

COMPOUND ANTHROPONYMS AS CULTURALLY MARKED SIGNS: LINGUOCULTURAL AND SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract: The present study investigates compound anthroponyms as culturally marked linguistic signs that preserve and transmit information about national identity, social structure, historical memory, and cultural values. Drawing upon theories of onomastics, linguoculturology, and semiotics, the article examines the structural and semantic characteristics of compound anthroponyms and their role in representing cultural knowledge. The research demonstrates that compound anthroponyms function not merely as nominative units but also as repositories of cultural codes that reflect the worldview of a particular linguistic community. Through examples from English and other naming traditions, the study reveals how multi-component personal names encode information concerning lineage, social status, ethnicity, religion, and cultural affiliation.

Keywords: compound anthroponyms, linguoculturology, cultural sign, onomastics, identity, naming traditions, cultural code.

Introduction

Contemporary linguistics increasingly regards proper names as important carriers of cultural information. Within anthropocentric paradigms, anthroponyms are viewed not only as identifiers of individuals but also as linguistic manifestations of collective cultural experience. Anthroponyms accumulate historical memory, social values, and national traditions, thereby functioning as significant elements of cultural communication. Particularly noteworthy are compound anthroponyms, which include double-barrelled surnames, compound personal names, and multi-component naming formulas. Their complex structure enables them to transmit a greater amount of sociocultural information than simple names. Consequently, compound anthroponyms may be interpreted as culturally marked signs whose semantic potential extends beyond basic identification.

The objective of this article is to examine compound anthroponyms from linguocultural and semiotic perspectives and to demonstrate their role as carriers of cultural meanings.

Theoretical Framework: The study of anthroponyms occupies a central position within onomastics. According to A. V. Superanskaya, personal names constitute a special subsystem of language that reflects historical, social, and cultural processes. Anthroponyms preserve information about ethnic traditions, family relations, religious beliefs, and societal development.

Linguoculturology interprets names as cultural signs. V. A. Maslova argues that linguistic units often function as repositories of cultural concepts and national experience. Within this framework, anthroponyms represent compressed cultural texts that encode collective knowledge and value systems.

The cultural significance of anthroponyms is further emphasized by researchers who describe personal names as indicators of identity, ethnicity, and social belonging. Anthroponyms may reveal an individual's cultural origins, religious background, and historical affiliations.

Table 1. Structural types of compound anthroponyms:

Double-barrelled surnames	Compound personal names	Multi-component naming formulas	titles or status
• Carter-Wallace • Lloyd George	• Mary-Anne • Anna-Maria	• John Fitzgerald Kennedy • Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Battuta	• Sir Arthur Conan Doyle • Prince William Arthur Philip Louis

Table 1. demonstrates four principal categories of compound anthroponyms identified in the corpus. The data indicate that multi-component anthroponyms represent a structurally diverse category reflecting different cultural traditions of personal naming. These structures reflect specific cultural traditions and naming conventions. In many societies, the inclusion of multiple name components signifies family heritage, social prestige, or genealogical continuity.

Compound Anthroponyms as Cultural Signs: From a semiotic perspective, a compound anthroponym functions simultaneously on several levels:

Identificational Level - The primary function of any anthroponym is identification. However, compound names provide more detailed information than simple names because they often indicate family connections and lineage.

Social Level - Many compound anthroponyms reveal social status. Double-barrelled surnames historically emerged among aristocratic families seeking to preserve both maternal and paternal family names. Consequently, such names often carry associations with social prestige and historical continuity.

Historical Level - Compound anthroponyms preserve historical memory. Through hereditary transmission, they become linguistic monuments reflecting social transformations and family histories.

Cultural Level - Names embody cultural values and collective beliefs. Certain anthroponymic components may indicate religious affiliation, ethnic identity, or regional origin. Thus, compound anthroponyms become markers of cultural belonging.

Linguocultural Interpretation of Compound Anthroponyms: The linguocultural approach considers anthroponyms as elements of a cultural code. Personal names are capable of activating extensive associative networks connected with national history, literature, mythology, and social memory.

For example:

- Fitzgerald evokes Irish cultural heritage (John Fitzgerald Kennedy)
- ibn indicates Arabic genealogical tradition (Abu Ali ibn Sina)
- Mac- and O'- signal Celtic ancestry (McDonald, O'Henry)
- von historically indicates German noble lineage (Otto von Bismarck)

Consequently, the semantic interpretation of compound anthroponyms extends beyond lexical meaning and enters the sphere of cultural symbolism.

As cultural signs, compound anthroponyms perform the following functions:

- preservation of cultural memory;
- transmission of family heritage;
- representation of social identity;
- maintenance of ethnic continuity;
- expression of cultural values.

The analysis demonstrates that compound anthroponyms possess a high degree of cultural markedness. Unlike simple names, they contain multiple semantic layers that contribute to the construction of personal and collective identities. Their significance is particularly evident in multicultural societies, where anthroponyms serve as markers of ethnic affiliation and cultural heritage. Through their structural complexity, compound anthroponyms preserve valuable information about historical developments, social hierarchies, and cultural traditions. Therefore, compound anthroponyms should be regarded not merely as nominative units but as semiotic constructs that participate in the transmission of cultural knowledge across generations.

Conclusion. The conducted analysis confirms that compound anthroponyms function as culturally marked signs within linguistic and cultural systems. Their structural complexity enables them to encode information concerning social status, family lineage, ethnic identity, religious affiliation, and historical memory. The linguocultural and semiotic interpretation of compound anthroponyms reveals their role as repositories of collective cultural experience. They operate as cultural texts capable of preserving and transmitting national values, traditions, and worldviews. Consequently, compound anthroponyms represent an important object of contemporary onomastic and linguocultural research.

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