

LINGUISTIC PECULIARITIES OF AZERBAIJANI ANTHROPNYMS

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Abstract: The paper refers to anthroponymy, which is a branch of onomastics. Just as other onomastic units in Azerbaijani, first names and surnames reflect people's history and their mental outlook. However, name models in main anthroponymic categories are not the same across various nations. Anthroponyms have always played an important role in the history of all nations. In any language they may be, personal names may be indicative of people's mother tongue, history, ethnography and psychology, as well as national etiquette. Anthroponyms that help people to communicate and talk to each other about someone else reflect social and linguistic features. Semantics is becoming better defined in Azerbaijani, so that modern Azerbaijani has got a rich anthroponymic stock. Today there is a common system of personal names in Azerbaijani, which vary in form and meaning. Ancient names are compared to present-day names on the basis of facts. This paper investigates surnames that became traditional for the Azerbaijani people in the 19th century. The development of surnames during democracy is presented and illustrated with anthroponymic examples.

Keywords: anthroponym, patronymic, personal name, word-stock, category, system.

Onomastic units are products of national thinking and reflect humans' material and spiritual life. As is known, these units are studied by onomastics, a branch of linguistics. Onomastics as a particular field has a special position in the vocabulary of a language and, therefore, its components display characteristic features.

An essential part of proper names is made up of the anthroponymic word-stock. The formation of the anthroponymic vocabulary as a special class of onomastic units is closely connected with the history of a people. Anthroponyms, i.e., personal names, are special words that act as means of communicating with people, holding a conversation with others, identifying and specifying them individually. Their function depends on the social, cultural and other activities of public life. Anthroponyms have always had great significance in the history of every nation.

At all times and in every civilization, people have had personal names. Members of the society have been given names, which have thus come into everyday use and spread among people. Anthroponyms are onomastic units that revivify a people's history, ethnography and psychology, and they may be suggestive of national etiquette.

Anthroponyms reflect all appropriate changes that occur in people's living standards in all historical periods. A thorough study of the system of personal names, its formation, regularities and changes in the development of the names provides ample opportunities for concrete research results as regards tracing the historical evolution and dynamic of anthropology as a science.

Anthroponyms are distinguished through their own social and linguistic properties in the word-stock of a language. National and historical onomastic units survive not only as linguistic signs differentiating the particular from the general, but they are also a valuable source of information that essentially reflects people's history. The roles and functions of anthroponyms in language are not equal. Anthroponyms differ due to their existence in different periods of history.

Modern Azerbaijani possesses a rich stock of anthroponyms. According to onomastic sources, there are a great number of linguistic facts related to the established anthroponymic categories in Azerbaijani. It is noteworthy to mention that in addition to the anthroponymic categories of patronymics, surnames (last names), titles and pseudonyms, only personal names were used in early periods in Azerbaijani. These names had a particularly descriptive character. In the 19th century, surnames became a part of the onomastic customs and traditions of the Azerbaijani people. Until then a patronymic was used alongside a personal name as a surname. Anthroponymic categories in the Modern Azerbaijani word-stock may be divided in two: (a) principal names and (b) auxiliary names.

It should be noted that the organization of anthroponymic categories is not the same across nations. In some nations a personal name and patronymic exist as a principal name. However, some nations use a personal name and a surname, but not a patronymic. Nowadays, everyone bears a personal name and a patronymic alongside a surname in Azerbaijan. These are considered to be officially registered, or in other words, principal names: e.g., *Magsood Rauf oglu Mammadli*, *Naiba Rashad gızı Mustafayeva*, *Aydan Fuad gızı Gurbanly*, and so on. In oral speech it is not necessary to use a full name. Sometimes a personal name can be used alone or together with a surname, and sometimes a personal name may occur with a patronymic.

Personal names are comprehensively rich in Modern Azerbaijani and they display distinctive characteristics. As already mentioned, personal names have been used from time immemorial in Azerbaijan. The system of personal names was established as a result. The broad concept of *personal name* is currently expressed in Azerbaijani by such terms as *person's name*, *man's name*, *woman's name*, *real name*, *diminutive name*, *full name*, *literary name*, and *proper name*. Therefore, in Azerbaijani personal names are considered lexical categories.

