

TYPES OF ETHNOPHOBISMS, THEIR ETYMOLOGY AND USAGE

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INTRODUCTION

Ethnomyms are words that indicate the nationality and belonging to ethnoses of different sizes and different geographical areas and places of settlement.

Ethnonyms are divided into endoethnonyms (autoethnonyms), that is self- names of the ethnic units and exoethnonyms (autoethnonyms), that is names of ethnoses which are given to them by the representatives of other ethnoses.

Up to the recent times there was not a separate term for citizens of the cities and towns. The general terms “ ethnonym” or “ topo-ethnonym” were used. But the topo- ethnonym applies to the residents of various localities (places)- countries, regions, cities, villages, etc.

We decided to use the term “ city demonyms” or “ town demonyms” for the words which denote residents of the corresponding cities and towns. The term is borrowed from the Merriam – Webster editor Paul Dickson (1988). But Dickson used it in a broad sense including residents of different localities (countries, administrative units, etc.)

In our case its meaning is reduced to the residences of the cities and towns.

We suggest that all the ethnonyms should be grouped into the primary ethnonyms, that is official names established in the international and linguistic practice, and the secondary ones – non- official names and nicknames of different ethnic groups and unities.

Many secondary ethnonyms can be called ethnophobisms as they have an abusive coloring. For example, Sooty – a black person. This abusive nickname is derived from the colour of soot. In actuality it is often used highly offensively¹.

In the process of language studies one should learn to differ neutral ethnonyms from ethnophobisms. Otherwise he/she may unwillingly abuse the interlocutor who is a foreigner².

¹ The corpus of ethnophobisms was compiled on the basis of the data presented in the Thorne T. Dictionary of Modern Slang. Moscow, 1996. 592 p;

² Green G. Dictionary of New Words. M: Persay, 1996. 352 p.

Ethnophobisms are mostly used in colloquial speech and are prohibited in such official spheres of communication as diplomatic negotiations, etc. They are not inherent in the literary style and can be used in the chronicles only as citations of some speakers when it concerns conflicts and other scandals³.

1. Classification of ethnophobisms

According to their origin ethnophobisms can be divided into several groups. We shall analyze the most typically means of their formation. The main ways are as follows:

1. Rhyming:

- dustbin lids. It means “Jews”. It is an example of the rhyming slang for Yids. Today it is rare;

- front – wheel skid. It denotes “Jew”. It is a result of rhyming on the other derogatory name of Jews – yid: yid → front – wheel skid. This expression was popular in London in the 1970s and 1980s;

- pommy (pommie). It is a derogatory slang term for immigrants from the British Isles in Australia. Pommy is probably a corruption of “pomegranate” chanted as a humorous semi – rhyme for “immigrant”. The noun is now probably more common in the form ‘pom’;

- septic. It is one of the nicknames given to the Americans by the citizens of Australia. It is an example of the rhyming slang: Yank → septic tank. It was first recorded being applied to visiting American servicemen during WW II. It is a corruption unit and still is in use among older speakers.

Distortions of the original ethnonyms with neutral or ironic colouring:

- Jerry – a German. The word is a shortening and alteration of the ethnonym ‘German’. It was the most widespread term in British use in the two world wars, replacing the earlier ‘Fritz’. Now it is largely supplanted by ‘Kraut’;

- an eyetie – means an Italian. This term appeared at about the time of WWI . In working – class pronunciation in both Great Britain and the USA the first syllable of the word “Italian” is pronounced “eye” [ai];

- chink means a Chinese person. It is the distortion, of the Chinese pronunciation of the syllable “Joong”. It was used in the USA and Australia but later it appeared in Britain;

³ Wentworth H. L., Flexner S. Dictionary of American Slang. N.Y., 1975. 767 p.

- hebe (heeb, heebic). It denotes a Jew. This ethnophobism is based on the word Hebrew. It originated in the USA. 'Hebe' is less offensive than 'heebie' and 'hike' but derogatory nonetheless. The heebie – jeebie is a jocular elaboration of the word 'heebic';

- poon – tang. It is a real taboo word which means a Negro or mulatto woman considered sexually. It derives from the French word 'putain' which denotes ' a prostitute'. Though prohibited, it is common among Southern whites in the USA;

- Wop. The word implies an illiterate Italian immigrant working as a day laborer. This word is a distortion of the Spanish word "guepo" which means a tough, brave Sicilian. The Italians themselves now use the word 'guappo' in a derogatory sense to mean Sicilian.

