



CONNOTATIVE MEANINGS AND PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF ANTHROPONYMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the connotative meanings and pragmatic functions of anthroponyms in English and Uzbek. It investigates how personal names convey not only identity but also social, cultural, and emotional nuances. The research highlights the differences and similarities between the two languages in terms of semantic transparency, cultural embedding, and pragmatic usage. The findings demonstrate that while English anthroponyms often retain historical or traditional connotations, Uzbek anthroponyms carry highly explicit evaluative and cultural meanings, reflecting national values, beliefs, and social expectations. This analysis contributes to the fields of onomastics, sociolinguistics, and intercultural communication..

Introduction

Anthroponyms, or personal names, are linguistic units that perform both nominative and communicative functions, providing not only identity but also social, cultural, and psychological information. The study of their connotative meanings and pragmatic functions has gained importance in recent years within sociolinguistics and onomastics. English and Uzbek, belonging to different linguistic families and cultural contexts, exhibit contrasting patterns in naming conventions and semantic transparency. English personal names often preserve historical, biblical, or occupational connotations, whereas Uzbek names frequently encode explicit cultural, moral, and evaluative content. Understanding these cross-linguistic differences is essential for insights into identity construction, language pragmatics, and intercultural communication.

Materials and Methods

The research draws on a corpus of 300 English and 300 Uzbek personal names collected from historical records, contemporary literature, public databases, and social contexts. Names were analyzed for connotative meaning, semantic transparency, and pragmatic function. The study applied comparative, descriptive, and semantic-pragmatic analysis, examining categories such as evaluative, moral, religious, and socially embedded connotations. Each anthroponym was classified according to its dominant pragmatic function, e.g., identity marking, social signaling, moral evaluation, or cultural reference. The methodology allows for a systematic cross-linguistic comparison of the cultural and functional dimensions of personal names.

Results

The results reveal clear cross-linguistic differences in connotative meanings and pragmatic functions. English anthroponyms, such as *William*, *Elizabeth*, *James*, often preserve historical, biblical, or occupational connotations but have limited semantic transparency in contemporary use; their pragmatic function primarily centers on identity and social differentiation. Uzbek anthroponyms, such as *Baxtiyor*, *Umid*, *Sabriddin*, explicitly encode positive traits, moral qualities, or religious values. These names serve multiple pragmatic functions: they convey social expectations, express parental hopes, and reinforce cultural and ethical norms. In addition, Uzbek personal names often carry symbolic and affective meaning, influencing both interpersonal communication and social perception.

Discussion

The analysis of English and Uzbek anthroponyms demonstrates that connotative meanings and pragmatic functions are deeply intertwined with cultural, social, and historical contexts. In Uzbek, personal names are often explicitly evaluative, reflecting moral, ethical, and social expectations. Names such as *Baxtiyor* (“fortunate”), *Umid* (“hope”), and *Sabriddin* (“patience of faith”) convey parental aspirations and societal ideals, functioning as tools for socialization and identity reinforcement. These anthroponyms do not merely identify an individual but carry embedded cultural codes that guide interpersonal interaction, signal group membership, and reflect collective values. Pragmatically, these names perform multiple functions simultaneously: they identify, evaluate, motivate, and connect the individual to a broader cultural and religious framework.

In contrast, English personal names like *John*, *Elizabeth*, or *William* often retain historical, biblical, or occupational connotations, yet in contemporary usage, these connotations are largely dormant. Their pragmatic function focuses primarily on identification and continuity, reflecting a more individualistic cultural orientation. While some connotative layers remain — for instance, *Elizabeth* might evoke aristocratic or traditional associations — the evaluative or moral coding typical of Uzbek names is largely absent. This difference illustrates how the social structure and collective versus individual cultural orientations influence the semantic and pragmatic profile of anthroponyms.

Furthermore, cross-linguistic comparison reveals that semantic transparency is higher in Uzbek anthroponyms than in English ones. Uzbek names frequently encode qualities that are immediately understandable and culturally resonant, whereas English names often require historical or etymological knowledge to access their original connotative meanings. This discrepancy has important implications for intercultural communication and translation, as literal transference of names between these languages may fail to convey the intended cultural and evaluative nuances, potentially leading to semantic loss or misinterpretation.

The role of religion also emerges as a key factor in shaping connotative meaning. Uzbek names are heavily influenced by Islamic cultural and ethical frameworks, which embed normative values and spiritual aspirations into personal naming practices. In English, while historical Christian influence is evident, it no longer actively shapes naming practices to the same extent. Consequently, the pragmatic load of English names is primarily sociolinguistic and historical, whereas Uzbek names are actively prescriptive and culturally evaluative, providing guidance on social behavior and moral conduct.

Finally, the study highlights the impact of globalization and cultural exchange. In Uzbek society, English or international names are increasingly adopted, but often combined with traditional naming conventions, creating hybrid semantic and pragmatic profiles. Conversely, English names show greater uniformity and neutrality, reflecting both linguistic standardization and a lower degree of explicit cultural coding. This dynamic underlines the importance of understanding names not only as linguistic signs but also as carriers of cultural and social knowledge, with direct implications for sociolinguistic research, onomastics, and intercultural education.

In conclusion, the discussion confirms that the connotative and pragmatic properties of anthroponyms are culturally mediated. Uzbek personal names exhibit rich, multilayered connotations and perform diverse pragmatic functions aligned with societal and ethical norms, whereas English names prioritize identity marking with historical or traditional resonance. Recognizing these patterns is essential for comparative linguistics, cross-cultural communication, and translation studies, emphasizing that names are not neutral labels but deeply embedded cultural signifiers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, English and Uzbek anthroponyms differ significantly in connotative meaning and pragmatic function. English names tend to retain historical or traditional connotations but are pragmatically limited to identity marking and social reference. Uzbek names, however, carry rich evaluative and cultural semantics, serving multiple pragmatic functions related to morality, social expectation, and national identity. This research highlights the intersection of language, culture, and social practice, contributing to a deeper understanding of personal naming systems, intercultural semantics, and the sociolinguistic role of anthroponyms. Further studies may explore diachronic changes and cross-cultural adaptation of anthroponyms in multilingual contexts.

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