

Translation of Medical Eponyms

Olga Voika

*Rīga Stradiņš University,
Language Centre, Latvia*

Introduction. Medical eponyms reflect names of persons, objects, places for whom something (disease, sign, symptom, syndrome, etc.) is named. The term eponym has derived from the Greek language, prefix *epi-* means upon, and *onyma* – name, or named after. Eponyms may bear names of real historic persons, mythological, or fictional ones, places, discoveries, etc. Eponyms are used daily in medicine: the head of Medusa, Adam's apple, duct of Wirsung, Pinocchio syndrome, "kissing" spine, French disease, etc.

Aim. The aim of the research is to get introduced with the medical eponyms, determine the main types of eponym formation, difficulties and mistakes commonly encountered in translation of eponyms.

Material and Methods. Articles, online medical dictionaries, medical sites, and regulatory issues concerning medical eponyms were analysed as part of this study.

Results. There are many problems in translation of medical eponyms for a translator without medical background. At first, abundance of synonyms available: whether to choose an eponym or a descriptive term. The choice of the type of the eponym formation: whether a possessive or non-possessive form. There are common misspellings of eponyms. There are different names for the same disease, different conditions that bear identical eponyms, and moreover, different eponyms in different countries.

Conclusions. Translation of medical texts requires good style, accuracy and precision; therefore, standardization of medical terminology is essential in order to eliminate equivocity and ambiguity. According to many authors, uniformity and simplification of terminology is required, with the predominance of the implementation of medical eponym non-possessive type.