It is one of the most common derogatory designations of the Italian in the USA. This word is typical of the colloquial speech and is often included in the characters speech of the novels and plays: The play "The Iceman Cometh" was written by O'Neill under the impression of M. Gorky's play "In the Bottom". Among those who live in the American dump is Rocky, the Italian by descent. The dwellers of the "dump" call him a Wop:

1. Larry. Don't mock the faith! Have you no respect for religion, you unregenerate Wop?

2. Hugo . Don't be a fool! Loan me a dollar! Damned bourgeois Wop! Buy me a think!

All the characters of the play belong to the American underworld (thiefs, killers, prostitutes, etc). They are people of different nationalities and in their communication they use a lot of obscene and derogatory words including ethnophobisms.

In the play by Tennessee Williams "Orpheus Descending" one of the personages calls himself a wop:

"I am a wop from San – Marino".

This word is also used by Beulah , one of the personages, who tells the story of the family life of Lady:

Beulah. Lady's father was Wop from the old country <...> People just called him the Wop, nobody knew his name, just called him 'The Wop', ha, ha, ha!

Now the word 'Wop' acquired another meaning – 'any foreigner, except an Englishman, Frenchman or German'. As a rule, it is applied to unskilled laborers from Southern Europe, especially of Greek descent.

3. Some ethnophobisms have the aboriginal origin:

- gook – a North Vietnamese. This derogatory term was widely used by American soldiers in the Vietnam war. But it originated much earlier, probably in the Filipino uprising of 1899 in which US troops referred to Filipinos as ‘gugus’, a native word meaning tutelary spirit;

- kuri(koorie). This abusive word in the Maori denotes ‘mongrel’ (New Zealand). Later it was applied by the immigrants for naming the aborigines;

- munt. The word denotes ‘a black person’. It derives from the Bantu word which has the meaning ‘a person’. It is a highly offensive term used in South Africa by white racists;

- nip refers to a Japanese person. It is the shortening of the Japanese word Nippon which means Japan. This term is largely pejorative. It was popular in the 1970s in Britain;

- kaffir – a_black person. It is a racist term used initially in South Africa to refer to indigenous black people. Kaffir was the name for Bantu – speaking tribespeople. It originated in the Arabic word ‘kafir’ which means ‘ infidel’.

The word is also used in the underworld of the USA. The example of such usage can be found in the play “Iceman Cometh” by O’Neill:

Lewis (along to himself, with a muzzy wonder). Good God! Have I been drinking at the dame table with a bloody.

Joe (grinning). Hello, Captain. Kaffir? Who’s he?

Wetjoen (blurrily). Kaffir, dot’s a nigger, Joe. (He chuckles and slaps Lewis on his bare shoulder). Hey, wake up, Cecil, tou plooly fool! Don’t you know your old friend , Joe? He’s no damned Kaffir! He’s white, Joe is!

But Joe is a black – skinned person and the last phrase sounds only as an irony. Later Joe when fully awake declared that he would never stand any abuses – as to his race and color of skin.

4. Blending:

- dink. It denotes a Vietnamese. It is supposed to be the result of blending: dinge and chink. This derogatory word is used in Australia and USA.

As to the element ‘ dinge’ it is a word which denotes ‘ a black person’ or ‘a coloured person’. This American term was recorded by the detective writer Raymond Chandler. The noun derives from the adjective dingy / ‘dingey’ which means ‘Negroid’.

5. Metaphor :

Metaphor is not used as frequently as metonymy. Nevertheless there are some expressive examples of this way of ethnophobisms formulation:

- coconut. It is applied to a non-white person who collaborates with white establishment. It refers to the idea that such people are, like the coconut, black on the outside but white on the inside;

- moss. This word is a derogatory name of the Negro. It is based on the association of the kinky hair of the Africans with the plant, – moss;

- Oreo denotes a Negro whose life style does not differ from that of the white establishment. It originated from the brand name of a chocolate cookie with a vanilla cream filling. It is used by the poor negroes who envy those who found their fortune.

