

ANTHROPONYMS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY: LINGUISTIC FOUNDATIONS OF ASSESSING ETHNICITY THROUGH NAMES

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Abstract

This article systematically analyzes the relationship between anthroponymy and national identity from a linguistic point of view, how ethnicity and national identity are reflected in the name, highlighting the interaction of Turkic, Persian-Tajik, Slavic and Arabic theophoric layers, writing traditions and formalization practices, as well as examining the possibility of transethnicity and error. The article presents etymological analysis, sociolinguistic observations and statistical standards as a methodological basis, and gives examples of Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Russian-Slavic anthroponyms as examples.

Keywords: Anthroponymy, national identity, ethnolinguistics, etymology, phonetic and morphological indicators, theophoric names, transliteration and writing traditions, sociolinguistic methods, transethnicity, naming policy.

Introduction

As you know, names are a vocabulary layer of enormous cultural and spiritual value, created by our ancestors for many centuries and has come down to us as a historical treasure. To date, anthroponyms are used as human names in almost all regions. In a unique way occurs. Names are nouns given to a person at a young age².

Anthroponyms are a complex linguistic phenomenon that includes the origin, formation mechanisms, semantic layers, and socio-cultural functions of human names. They are inextricably linked with national identity and constitute a multilayered system with historical continuity. The name is not only a nominative unit that ensures the recognition of a person in the social environment, but also an important tool in the process of understanding national identity as a carrier of social memory, religious beliefs, political views, spiritual ideals, the phonetic-morphological structure of the language, and semantic developments. The analysis of personal names requires the study of historical layers of ethnicity, morphological modeling methods, phonetic norms, types of semantic motivation, as well as mechanisms of interlinguistic and intercultural influence. After all, the anthroponymic system develops in direct connection with rituals, institutions of power, and writing traditions.

Materials and Methods

Speaking about the term anthroponym, N.V. Podolskaya mentioned that it includes a name, patronymic, nickname, pseudonym, surname, cryptonym (nickname, first name, name), andronym, gyneconym, patronymic³.

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² Madvaliyev A. "Onomastika" "Sharq" 2018. – B. 44.

³ Nazarova Navbahor Ahrorovna. Antroponimlar mohiyati va semantik tahlili. International Scientific Conference

Specifically, when it comes to a surname, it can be viewed as a family name that is formed from the name of the father or grandfather, added to the person's name, and passed down from generation to generation⁴⁴. In the anthroponymic system, the linguistic foundations of identity perception are formed through several main components: a system of phonetic devices, morphological models and affixation processes, sources of semantic motivation, etymological roots and national-dialectal evolution, socio-pragmatic functions, ceremonial contexts and legal practices. In the anthroponymics of Turkic languages, at the phonetic level, the law of harmony, phonotactic adaptation of sounds, and tendencies towards Turkicization of borrowed words are observed. In the Persian-Tajik anthroponymic space, the influence of isophaneal structures and the preserved traces of elements of the Arabic phonetic model are manifested as important phonetic factors. In this regard, at the morphological level, the widespread use of components such as -bek, -jon, -khan, -boy, -ali, -ulla in Turkic names served as a means of expressing the social status of a person, the content of affection, faith or respect, while in the Persian-Tajik anthroponymic system, structures based on composition and isophane prevail. From the point of view of sources of semantic motivation, anthroponyms usually acquire meaning based on moral qualities (justice, loyalty, patience), natural elements (sun, moon, star, flower), religious and spiritual meanings (closeness to Allah, names of prophets), names of historical figures, heroes and commanders, and titles indicating social role or status. Anthroponyms appear as important indices of national identity: they indicate a person's belonging to an ethnic community, define the boundaries of "one's" and "stranger" in the communicative space, regulate marriage and kinship relations, ensure the continuity of ceremonial customs and folk memory, and reformulate naming strategies in the conditions of modernization. From the point of view of systemic stability, the etymological root, semantic motif, morphological structure and external form (appearance, reflection in writing, official registration) of an anthroponym are in continuous interaction, which allows for statistical reliability and context-dependent interpretations in maintaining ethnic affiliation.

