, *the toughs* with the brass tubes and the slender knights with the Esmarch douches both made their way to the stern at the same time (JR, 229).

На эстраду вышел *сдобный мужчина* в визитке и лаковых туфлях [19, 124].

A *well-fed man* in a morning coat and patent-leather shoes came on to the stage (JR, 143).

A *man* in a cutaway coat and patent leather dress shoes came out onto the stage (AF, 250).

2.2 Units denoting a person according to situational physiological state or condition

Together with anthroponominations denoting permanent physiological features there is a group of units describing a person according to physiological state or condition imposed by a situation. As a rule, such units are used to describe changes in a character's appearance. In the novel "The Twelve Chairs" the anthroponominations describing changes in appearance are mainly used to characterize Ippolit Matveevich. For example, the periphrasis *жертва «Титаника»* [zhertva ti'tanika] - the victim of the Titanic (AF, JR) is used to describe the result of colouring hair with contraband dye after which Ippolit Matveevich's hair and moustache turned greenish black and had to be shaved off:

В зеркальце отразился большой нос и зеленый, как молодая травка, левый ус. <...> Правый ус был того же омерзительного цвета. Нагнув голову, <...> несчастный увидел, что радикальный черный цвет еще господствовал в центре каре, но по краям был обсажен тою же травянистой каймой. <...>

– Товарищ Бендер, – умоляюще зашептала *жертва «Титаника»* [19, 44].

Reflected in the little mirror were his large nose and the left half of a mustache as green as new grass <...> The right half of the mustache was the exact same sickening color. Lowering his head <...> the unfortunate man saw that the radical black color still reigned in the middle of his hair, but its edges were lined with the same grassy border <...>

"Comrade Bender," *the victim of the Titanic* whispered pleadingly (AF, 83).

The metaphorical periphrasis *актер без ангажемента* [ak'tyor bez angazhe'menta] – (the face of) an actor between engagements (AF), an unemployed actor (JR) is used to describe Vorobyeninov's looks after being shaved by Ostap Bender:

Ипполит Матвеевич отряхнул с себя мерзкие ключья, бывшие так недавно красивыми сединами, умылся и, ощущая на всей голове сильное жжение, в сотый раз сегодня уставился в зеркало. То, что он увидел, ему неожиданно понравилось. На него смотрело искаженное страданиями, но довольно юное лицо *актера без ангажемента* [19, 46].

Ippolit Matveevich brushed off the nasty clumps of hair that so recently had been handsome gray locks and

washed his face. Experiencing a strong burning sensation all over his head, he looked in the mirror for the hundredth time that day. Surprisingly, he liked what he saw. Looking back at him was the face of *an actor between engagements*, which, although twisted from suffering, was still fairly young (AF, 87).

Ippolit Matveevich shook himself free of the nauseating tufts that until so recently had been distinguished grey hair, washed himself and, feeling a strong tingling sensation all over his head, looked at himself in the mirror for the hundredth time that day. He was unexpectedly pleased by what he saw. Looking at him was the careworn, but rather youthful, face of *an unemployed actor* (JR, 49-50).

Another evident and easily changed characteristic of a person is the colour of the hair. The anthroponominations with the same of hair colour are used in the novel to provide an immediate identification of unknown or new characters:

– Что же мы видим, товарищи? Мы видим, что *блондин* играет хорошо, а *брюнет* играет плохо [19, 215].

And just what is it that we see, comrades? We see that *the blond man* plays well, but *the brown-haired man* plays badly (AF, 432).

What do we see, Comrades? We see that *the fair-haired fellow* plays well and that the other one plays badly (JR, 239).

Another way to give an immediate and unique characteristic to a person is to name a trait or a feature that makes them different from other people by means of differentiating them from the common or normal state or condition. Among anthroponominations of the kind we distinguish such units as *одноглазый* [odno'glazyi] – the one-eyed man (AF, JR), *слепые* [sle'pyie] – the blind (AF), *обжора* [ob'zhora] – glutton (AF), a gourmand (JR), *пожиратели шашлыка* [pozhy'rateli shashly'ka] – the shish kebab eaters (AF), *сластун* [slast'un] - with a sweet tooth (JR, AF), *король дипсодов* [ko'rol dip'sodov] - King of the Dipsodes (AF, JR), *пьянчуга* [pian'chuga] – a tospot (JR), drunk (AF), *пьяный* [p'iany] – a drunk (AF, JR).