6. Metonymy:

- darky – It is a widely used lexeme which is offensive for the Afro – Americans. In the above – mentioned play by T. Williams the word is used by Amanda: “No, sister, no, sister- you be the lady this time and I’ll be the darky”;

- greaser. This word denotes a Hispanic or person of Mediterranean origin. It refers to a supposedly greasy complexion. This ethnophobia expresses great contempt and causes offence;

- hook – nose or its shortened form ‘hookie’. This abusive word means a Jew. Generally it is used by schoolchildren referring to the supposed hooked noses of Jews;

- frog (froggie) denotes a French person. One of the rare slang words for this particular nationality. It goes back to the XVIII c. when the French were known as frog – eaters;

- kraut means a German, especially a German soldier. It is a shortening of sauerkraut, that is thin – cut cabbage pickled in brine which is a popular German dish. It has supplanted the jargonisms ‘hun’ and ‘Jarry’ in the British slang usage. Metonymy is based here on the idea that Germans invented and eat a lot of sauerkraut. It was common during WW I and WWII. The soldiers used it seldom but it was popular with journalists. Another variant is the compound Krauthead having the same meaning;

- rag – head. The ethnophobia denotes ‘an arab’. This pejorative term is inspired by the headdress worn particularly by gulf arab males;

- kelper – the inhabitant of the Falkland Islands. It derives from the ‘kelp’, the seaweed gathered for fuel and fertilizer by the inhabitants of many rocky island outposts. This nickname became known during the Falklands War of 1982;

- limey – an Englishman. This word, used mostly in North America, is a shortening of ‘lime – juicer’, a pejorative term applied originally to

British sailors who were issued with rations of lime juice as a protection against scurvy.

One of the personages of the play “Iceman Cometh” by O’Neill is a Boer who still remembers the Anglo – Boer war in which he took part fighting against the British Army. His hatred and contempt for the immigrants from England he expresses by calling them Limey:

Wetjoen. He (Lewis)’s still plind drunk, the plody Limey chentlman! A great mistake I missed him at the pattle of Modder River. Vit mine rifle I shook dam fool Limey officers py the dozen, but him I miss. De pity of it!

Wetjoen who distorts many English words still is full of hostility towards immigrants from England, his former enemies in South Africa during the Anglo – Boer war;

- coon – a Negro. It is one of the most familiar derogatory designations of people with dark skin. It originates from the name of the raccoon, the animal which Southern Negroes were supposed to enjoy hunting and eating;

- sausage – a German soldier. Metonymy is based on the fact that German people like to eat sausage. The nickname became popular with the British soldier in during WW I ;

- pea – soup. The word is a nickname of a French – Canadian. Metonymy here is based on traditional fondness of those people for pea soup;

- squints – this word denotes Japan people because of the shape of their eyes. The word was popular with the American soldiers in WWII. In the play “Home of the Brave” A. Laurents included the utterances with this ethnophobisms used by the soldiers fighting against Japan:

1. Major. It is better to be overalert than to be caught napping.

Mingo. I wonder if the squints know how many of us there are.

2. T.J. We’ll have a chance to find out what the squints do if we keep sitting here.

– spaghetti is a well- known ethnophobism for naming Italians. Later this word spread to Spaniard, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, that is any person from Latin America.

This derogatory nickname has a number of shortened variants: spic, spick, spig, spiggoly. R. Chandler in his novels used the variant ‘spig’ referring to the Mexican: “Don’t go dumb on me, spig” (CH. Finger Man).

- macaroni is also a well – known nickname for Italians connected with their food preferences.

7. Abbreviation:

- groid. The word denotes a black person. This derogatory term is a shortening of the adjective negroid. It can be heard from the policemen in London of 1980s. The word also is registered in the American colloquial speech;

- hunkie is a shortening form of a Hungarian (immigrant). But later it started to refer not only to Hungarian immigrant in the USA but to any immigrants no matter what country he / she comes from;

- Aussie – an Australian. It was recorded during WW I. Now it is not qualified as an ethnophobism but as an ironic nickname;

- Jap – a Japanese person. This shortening form of the word is considered to be pejorative. It should not be confused with the acronym JAP.

During world War II the American Army was fighting against Japan. These events were described by A. Laurens in his play “Home of the Brave”. The American soldiers called the Japanese, using the contemptuous shortening ‘the Japs’:

1. T.J. If we could hear him, the Japs could hear him. Finch isn’t that dumb.

2. T.J. If the Japs spot Finch, they might let him go – thinking he’d lead them to us.

Coney. Finch wouldn’t lead any Japs to us.

Both soldiers engaged in this conversation use the word ‘Jap’ instead of the official Japanese.

3. Doctor. Some of the Japs fired machine guns when they realized what was happening

As we see, the usage of this word among the American soldiers and officers is stable;

- paki – a Pakistani. This abbreviation has a derogatory coloring though it is only a shortening of the neutral official denomination of this nation representatives.

