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**МЕТАФОРИЧЕСКАЯ НОЗОЛОГИЯ В МЕДИЦИНЕ: КАЧЕСТВЕННЫЙ
И КОЛИЧЕСТВЕННЫЙ АНАЛИЗ**

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**METAPHORICAL NOSOLOGY IN MEDICINE: A QUANTITATIVE
AND QUALITATIVE STUDY**

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Резюме. Метафора – это не только одно из средств художественной выразительности, но и способ выделения специфических характеристик объекта, поэтому использование метафорических названий заболеваний в разных языках, включая английский, встречаются широко в нозологических классификациях. Проведенное исследование показало структурное разнообразие метафорической терминологии в англоязычной нозологии, обусловленное как научно-медицинскими, так и культурологическими факторами.

Ключевые слова: нозология, метафора, медицинская лингвистика, метафорические названия заболеваний.

Resume. Metaphor is not only one of the means of artistic expression, but also a way to highlight the specific characteristics of an object, therefore the use of metaphorical names of diseases in different languages, including English, are widely found in nosological classifications. The conducted research has shown the structural diversity of metaphorical terminology in English nosology, due to both scientific, medical, and cultural factors.

Keywords: nosology, metaphor, medical linguistics, metaphorical disease names.

Relevance. Highlighting the interaction between medical knowledge and public perception, metaphorical disease names are widely used in both medical and everyday language, serving as a bridge between complex scientific terminology and public understanding. Understanding their structure and distribution can provide insights into medical linguistics and communication.

Aim: the main aim of this research is to examine the prevalence and linguistic characteristics of metaphorical disease names in English.

Objectives:

1. to collect and analyse metaphorical disease names in English;
2. to identify their frequency and areas of usage;
3. to classify the collected names based on medical criteria and linguistic structure;
4. to compare medical and linguistic classifications, identifying patterns and correlations.

Materials and methods. The study is based on a systematic collection and analysis of metaphorical disease names in English. The research employs a mixed-method approach, including:

1. Compilation of metaphorical disease names from medical literature, dictionaries, and public discourse.
2. Quantitative analysis of their frequency.
3. Classification of the collected names according to medical criteria and linguistic structure.

This comprehensive analysis involved investigation of various websites which totaled to about 26 including such medical expertise resources as:

1. National Institutes of Health (NIH)
2. Mayo Clinic
3. The National Health Service (NHS)
4. Merriam-Webster dictionary
5. Wikipedia

Results and their discussion. The major notions underlying this study are nosology on the side of medicine and metaphor on the side of the English language.

By origin, nosology comes from Greek in which *nosos* meant “disease” and *logos* indicated “word”. Merriam-Webster dictionary presents the meaning of nosology as a classification or list of diseases. Otherwise nosology can be defined as the branch of medicine dedicated to classify and describe diseases. [1]

In turn, metaphor is defined as a figure of speech that, for rhetorical effect, directly refers to one thing by mentioning another. It may provide (or obscure) clarity or identify hidden similarities between two different ideas. Metaphors are usually meant to create a likeness or an analogy. [2]

Investigation resulted in selecting 50 nosological entities totally, to which 2 main classification criteria were applied: nosological criterion involving disease classes such as neurological, genetic and infectious diseases, and linguistic parameters based on their syntax analysis according to the parts of speech.

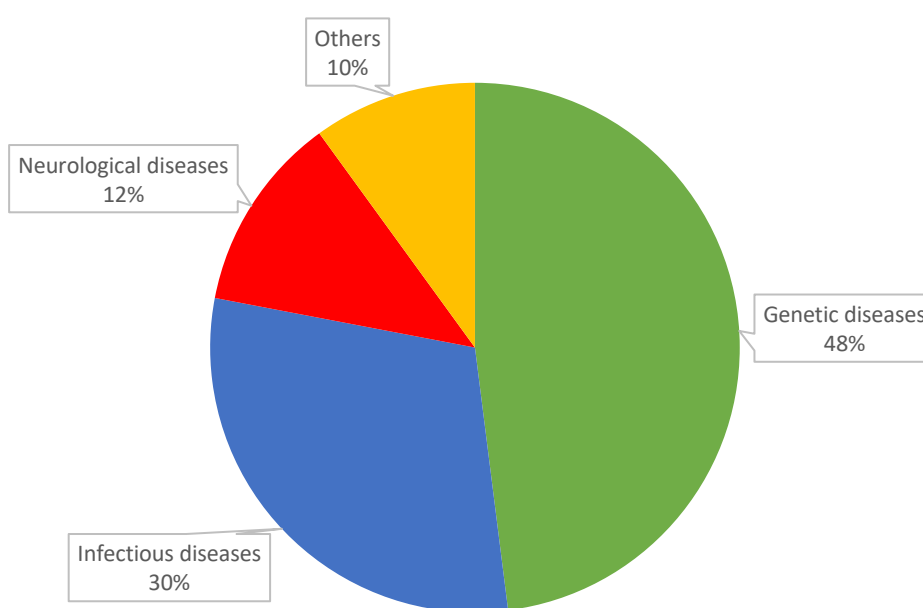


Fig. 1 – Medical classification

Figure 1 presents the medical classification. Among the 50 collected metaphorical disease names, the largest proportion (48%) belonged to the genetic disorders category, suggesting that metaphorical naming is particularly prevalent for congenital conditions with distinctive physical manifestations. The infectious disease category (30%) was the second largest group, where metaphors often highlight the severity and symptoms of the illness. Neurological conditions (12%) formed a smaller but distinct category. These terms often relate to behavioural or motor impairments, reflecting either the patient’s experience or cultural references. The remaining 10% were classified under “other”, where metaphorical names describe unusual visual symptoms. Some clear examples include the following:

