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THE AFFIXAL MODEL OF ANTHROPONYMS IN CHINESE AND UZBEK: A COMPARATIVE LINGUOCULTURAL AND PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This article presents a comparative study of anthroponymic formation in Chinese and Uzbek from morphological, linguocultural and pragmatic perspectives. It considers the role of suffix-like Uzbek name components and Chinese character-based naming and address forms in encoding affection, respect, familiarity and cultural ideals. Particular attention is given to the typological distinction between agglutinative Uzbek and predominantly isolating Mandarin Chinese. Examples such as Ali–Alijon, Madina–Madinaxon, 李明 (Lǐ Míng), 小王 (Xiǎo Wáng) and 阿明 (Ā Míng) show that comparable interpersonal meanings need not have identical grammatical expression.

Key words: anthroponyms, Uzbek, Mandarin Chinese, affixal model, onomastics, linguocultural comparison, morphology, pragmatics.

1. Introduction

Personal names, or anthroponyms, identify individuals and simultaneously convey linguistic and cultural information. Naming practices can reflect family expectations, beliefs, aesthetic ideals, historical experience and social relationships. Comparing naming patterns therefore contributes to onomastics and intercultural pragmatics. Uzbek is an agglutinative Turkic language, whereas Mandarin Chinese is predominantly isolating. This difference affects the ways meaningful units are combined in personal names and address forms. Uzbek forms such as Muhammadjon and Madinaxon often contain postposed affectionate or honorific elements. Chinese forms such as 小王 (Xiǎo Wáng), 老李 (Lǎo Lǐ) and 阿明 (Ā Míng) employ preposed elements in familiar address. The Chinese forms are not exact grammatical equivalents of Uzbek suffixes. The purpose of this study is to compare the formal organization, cultural associations and pragmatic functions of selected Chinese and Uzbek anthroponyms. The topic is relevant to translation, language teaching and intercultural interaction, where a literal reading of a name can obscure the speaker's intention.

2. Literature Review

Begmatov's O'zbek ismlari provides a major reference for Uzbek personal names, their meanings and traditional formation patterns [1]. Names containing gul ("flower"), oy ("moon"), bek (a historical title), jon ("dear") and xon (an honorific or naming component) display the interplay of lexical meaning and cultural convention. For example, Gulbahor combines gul and bahor ("spring"); Otabek brings together ota ("father") and bek; Muhammadjon uses the affectionate element -jon. It is important, however, not to classify every final component in a compound name as a productive grammatical suffix.

Wiedenhof's A Grammar of Mandarin supplies a grammatical basis for analyzing Chinese morphology [2]. Mandarin personal names typically consist of a surname followed by a given name: in 李明 (Lǐ Míng), 李 is the surname and 明 ("bright") is the given name; in 王美玲 (Wáng Měilíng), 王 is the surname and 美玲 is the given name. The constituent characters are usually meaningful lexical elements, not case endings or ordinary inflectional suffixes. This typological distinction is central to any comparison. The two books thus provide complementary evidence: Uzbek anthroponymy permits a variety of suffix-like and compound patterns, while Mandarin names typically select and combine meaningful written characters. Comparable cultural meanings can emerge from different linguistic structures.

3. Research Methodology

The research uses a qualitative, descriptive and contrastive approach. First, example names and address forms are segmented into meaningful elements. Second, those elements are categorized by structural position and function. Third, cultural interpretations are considered in relation to semantic content and interpersonal use. Finally, equivalent pragmatic intentions—affection, respect and familiarity—are compared across the two languages [3]. Examples are illustrative rather than drawn from a frequency-balanced corpus. Consequently, the discussion establishes potential structural and functional correspondences, not population-level frequencies or universal rules. Chinese examples are presented in simplified characters together with tone-marked Hanyu Pinyin to preserve their orthography and standard Mandarin reading.

