



THE SOCIOCULTURAL FUNCTION OF ANTHROPONYMS IN THE MODERN WORLD

Abduhakimova Madinaxon Kamolovna

SamDCHTI o'qituvchisi

E-Mail: mka010183@mail.ru

Tel :932393863

Abstract. *This article examines the sociocultural function of anthroponyms (personal names) in contemporary society. Names are not only linguistic signs but also cultural markers that reflect social values, traditions, and collective memory. By analyzing the historical roots, semantic layers, and cultural meanings of personal names, the study highlights their role in identity formation, social interaction, and cultural continuity. The paper also considers the influence of globalization, migration, and digital communication on anthroponymic practices in the modern world.*

Keywords: *anthroponyms, sociocultural function, identity, globalization, cultural heritage, naming practices.*

INTRODUCTION.

Anthroponyms as Markers of Identity

Personal names are crucial elements of identity. They link individuals to their families, ethnic groups, and nations. For example, in many cultures, surnames denote kinship and lineage, while given names reflect parental expectations or religious beliefs. In Islamic societies, names such as *Abdullah* or *Fatima* express religious devotion, whereas in Western societies, names like *Elizabeth* or *George* may indicate royal or historical associations. Cultural and Symbolic Functions of Names. Names carry symbolic meanings that reflect cultural values. In many Asian cultures, parents choose names that embody wishes for health, prosperity, or wisdom. In African traditions, names may be linked to circumstances of birth or ancestral memory. In Slavic countries, names like *Vladimir* (“ruler of peace”) or *Svetlana* (“light”) carry meanings that connect individuals to cultural ideals. Thus, anthroponyms serve as vehicles of collective symbolism.

Social Interaction and Power Relations Anthroponyms also function in the dynamics of social interaction. The way names are used—formal or informal, with titles or without—reflects social hierarchies and cultural etiquette. For example, in Japan, the use of honorific suffixes (*-san*, *-kun*, *-sama*) marks respect and social distance. In Western contexts, the shift from using surnames to first names often signals informality or equality.

The Impact of Globalization on Naming Practices Globalization has reshaped naming systems worldwide. Cross-cultural influences have led to the adoption of international names such as *Alex*, *Sophia*, *Daniel*, or *Amina*. Migration introduces new naming patterns into host societies, producing hybrid forms or modified spellings. Moreover, global media and popular culture (movies, celebrities, social media influencers) increasingly shape naming trends, particularly among younger generations.

Digital Communication and Personal Names

In the digital age, anthroponyms function not only as identifiers in real life but also as virtual markers in online platforms. Usernames, pseudonyms, and digital identities coexist with official names, influencing how individuals present themselves in cyberspace. This duality creates new dimensions of personal and social identity.



Preservation of Cultural Heritage through Names

Despite globalization, personal names remain a stronghold of cultural continuity. Revival of traditional names is often associated with national identity and cultural pride. For instance, in post-Soviet countries, there has been a return to indigenous names as symbols of independence and cultural revival. In many societies, anthroponyms thus play an essential role in preserving intangible cultural heritage.

As a conclusion anthroponyms in the modern world serve complex sociocultural functions. They are not only tools of individual identification but also cultural symbols that transmit traditions, values, and social norms. In the context of globalization and digitalization, names are both preserved and transformed, reflecting the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity. Understanding the sociocultural function of anthroponyms provides valuable insights into identity, heritage, and cultural interaction in contemporary society.

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