1. The phenomenon of glowing wounds is caused by contamination of wounds by bioluminescent bacteria called *Photorhabdus luminescens*. Wounds glowing in the dark might sound like something out of science fiction, but that’s just what was seen after the Battle of Shiloh—fought in April, 1862—during the American Civil War. Not only did soldiers experience this strange phenomenon, but it also seemed that those whose wounds showed this strange light were more likely to survive. For some reason it seemed to help their wounds to heal better. Because of the strange glowing light, and the fact that it seemed to provide some sort of unexplained protection it was given the nickname “Angels’ Glow.” [3]

2. Sydenham chorea, a neurological disorder characterized by irregular and involuntary movements of muscle groups in various parts of the body that follow streptococcal infection. The name “St. Vitus Dance” derives from the late Middle Ages, when persons with the disease attended the chapels of St. Vitus, who was believed to have curative powers. That is why people suffering from this disease gathered in front of the chapels. [4]

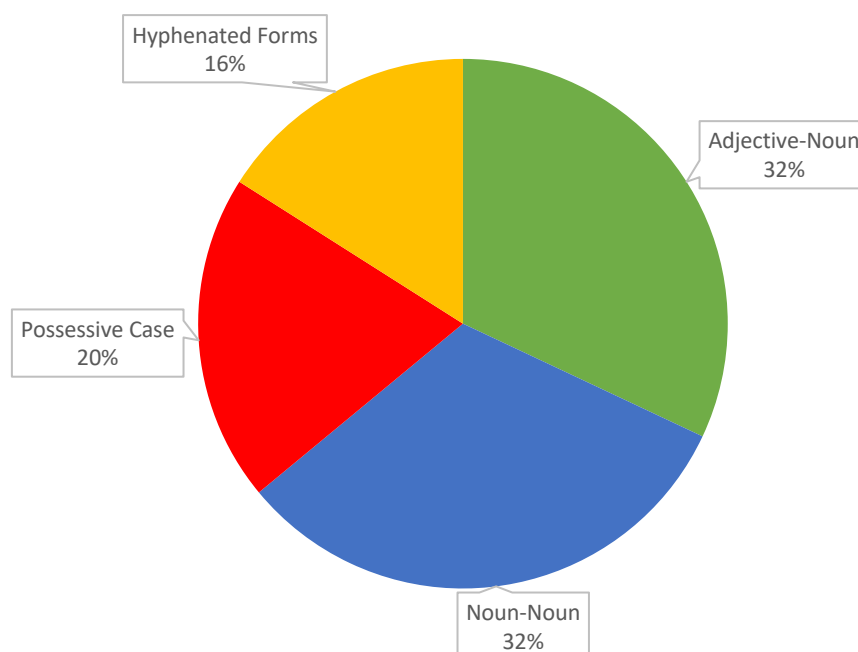


Fig. 2 – Linguistic classification

Figure 2 shows the linguistic classification. From a linguistic perspective, metaphorical disease names were grouped into four structural categories. Adjective-Noun (32%) was one of the most common. Noun-Noun (32%) proved as frequent as the first group. These names typically highlight a defining visual characteristic or symptom of the disease. Possessive Case (20%) category was notable for being almost exclusively composed of infectious and neurological diseases, suggesting that this structure is particularly associated with conditions named after historical or occupational contexts. Hyphenated forms (16%) included names where the hyphen connects descriptive elements in a way that emphasises visual or functional aspects of the illness.

One of the examples illustrating this classification, and namely the adjective-noun pattern, is *Blue Baby Syndrome*, which is a condition some babies are born with or develop early in life. It's characterised by an overall skin color with a blue or purple tinge, called cyanosis. This bluish appearance is most noticeable where the skin is thin, such as the lips, earlobes, and nail beds. Methaemoglobinaemia, as well as Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF), can be the cause of the syndrome. [5]

The noun-noun pattern can be demonstrated by *Four Corners Disease*, which is called so because of the 1993 Four Corners hantavirus outbreak – an outbreak of hantavirus disease in the United States in the region limited by the four states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah forming a rectangular.

Conclusion. The study demonstrated that metaphorical disease names are both prevalent and structurally diverse in English medical terminology. The medical classification showed that such names are particularly common in genetic disorders, likely due to their distinctive phenotypic traits, while infectious diseases often use metaphor to describe severity or transmission. Neurological diseases and other conditions also exhibited unique naming patterns, often rooted in historical or symptomatic descriptions. In terms of linguistics, the adjective-noun and noun-noun structures were the most frequent, while possessive case forms included mainly infectious and neurological diseases. This suggests that metaphorical disease names are not random but follow certain patterns influenced by both scientific and cultural factors.

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