However, anthroponymic indicators are not absolute: a multicultural environment, urbanization, migration, global cultural influence and transethnic processes can change their meaning. Nevertheless, from the point of view of linguistics and ethno-linguistics, some phonetic-morphological patterns, etymological roots, and semantic motifs serve as the main factors in preserving national identity. At the phonetic level, Turkic anthroponyms are formed mainly through processes such as vowel harmony laws, syllabic rhythmic balance, and consonant adaptation or softening. Arabic and Persian borrowings are often adapted to the Turkic phonotactic system, simplified in pronunciation or divided into components and recomposed with Turkic affixes. In the Persian-Tajik phonetic system, long vowels, fricativeization of some consonants, traces of isophallo construction, and adaptation of Arabic phonemic elements to the Tajik language are among the main factors strengthening phonetic features.

Results and Discussion

The compositional structure is widespread in Turkic names, which are often formed in the form of a name + title (for example, Temur + bek), theophoric components (Abdu + lla), affixes denoting affection (-jon), morphemes denoting social status (-khan, -boy), and a semantic core consisting of elements of nature (Oy + bek, Gul + nora). In the Persian-Tajik anthroponymic system, compounds based on the isophane construction (Gulchehra -

⁴⁴ Begmatov.A.E. O'zbek tili antroponomikasi. "Fan" nashriyoti. Toshkent-2013. – B. 323-324.

metaphorical expression of "flower" + "face"), Arabic theophoric forms (Abdullah, Abdurahmon), and names with moral and spiritual content (Sabridin, Shukrullo) occupy a central place. In Slavic anthroponymics, there is a strong morphological connection with names belonging to the Christian calendar (Ivan, Nikolay, Alexander), patronymic models, and surnames. These names often have ancient Greek, Latin, or Hebrew roots, but they live in a nationalized form based on the Russian phonetic-morphological system.

At the semantic level, anthroponyms are dominated by theophoric content (such as the servant of Allah, mercy), names of historical heroes and famous people (Temur, Jalaluddin), metaphors of nature and beauty (Gulnora, Dilafruz), units denoting moral and spiritual qualities (Patience, Thankfulness, Justice), and titles expressing social status and respect (Bek). The semantic field of names is inextricably linked with folk oral literature, epic traditions, religious texts, calendar systems, ceremonial customs, and family naming practices, forming an important symbolic structure of national identity. Thus, the semantic layers of anthroponyms combine ethnic memory, religious beliefs, social status, and aesthetic ideals into a single semiosystem.

Anthroponyms, as linguocultural signs reflecting the historical memory, religious traditions, customs, social status system, moral values, and aesthetic ideals of a society, serve as a powerful signal in the understanding of national identity. They embody elements of cultural layers at the semantic, phonetic, morphological, and pragmatic levels, becoming a symbolic indicator of the identity of a society.

From this point of view, we can cite several anthroponyms as examples: The anthroponym "Temur" goes back to the Turkic root "temir" (metal) and semantically means "made of iron" or "strong as iron". In the historical context, it is associated with the personality of Amir Temur, strengthened by power, military prowess and legitimate rule. From a phonetic point of view, the form "Temur" corresponds to Turkic phonotactics, although there is also a variant "Timur" formed under Persian influence, in Uzbek speech practice the form "Temur" is mainly used. Morphologically and compositionally, the name is used in combinations such as "Temurbek", "Temurxon", expanding the semantic field by expressing social status and respect. From the point of view of ethnic identification, "Temur" is a strong index of Turkic historical memory and appears as a central anthroponym in the Uzbek anthroponymic environment, carrying the content of heroism, statesmanship and national pride.

The anthroponym "Ulug'bek" is formed in a compositional way, consisting of a combination of the adjective component "ulug'" (great, high) and the title "bek". Semantically, it means "great bek" or "a person of high status". In the historical context, the name is associated with the personality of Mirzo Ulug'bek and appears as a symbol associated with science, astronomy, enlightenment, state administration and cultural revival. This strengthens the anthroponym as a high symbol of the Uzbek enlightenment code. At the phonetic level, the Turkic sound harmony is preserved, and the component "bek" strengthens the sign of social respect and leadership, while the consonant g' in the component "ulug'" serves as a strong signal for ethnic identification in the Turkic phonetic environment.