4. Analysis and Results

In Uzbek, -jon commonly conveys affection or closeness: Ali → Alijon and Dilshod → Dilshodjon. The addition changes the interpersonal tone of an address without replacing the person identified. Similarly, Madina → Madinaxon and Zulfiya → Zulfiyaxon can communicate respect or affectionate politeness; interpretation depends on situation and relationship. Some such combinations are conventional full names as well as possible address variants. Mandarin often uses a different arrangement. 小 (xiǎo), literally "small" or "young", precedes a surname in familiar address: 王 (Wáng) → 小王 (Xiǎo Wáng) and 李 (Lǐ) → 小李 (Xiǎo Lǐ). 老 (lǎo), literally "old", likewise appears in 老王 (Lǎo Wáng) and 老李 (Lǎo Lǐ); its function may be collegial, familiar or respectful rather than literally age-descriptive. Such readings depend on the speakers' social relationship [4].

In some Chinese regional speech and naming practices, 阿 (ā) precedes a familiar given name: 明 (Míng) → 阿明 (Ā Míng). This may express familiarity or warmth and can be compared functionally with Uzbek Alijon. Yet 阿 is preposed and its dialectal distribution differs from the Uzbek postposed -jon; they should not be labelled identical morphemes.

Cultural semantics are also visible in the components of given names. Uzbek Gulbahor ("flower" + "spring") and Oygul ("moon" + "flower") evoke natural beauty; Chinese 美玲 (Měilíng) contains 美 ("beautiful"), while 芳 (Fāng) is associated with fragrance. These are cultural tendencies and associations rather than obligatory gender markers. Uzbek Abdulaziz and Muhammadali illustrate Islamic-derived name traditions. Chinese 志强 (Zhìqiáng; "aspiration/determination" + "strong") and 建国 (Jiànguó; "build" + "country") evoke personal virtues or civic ideals.

Table 1.

Comparison of selected Chinese and Uzbek anthroponymic patterns

Feature	Uzbek	Mandarin Chinese
Language structure	Agglutinative; compounding and postposed elements	Predominantly isolating; character-based names
Affectionate pattern	Ali → Alijon	明 (Míng) → 阿明 (Ā Míng)
Familiar address	Dilshod → Dilshodjon	王 (Wáng) → 小王 (Xiǎo Wáng)
Respect / familiarity	Madina → Madinaxon	李 (Lǐ) → 老李 (Lǎo Lǐ)
Nature / beauty	Gulbahor, Oygul	美玲 (Měilíng), 芳 (Fāng)
Typical position	Postposed -jon / -xon	Preposed 小 / 老 / 阿
Main caution	Not all final name parts are suffixes	Address elements are not Uzbek-style suffixes

The comparison shows convergent pragmatic goals but divergent formal means. Literal translation alone is often misleading: 老李 (Lǎo Lǐ) does not necessarily mean that Li is elderly, and Alijon does not operate as the literal sum of "Ali" and "soul." Cultural and interpersonal context must be considered in translation and communication [5]. The principal results are that (i) name formation reflects language typology; (ii) affection and respect may be expressed through either postposed or preposed elements; (iii) name components preserve cultural values; and (iv) the identifying function of a proper name differs from the dictionary meanings of its parts [6]. These conclusions are analytical observations based on selected examples rather than quantitative generalizations.

5. Conclusion

Chinese and Uzbek anthroponymic systems differ significantly in form while sharing several cultural and pragmatic functions. Uzbek frequently uses postposed affectionate or honorific elements such as -jon and -xon; Mandarin employs meaningful characters within given names and preposed forms such as 小 (xiǎo), 老 (lǎo) and 阿 (ā) in particular modes of address. Their similarity is functional, not evidence of identical grammatical status. The names and address forms examined here illustrate how language and culture jointly shape social identity. Correct interpretation requires attention to morphology, naming convention, regional practice and communicative context. Further research should use a systematically sampled corpus and sociolinguistic evidence to test the relative frequency and contextual distribution of these formations.

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