8. Proper names transformations.

In this case ethnophobisms are the names typical of the representatives of a certain nation taken both in full/ official form or in diminutive form, sometimes distorted or shortened:

Jim Crow – it is a common nickname of a Negro and is often used in colloquial speech in the USA. This derogatory nickname can be found in the speech of the characters in the plays by the well – known playwrights.

For example, in the “Orpheus Descending” by Tennessee Williams this nickname is used in the following utterance:

“Jim Crow killed her. Jim Crow and John Barleycorn. She was in an accident and bled to death while they were taking care of white people”.

The nickname later was converted into the verb – to Jim Crow means ‘to discriminate against Negroes, to practice or enforce rules of segregation’ and was widely used by journalists.

– Ivan – a Russian. This name always associated with the Russian people. It cannot be qualified as a strong ethnophobia but it suggests contempt.

– dago (Dago). This derogatory word comes from the popular Spanish name Diego. Now it is applied not only to Spaniards but also to Italians.

In his play “Iceman Cometh” O’Neill included the ethnophobia Dago into the characters speech. The dwellers of the dump where lives Rocky, an Italian by descent, scornfully call him Dago:

Hope (addressing Mc Gloin and Mosher).

Leave it that Dago to keep order.

The women living in the dump do not choose the words either. One prostitute during the quarrel with the other, who is an Italian immigrant, calls her Dago:

Cora (starts moving toward Pearl threateningly). Yuh can’t talk lik dat to me, you fat Dago hooker! I may be a tart, but I ain’t a cheap old whore like you!

In the play “Orpheus Descending” by T. Williams the word Dago is also uttered by some personages:

Beulah. She (Lady)’s not a Dago for nothin’;

– Fritz – a German. It was applied to German soldiers during WWI and WWII. It was more common with British soldiers than American ones. This ethnophobia was used alongside the derogatory word ‘Boche’. In the novel “Death of a Hero” both Fritz and Boche were widely used by R. Aldington who described the events of WWI: 1) The Boche front line runs just in front of that, about four hundred yards away”; 2) Crump, Crump – the Boche was bracketing.

In the author’s speech the neutral official ethnonym is used: “and then the Germans began a steady systematic gas bombardment of all the ruined villages in the advanced area”; 3) Fritz ‘sentry’, whispered the man;

- ikey – a Jew. This derogatory word dates from the 19 th c. ‘Ikey’ is a diminutive form of Isaac. Another variant is Ikey Mo, where the word Mo is a shortening of the Jewish name Moses;

- Jock – a Scot. Since the XIX c. this has been the universal nickname for Scottish people. It is derived from the northern diminutive for John.

- mick – an Irish person. This shortening of one of the most common Irish Christian names Michael (along with Patrick or Paddy). The usage had come to Britain from the USA and Australia by the early years of the XX c. It has a number of variants: Michey and Mickey. This nickname can be found in the artistic literature. It was used by Dreiser (Sister Carrie), S. Lewis (Babbitt), E. Neill (Hairy Ape), etc.;

- Ginny (gianny) – It is an offensive word which might derive from the proper name Gianni or Giovanni.

In the “Iceman Cometh” by O’Neill Rocky, who is an Italian, is called not only a Wop and Dago but also Ginny:

1) Pearl. A dirty little Ginny pimp, da’t what!

In this way Pearl, who is a prostitute, reacts to the slap which Rocky gave her on the face.

2) Cora (tearfully indignant). Ain’t yuh going to wish us happiness, yuh doity little Ginny?;

- Paddy. It means an Irish person. This nickname derived from the short form of Patrick, one of the most common male Christian names in Ireland. It has been used since at least the XVIII c.

It may be heard among the Irish themselves. Usually it is a personification of a typical rustic Irishman;

- kike means ‘a Jew’. It is supposed to derive from the diminutive of the name Isaac, though another version suggests that immigrants on arrival in the USA signed their names with a circle which in Yiddish sounds as KIKE. It is still occasionally heard and is considered a very rude ethnophobia. It is difficult to prefer the derivative or metonymic version of this ethnophobia origin.

In the years of WWI separate cases of anti-Semitism were fixed in the American Army. These facts were described by some American playwrights who served in the Army. For example, the remarks/utterances carrying ethnophobias denoting ‘Jews’ who also served in the US Army can be found in the play “Home of the Brave” by A. Laurens devoted to the different problems in the US Army during WWII including the ethnic ones:

Finch. The Major told him (Coney, a Jew) to take it easy today and you know it.