Being different in form and content from centuries-old names, today men's names have developed a general system in Azerbaijani. In the Azerbaijani system of onomastics, in addition to national names, there exist men's names that entered the language on account of some objective and subjective reasons. Approximately 1,200 male names exist in Modern Azerbaijani. People's needs and desires, joy and grief are

reflected in men's names to some extent. Courage, bravery, strength, patriotism and wisdom among others are considered essential features conveyed by men's names in Azerbaijani: e.g., *Dashdamir* ('stony iron'), *Gudret* ('power'), *Igid* ('a brave man'), *Jassur* ('a courageous man'), *Mardan* ('a brave man'), *Ujal* ('be at the top'), *Umud* ('hope'), and others.

As is known from historical data, men's names derived from names of strong birds and field animals occupied a special place in the system of personal names of the Turks. Nowadays, a great number of men bear names of that kind in Azerbaijan: e.g., *Aslan* ('a lion'), *Babir* ('a panther'), *Lachyn* ('a pigeon hawk'), *Shahin* ('a peregrine falcon'), *Shiraslan* ('a lion') and *Shahpalang* ('a king tiger').

There are a fairly sufficient number of men's names borrowed from other languages. They are widely used in everyday life. Most of them originated from Arabic in connection with the spread of Islam. This process is still in development. For example, according to statistical data, in the past years newborn boys were given names related to the Islam, such as *Ahmad*, *Ali*, *Heydar*, *Mahammad*, *Omar*, *Rauf* and *Yusif* among others.

In the system of personal names in Azerbaijani women's names have been formed on the basis of words expressing beauty, charm, tenderness and mildness among others: *Dilbar* ('beloved'), *Gyozal* ('a beautiful girl or woman'), *Nigar* ('a sweetheart'), *Ziba* ('a beautiful girl or woman'), and so on.

There is a preference for the use of phyto-anthroponyms as women's names. Along with the women's names formed from actual names of flowers, many names with the components *gyul* and *chichek* ('a flower') are used in Azerbaijani: e.g., *Gyulnar* (*gyul* 'a flower' + *nar* 'a pomegranate'), *Gyultekin* (*gyul* 'flower' + *tekin* 'like, similar'), *Chichek* ('a flower'), *Aychichek* (*ay* 'the moon' + *chichek* 'a flower'), and others.

Women's names formed from names of graceful birds and field animals occupy a special place in Azerbaijani: e.g., *Gumru* ('a turtle dove'), *Jeyran* ('a gazelle'), *Keklik* ('a partridge'), *Maral* ('a deer'), *Tovuz* ('a peacock') and *Tutu* ('a parrot', 'sweet').

Personal names derived from city names are extensively used in Azerbaijani anthroponymy: e.g., women's names – *Afina* (< *Athens*), *Thehran* (< *Teheran*), *Samira*, *Madina*; men's names – *Guba*, *Isfahan*, *Sheki* and *Tabriz* among others. This phenomenon also occurs in the anthroponymic system of other nations' everyday life.

Men's and women's names formed from obsolete or archaic titles constitute the majority of Azerbaijani anthroponyms. Names of titles or ranks of Turkish origin and those from other languages can be found among them: e.g., *Pasha* (the highest title among Turkish civil and military officials), *Tarkhan*, *Beylar* (Turkish governor, chief), *Khankishi* ('khan' + 'man'), *Alibey* (*Ali* + 'chief'), *Knyaz* (< from Russian, 'prince'), *Shahlar* ('shahs'), *Akhund* (religious title in Islam), *Sultan* (a Muslim sovereign), *Khanym* (the wife of a supreme ruler of Turkish tribes), *Bika*, *Beyim* (the wife of a Turkish governor), *Shahsanam* (< the shah of a pretty woman), *Beyimkhanym* (< *beyim* + *khanym* 'a lady'), and others.

It is well known that precious stones and jewellery have been worn since the

earliest periods of Oriental life. Their extensive use was observed in women's names: e.g., *Almaz* ('diamond'), *Inji* ('pearl'), *Zumrud* ('emerald'), *Firuz* ('turquoise'), *Mirvari* ('pearl'), *Javahir* ('jewel'), and so on. Although ancient, these personal names still retain their popularity.

As previously mentioned, at present personal names related to religion are preferably used in Azerbaijan. According to statistic data, names like *Fatma*, *Zeynab*, *Zahra* and *Maryam* are widely spread in Azerbaijani everyday life. It should be noted that borrowed men's and women's names of Hebrew origin and some taken from the Bible exist in the system of personal names in Azerbaijani: e.g., *Isa*, *Davud* (*David*), *Ibrahim* (*Abraham*), *Abel* (*Habil*), *Maryam* (*Mary*), *Sara* (*Sarah*), and others.

