PRAGMATIC AND SOCIOCULTURAL FUNCTIONS OF ANTHROPONYMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract: This article examines the pragmatic and sociocultural functions of anthroponyms in English and Uzbek. The study aims to analyze how personal names operate in real communicative contexts and how they reflect social relations, cultural values, and identity construction. Using a qualitative comparative approach, the research explores pragmatic features such as address forms, politeness strategies, and social markers, as well as sociocultural factors including traditions, hierarchy, and gender roles. The findings indicate that Uzbek naming practices are strongly influenced by social hierarchy, respect, and cultural norms, while English anthroponyms demonstrate greater flexibility and individual orientation. The study contributes to the fields of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and onomastics.

Keywords: anthroponyms, pragmatics, sociocultural factors, naming practices, English, Uzbek, identity, politeness

Introduction

Anthroponyms, as personal names, play a crucial role not only in identifying individuals but also in structuring social interaction and expressing cultural values. From a pragmatic perspective, names function as essential tools in communication, reflecting relationships between speakers, levels of formality, and social distance. At the same time, sociocultural factors shape how names are chosen, used, and interpreted within a given community.

In modern linguistics, the study of anthroponyms has expanded beyond etymology and semantics to include pragmatic and sociocultural dimensions. This shift reflects the understanding that language is deeply embedded in social context and cultural practice. In this regard, English and Uzbek provide an interesting contrast, as they represent different cultural models and communication styles.

This study aims to investigate the pragmatic and sociocultural functions of anthroponyms in English and Uzbek. The research focuses on how names are used in communication, how they signal social relations, and how cultural norms influence naming practices. The study also seeks to identify key similarities and differences between the two linguistic systems.

Methodology

The research adopts a qualitative comparative methodology based on data from commonly used English and Uzbek anthroponyms. The analysis is grounded in theories of pragmatics and sociolinguistics, particularly the concepts of speech context, politeness strategies, and social identity.

The study involves three stages. First, different types of anthroponyms and forms of address are identified in both languages. Second, their pragmatic functions are analyzed, including their role in expressing respect, familiarity, and social hierarchy. Third, sociocultural factors influencing these practices are examined and compared.

The methodological approach integrates linguistic analysis with cultural interpretation, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of naming as a social and communicative phenomenon.

Results and Discussion

The analysis demonstrates that anthroponyms in both English and Uzbek perform important pragmatic and sociocultural functions, although these functions vary significantly across the two languages.

One of the key pragmatic functions of names is the expression of social relationships. In English, the use of first names is common even in relatively formal contexts, reflecting a tendency toward informality and equality. Titles and surnames are used primarily in formal or professional settings, but their use has decreased in everyday communication. This indicates a pragmatic model that emphasizes individual identity and reduced social distance.

In contrast, Uzbek naming practices are strongly influenced by social hierarchy and cultural norms of respect. The use of titles, honorifics, and kinship terms is widespread, especially when addressing elders or individuals of higher social status. This reflects a pragmatic system where language encodes respect and social roles explicitly. The choice of name form is therefore closely linked to the speaker's intention and the social context.

Another important aspect is the use of diminutive and affectionate forms. In Uzbek, such forms are commonly used within family and close social circles to express emotional closeness and warmth. These forms carry strong sociocultural meanings and reflect the importance of interpersonal relationships. In English, while nicknames and shortened forms exist, their use is more flexible and often based on personal preference rather than strict social conventions.

Gender also plays a significant role in naming practices. Uzbek anthroponyms often reflect traditional gender roles and cultural expectations, particularly in the naming of females, where names may symbolize beauty, purity, or kindness. In English, gender distinctions in names exist, but they are less rigid, and modern trends show increasing variability and neutrality.

Despite these differences, both English and Uzbek anthroponyms serve as important markers of identity and social belonging. They function as pragmatic tools that help speakers navigate social interactions and express cultural values. This suggests that while the specific forms and conventions differ, the underlying communicative functions of names are universal.

Conclusion

The study highlights the significant role of anthroponyms in both communication and culture. From a pragmatic perspective, names are not merely labels but dynamic tools that reflect social relationships, intentions, and contextual meanings. From a sociocultural perspective, they embody cultural values, traditions, and social structures.

The comparative analysis shows that English naming practices are characterized by flexibility and individualism, whereas Uzbek anthroponyms emphasize respect, hierarchy, and cultural continuity. These differences illustrate how language and culture interact in shaping naming practices.

The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of anthroponyms within the frameworks of pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Future research may explore additional dimensions, such as discourse analysis or cross-generational changes in naming practices.

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