T.J. The little kike lover.

In this episode Finch tries to defend the Jewish boy Coney whom T.J. calls 'kike' and 'lousy yellow Jew bastard'.

T.J., as we can see, is an anti – Semite. While the other soldiers are against anti-Semitism and have with the Jews friendly relations: they do not care whether the other soldiers are Jews, Italians or Englishmen. Only when it concerns their enemy, the Japanese soldiers, they name them scornfully 'Japs'.

9. Designation transference from one nation to another nation:

There are cases of application of the neutral sobriquets to the representatives of the other nations. This transformation leads to the changes of their axiological sign:

Hun – a German soldier. The word was popular with the British soldiers during WWI . R. Aldington used this ethnophobia in his novel "Death of the Hero" in which he described all the horrors of war:

'Ah!' said the Corporal, did you tell 'em-puff – all about the wicked Huns?'

The neutral word 'Hun' which is the name of the warlike tribes of Asia who overran and devastated Europe in the V th c. acquired the open negative overtone when referred to the German soldiers which is only implied when the word is used in its first meaning;

– a gyp – an Arab. This neutral nickname which is referred to gypsies turns into a pejorative unit when it is applied to Arabs.

10. Borrowing : Neutral words taken from the other language and transformed into ethnophobisms, often change their axiological sign. Existing as neutral in their own language, they acquire some negative colouring or pejorative overtone when appear in another language:

– schatzi (schanzi) This American slang word means 'German prostitute'. It is a derivative of the German word "schatz" which means 'treasure' and has a meliorative colouring in Germany . The word was widely used by the American and British soldiers stationed in Germany after WWII;

– shonk (shonker) means 'a Jew' . It is borrowed from the Yiddish word denoting ' a trader' or ' a pedlar'. It has a number of variants: shonkie and shonky.

11. Acronyms . It is a kind of shortening when only the initial letters are used:

– JAP. This acronym means 'a young Jewish girl, especially a wealthy or spoilt one'. It is deciphered as Jewish American Princess but it has an ironic or negative colouring;

– P.R. denotes ‘a Puerto Rican’. This abbreviation has a derogatory colouring.

12. Back slang origin:

– ofay. It denotes ‘a white person’. The word is said to be a backslang version of the word ‘foe’ in the Black American slang of the late 1960s. Another proposed etymology is the Yoruba word ‘ofe’, meaning ‘charm’. Sometimes it is encountered in the expression ‘ixnay afay/s’, meaning ‘no whites’. In the immigrant underworld it serves a code reference to some authority figures.

The ethnophobism ‘oflay’ was popular with journalists who used it alongside the other derogatory names of different nations and races:

The plutocrats compromised with the spades who inhabited Harlem and let the ofays have Wall Street to themselves (Bob Brown. Amer. Mercury Dec 407/ 2, 1951). Now it is not in common use.

To enforce the derogatory effect another variant is applied. It is the word ‘ofaginzy’, used by the Negroes to make it sound harder.

13. The names of the popular characters of the literature, films, newspaper, caricatures, etc.

– kermit means a French person. A jocular nickname was used by students in the 1980s. It is inspired by the character ‘ Kermit the Frog’ of the muppet show, well- known US television series.

14. Reduplication:

– inky – dink. It means a very dark complexioned Negro.

2. Cases of Obscure Origin

Sometimes the origin of the ethnophobisms is obscure. For example, the word ‘guinea’ means ‘an Italian’. Some specialists believe that it might derive from a proper name, such as Gianni or Giovanni. This version sounds rather convincing.

The word ‘honky’ (honkey, honkie) is used by the Afro – Americans. So they call white people. The origin of this word is unclear. There are several versions of its origin. Some scholars believe that it is a deformation of ‘ hunk’ meaning an immigrant from Hungary, that is Hungarian. Some other scholars believe that it was inspired by the honking of pigs. This version can be qualified as metonymic. The etymology of this word is still debatable.

Another example of obscure origin is the derogatory name sheeny applied to Jews. It acquired the offensive overtones in the XX th c.

Many possible etymologies have been proposed. The most plausible are:

- 1) the German word ‘schön’ (beautiful);
- 2) the transformation of the Yiddish expression ‘a miesse meshina’ which denotes ‘an ugly fate or death’. There is no reason to prefer one or other of these suggestions. Now it is rare in both Britain and the USA, but not yet obsolete.