It is known that, unlike in other languages, there is no gender category in Turkic languages. However, the formation of women's names by adding the derivational suffix *-ə* [æ] (or *-a*) to some men's names has become traditional: e.g., *Arif* – *Arifa*, *Tahir* – *Tahira*, *Chinar* – *Chinara*, and so on. Similarly, this kind of derivation can also be observed in unmarked women's names: *Aynur* – *Aynura*, *Fidan* – *Fidana*, *Nuray* – *Nuraya*, *Zərif* – *Zərifə*, and others.

The semantic groups in the classification of Azerbaijani personal names are more numerous. They include names of tribes and human beings, as well as names related to generations, descent, bravery, happiness, kinship, profession, vocation, colour and some other notions. Generally, the study of semantic groups of anthroponyms provides the opportunity to explore and identify the ethnic origins of the Azerbaijani people, their relationships and contacts with other nations, their historical and cultural links and ethnogenetic problems. This classification is an indicator of the close relationships between the anthroponymic system and onomastic categories and their consistent development.

It is known that surnames (or last names) as principal names in the system of anthroponymic units are social and historical phenomena. Some nations have different formations of surnames in their history. Officially, the traditional use of surnames in Azerbaijan is not very old. These units entered the system of anthroponyms of the Azerbaijani language chiefly through the Persian and Russian cultures, but historical sources testify that the Turks had a deep-rooted tradition of family-name usage. Until the 19th century, the Turks attached their patronymics to personal names as last names. In order to express this notion, the terms *oğul* ('one's son'), *kök* ('root'), *arxa* ('support'), *toxum* ('sperm'), *ocaq* ('home, family'), *cins* ('sex'), *tayfa* ('a band'), *nəsil* ('a descendant, family'), *uşağı* ('one's child') and the like were used before the surname was officialised in Azerbaijan. In the Soviet period, only the lexeme *oğul* ('one's son') passed from the verbal unofficial level to the written official one, and it was not used as a surname, but as a patronymic derivative. Generally, the use of surnames in the official and scientific style in Azerbaijani dates from the 19th century and their officialisation started in the late 20s of the 20th century.

Ninety per cent of Azerbaijani surnames were derived from personal names. In the Soviet period, supposedly 92 per cent of the surnames were formed by compulsorily

adding to personal names the Russian suffix *-ov/-ova/-yev/-yeva*, denoting possession, ownership, which was in breach of agglutination and brutally violated the law of harmony. The same derivation was characteristic of other Turkic nations in the Soviet period. Thus, in this way natural and national traditions were broken and removed. At that time, surnames with endings borrowed from Russian (*-ski, -skaya*, not numerous) and Persian (*-i, -zadeh*) also existed alongside surnames with the native elements *oğlu* ('one's son'), *qızı* ('one's daughter') and *-lı* at the end. All this caused indefiniteness in the appropriate use of surnames.

After Azerbaijan obtained its independence, the processes that occurred in the field of onomastics exerted an influence on surnames as well. The artificial traditions of the Soviet period clashed with the contradictions of a new period and underestimated its importance. Nowadays, a great part of Azerbaijani citizens who wish to nationalise their surnames use the suffixes established in the official decision regarding the return to traditional surnames. The national surname formants *-li, -lı, -lu* and *-lü* are extensively used in this respect: e.g., *Mammadbayli, Talibli*, and so on.

One can also observe a preference for the use of surnames formed with *-zadeh*, a suffix borrowed from Persian, and the native elements *oğlu* and *qızı*. However, those who choose models based on the combination of a personal name and a patronymic (without a formant) are not few: e.g., *Rafiq Rashad, Asgar Rauf, Hassan Khalig*, and so on. Despite the authorities' decision regarding the return to traditional, national surnames, the endings *-ov / -ova* and *-yev / -yeva* still hold the dominant position in the system of Azerbaijani anthroponymy (60%) – the indefiniteness has not been completely eliminated yet. This is also a characteristic of other Turkic people from the former Soviet period. Moreover, one can widely notice the conservatism of older people who have been accustomed throughout their lives to use surnames with the endings *-ov/-ova* and *-yev/-yeva*.

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