A number of names are absorbed into Uzbek anthroponyms through Persian-Tajik poetic traditions, creating new semantic layers. For example, "Gulnora" (flower + pomegranate) means beauty, tenderness and blessing, while "Nodira" reflects the meaning of uniqueness and love, clarity. Phonetically and morphologically adapted to Turkic pronunciation, these compounds synthesize Persian-Tajik influence with Turkic identity. The theophoric component "Abd" comes from an Arabic root and combines with the attributes of

Allah: “Abdu-” is adapted in the Turkic phonetic environment, creating variants such as “Abduaziz”, “Abdulhaq”, “Abdulla”. Such anthroponyms clearly indicate Muslim faith, and when added to the Turkic affixes (-bek, -khan), they enhance social status and religious and cultural respect. The anthroponym Rustam is associated with one of the central heroes of the epic corpus “Shahnama” and carries the semantics of strength, courage, patriotism and epic heroism; Etymologically, it goes back to Iranian roots, phonetically it uses Tajik pronunciation and Persian rhythmological structure, morphologically it is simpler. For ethnic identification, “Rustam” is one of the strongest indices of Tajik-Persian cultural memory, and when its name is heard, the entire semantic field of epic tradition, poetry and classical literature comes together.

The composition “*Nursultan*” is a combination of “nur” (light, blessing) and “sultan” (ruler, product), which has acquired a symbolic meaning in the modern Kazakh political context. The phonetic system corresponds to the Turkic pronunciation, the Arabic component “sultan” is Turkicized, semantically successful, combining the manifestations of light, blessing, political status and statehood. It has become an anthroponymic index of the Kazakh modernization processes in ethnic identification, a manifestation of the Turkic-Islamic synthesis through the compositional style. Manas is the central hero of the Kyrgyz national epic, as an anthroponym it highly conveys the semantics of heroism, unity, national spirit and memory. Etymological roots merge with the metaphorical field in the context of the epic, in the phonetic representation the syllabic rhythm characteristic of the Kyrgyz language is felt, morphological simplicity is balanced by a strong symbolic load. In ethnic identification, “Manas” is a signal of the collective identity of the Kyrgyz people, and epic memory is immediately activated when the name is heard.

“*Alexander*” - protector; “*Ivan*” - John - God's blessing; “*Nikolai*” - from the semantics of the victory of the people. Phonetic medical Russian pronunciation and stress system, combined with morphological medical surnames, patronymics (Aleksandrovich, Ivanovna), provide a systematic structure in the socio-legal naming system. In ethnic identification, these names reflect the Russian-Slavic cultural mythologism and religious traditions, act as indicators of Slavic ethnosubculture in a multicultural environment.

The names “*Muhammad*” - “Muhammadjon”, “*Ahmad*” come directly from Islamic religious texts, hadith-hagiographic context, and through the theophoric content, the names of prophets and companions express the semantics of faith, piety, blessing and mercy. Phonetic adaptation occurs in Turkic, Persian-Tajik and Russian environments: compositions such as “Muhammad” - “Muhammadjon”, “Ahmad” - “Ahmadali”; “*Fatima*” and “*Ayisha*” have highly respected semantic connotations as female names in the Muslim world. Although religion acts as a transethnic index in ethnic identification, local pronunciation and morphologically appropriate nationalization reinforce the environment with many secondary signals.

Conclusions

In conclusion, anthroponyms are one of the most living, permanent and multi-layered codes of national identity, through which the linguistic structure, poetic-epic memory, religious beliefs, social status indicators, ceremonial traditions and political processes of the people are simultaneously manifested. Names act as a bridge between historical layers: Turkic roots denote the semantics of strength, courage and social status; the Persian-Tajik poetic layer reflects beauty, love and the aesthetic ideal; Arabic theophoric elements are filled with religious beliefs and spiritual meanings; and the Slavic anthroponymic system, connected with the

Christian cultural heritage, expresses the socio-legal order through surname and patronymic structures. Determining ethnic affiliation through a name is carried out in linguistic analysis using the tools of phonetics, morphology and etymology, taking into account social control and historical, formalization practices. The personal name is the core product of national memory and identity, and despite changes in form and content, it maintains a balance between the internal system of language and the components of society, and continues its symbolic-spiritual role. Anthroponymics sheds light on this process on a scientific basis, revealing the multi-layered semiosis of names, explaining the linguistic mechanisms of national consciousness, and providing reliable, contextual, and evidence-based analytical criteria for practical identification. Thus, anthroponyms occupy a permanent central place in the understanding of the nation as a window into society's self-understanding, a gateway to history, and a semantic signpost to the future.

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