There are several versions of the origin of the ethnophobia ‘jig (jigg)’ which denotes a Negro. The first version runs that it derives from ‘jigaboo’ denoting a Negro as its shortened variant. The other version suggests its relation to ‘jig’ – the name of the dance, as Negroes have been traditionally considered (as) exceedingly rhythmic people. Now it also denotes any dark – skinned person, as a West Indian, Spanish, or Puerto Rican. But it is not possible to say for certain which version of origin should be preferred.

Yank is the offensive word used to call the American soldiers by the Japanese in WWI.

The utterances with this contemptuous word were including by A.Laurents in the utterances of the Japan soldiers in the play “ Home of the Brave”:

1 First Jap. Hey, Yank! Come out and fight!

Second Jap. Hey, Yank! Come out and fight!

The etymology of this word is not quite clear though it is often used in the colloquial speech. It is a shortened form of the word “Yankee”.

One of the versions refers this word to the Dutch ‘Jan Kees’ which is a nickname applied by the Dutch of New York to the English colonists of Connecticut. Later it extended its meaning. First it denoted a native or inhabitant of New England and now it denotes natives or inhabitants of the USA in general. The word ‘Yankee’ is not a rude ethnophobia but the shortened version which has a strong negative overtone.

There is a jocular explanation of the notion ‘Yankee’ which is close to reality:

To foreigners, a Yankee is an American.

To Americans, a Yankee is a Northerner.

To Northerners, a Yankee is a New Englander.

To New Englanders, a Yankee is a Vermonter.

And in Vermont, a Yankee is somebody who eats pie for breakfast⁴.

⁴ Moore E. That’s Not English. Vintage, 2016.

Prior to the American Revolution, 'Yankee' was an insult. British soldiers had contempt for the soldiers of the American colonies, who seemed to them an army of amateurs.

Another version is that the word comes from the Cherokee word 'eankke', which means 'coward'.

During the Civil War era, Confederates used the word to describe Federalists and other Northerners on the opposite side of the conflict.

CONCLUSIONS

Ethnophobisms are derogatory secondary designations of the representatives of different races and nations. They make up the great part of all the secondary ethnonyms, that is of the non-official nicknames concerning different nations and races.

It is not allowed to use ethnophobisms in official texts, in diplomatic negotiations, etc. But they are inherent in the colloquial speech, especially in the milieu known as underworld.

Ethnophobisms have different origins. The most frequent ones are:

1) distortions of the official ethnonyms;

2) metonymy;

3) metaphoric transference;

4) blending;

5) rhyming (full or partial);

6) application of the neutral official ethnonyms to the representatives of the other nations when they acquire offensive overtones;

7) shortenings including acronyms;

8) backslang, etc.

Origin of some ethnophobisms remains obscure and it is difficult to give preference to one or other version.

Some ethnophobisms are applied to the representatives of one's own nation or race. In this case they should be called autoethnophobisms or endo-ethnophobisms.

A lot of ethnophobisms appeared in the time of two world wars and were inspired by the hostile attitude to the enemy. In the process of language studies it is important to differ neutral ethnonyms and ethnophobisms. Otherwise it is possible to abuse the interlocutor calling him/her or his/her compatriots abusive names.

As we see, there are groups of derogatory nicknames for different nationalities and races. Many originated to express resent toward now

immigrant groups. They can cause quarrels and open conflicts when they are used in direct address. When used among friends they carry only jocular or ironic connotation.

SUMMARY

The paper deals with the ethnophobisms, that is secondary non-official ethnonyms having an abusive / offensive overtones. In this work ethnophobisms are classified according to their origin. The most typical ways / means of their formation are as follows:

- 1) metaphoric transfer of meaning (a Negro → Oreo);
- 2) metonymic transfer of meaning (a German → Kraut);
- 3) rhyming and semi – rhyming (Yids → dustbin lids);
- 4) blending (a Vietnamese → dink);
- 5) different kinds of abbreviation (shortenings) including acronyms (Puerto Rican → P.R.);
- 6) distortion or corruption of the official ethnonyms (Hebrew → hebe);
- 7) diminutive names (a German → Fritz) and their derivatives;
- 8) backslang (a white person → ofay);

Origin of some ethnophobisms is obscure and it is not easy to prefer one or another suggestion. Many ethnophobisms were inspired by the hostile attitude towards the enemy during the two world wars. Ethnophobisms are widely used in colloquial speech especially by the speakers from the underworld. The knowledge of ethnophobisms is important in the process of languages studies as it may help to evade the confusion communication with foreigners calling them and their compatriots the abusive names.

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