Onomastic analysis of warts in traditional Persian medicine

Payam Shams al-Dini[a], Jalal al-Din Rafi'far[b]*, Moluk-Sadat Hosseini Beheshti[c], Nafiseh Hosseini Yekta[d]

[a]Iranology Foundation, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran
[b]Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran
[c]Terminology and Ontology Research Group, Information Science Research Institute, Iran Information Science and Technology Research Institute, Tehran, Iran
[d]Department of Persian Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Army University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran

Abstract:

Background and Purpose: There are slightly different and diverse names for diseases in Persian medical sources. Among them, learning about native words for a simple disease such as "wart" includes anthropological values as well. Not only physicians and medical historians, but also many anthropologists, folklore researchers, and even lexicographers have been involved in the issue of nomenclature multiplicity.

Materials and Methods: In this research, numerous and various names for "wart" were collected initially, applying library research, review methods, and referring to resources on the history of medicine in Iran, including texts of medical history, traditional and folk medicine; Subsequently, these words were classified and analyzed through historical-comparative linguistic axioms and anthropological methods.

Results: The words related to "wart" are divided into six main groups, one minor geographical category and two main groups, one minor linguistic-dialect class. Since naming any disease is the initial step in diagnosis, these words indicate immemorial and ancient medical systems; therefore, developing a historical atlas of ancient medical subcultures in Iran is achievable by illustrating the reason for diverse nomenclature of each disease including "wart".

Conclusion: The elaboration of word classification related to "wart" and their function to reveal subcultures is so significant that it could be considered as one of the most important indicators of ethnomedical knowledge in any region of Iran. Regarding linguistic transformations and similarity rates to original words, another classification can be suggested to illuminate the antiquity of ethnomedicine in each geographical location in the country.