И *одноглазый* не сводил своего единственного ока с гроссмейстеровой обуви [19, 215].

The one-eyed man didn't take his single eye off the grand master's footwear (AF, 432).

The one-eyed man was keeping his single peeper firmly fixed on the Grossmeister (JR, 239).

In the Russian language the units are substantivized (*блондин, брюнет, одноглазый*) whereas in the English language the words, describing the colour of the hair or some physiological deficiency, function as attributes modifying the noun *man* or *fellow*.

Anthroponominations depicting a special attitude of a person to food and alcoholic beverages are widely used in the novel to characterize personages, as it may be seen from the following example:

Кто же этот розовощекий индивид – *обжора, пьянчуга и сластун*? Гаргантюа, *король дипсодов*? Силач Фосс? Легендарный солдат Яшка Красная Рубашка? Лукулл? [19, 94].

Who is this rosy-cheeked individual—a gourmand and a tosspot—with a sweet tooth? Gargantua, King of the Dipsodes? Silaf Voss? The legendary soldier, Jacob Redshirt? Lucullus? (*JR*, 111).

Who is this rosy-cheeked individual, this glutton and drunk with a sweet tooth? Gargantua, the king of the Dipsods? Strongman Voss? The legendary soldier Yashka Red-Shirt? Lucullus? (*AF*, 192).

The names of all of these characters are used metaphorically in order to create an effect of negative connotation. All of them are known as legendary eaters: Gargantua is a vulgar, appetite-driven giant, whose adventures along with his son Pantagruel are related in Rabelais' satirical cycle *The Life of Gargantua and Pantagruel*, published in the mid-sixteenth century. Strongman Emil Voss, a circus wrestler with a fabulous appetite, would appear in restaurants and eat enough for ten men as a form of advertisement. Once he retired, however, he continued to eat enormous amounts, but without the ability to pay, causing great consternation among shopkeepers and restaurant owners. Yashka Red-Shirt is a popular soldier and picaresque character from boulevard literature, which does not make special mention of his eating habits, so apparently Ilf and Petrov added this quality themselves. Lucullus was a general and politician of the late Roman republic who was famous for his sumptuous feasts.

In the novel there is one more anthroponomination used metaphorically to create an ironical or even sarcastic effect, it is *конек-горбунок* [ko'nyok gorbu'nok] – Little Humpbacked Horse (*AF*) used by Ostap Bender to describe Vorobyandinov in his protest to beg for money.

Ипполит Матвеевич мигом преобразился. Грудь его выгнулась, как Дворцовый мост в Ленинграде, глаза метнули огонь, и из ноздрей, как показалось Остапу, повалил густой дым. Усы медленно стали приподниматься.

– Ай-яй-яй, – сказал великий комбинатор, ничуть не испугавшись. – Посмотрите на него. Не человек, а какой-то *конек-горбунок* [19, 225].

Ippolit Matveevich was immediately transformed. He puffed up his chest until it stuck out as much as the Palace Bridge in Leningrad, his eyes flashed fire, and a thick smoke came boiling out of his nostrils—or at least that's what it looked like to Ostap. His moustache slowly began to rise.

“Ai-yai-yai!” the smooth operator said, not a bit frightened. “Take a look at him. He's not a man, he's some kind of Little Humpbacked Horse!” (*AF*, 453).

“Little Humpbacked Horse” is a famous fairy tale by Pyotr Ershov in which the horse of the title, although small and humpbacked, has magic power enough to help a peasant boy perform many impossible trials asked of him by the Tsar; the boy prevails and wins the Tsar-Maiden. Though being a positive character in the fairy tale, the image of a small horse with a deformity is used to create a comic effect in the novel.

3 Conclusion

Anthroponominations denoting people according to their external physiological features, either permanent or changeable, play an essential role in the novel “The Twelve Chairs” by Ilf and Petrov. The system of anthroponominations in the novel consists of several levels characterizing personages as members of society having certain individual features. They are used to give a description of physiological features of the characters (age, gender, appearance) helping to create their vivid image. There have been distinguished two semantic subgroups of anthroponominations under survey: 1) units denoting a person according to biological characteristics, such as age and gender (62 units) 2) units denoting a person according to situational physiological state or condition (13 units). Anthroponominations of each subgroup are characterized by having specific semantic features. Their semantic structure has a hierarchy of semes whose manifestation becomes evident through the realization and functioning of the units in the context of the novel aiming to create unique, bright and unforgettable images.

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