



THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN ANTHROPONYMIC PROPERTIES AND THEIR REFERENTIAL MEANINGS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17759115>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 23rd November 2025

Accepted: 28th November 2025

Online: 29th November 2025

KEYWORDS

Anthroponym, referent, reference, connotation, cultural metaphor.

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the causes and mechanisms of the mismatch between anthroponyms and their real-life referents in English and Uzbek. Drawing on major theories of reference, it demonstrates how names undergo semantic broadening, loss of transparency, and cultural reinterpretation under the influence of historical, cultural, and intertextual factors. Examples show that English anthroponyms often develop metaphorical generalization ("Einstein," "Don Juan"), while Uzbek names reflect folkloric and mythopoetic layers ("Tohir," "Otabek," "Oybarchin"). The study argues that personal names function not only as identifiers but also as carriers of cultural memory and collective imagery.

In modern linguistics, the study of how reality is represented in various languages, the analysis of linguistic worldviews, and the investigation of national and cultural traits encoded in language are some of the most pressing research avenues. The national distinctiveness of a language is inextricably linked to the culture of its speakers and the distinctive characteristics of their social structure.

Reference denotes the relationship between a contextualized name (or name phrase) and the reality it signifies. The referential identity of the subject in a phrase unequivocally dictates the logical content and truth value of the assertion. Consequently, it is unsurprising that reference-related phenomena have historically captivated logicians.

Certain vocabulary units across all languages may correspond to specific aspects of the physical environment [Lyons 1978: 449]. Lyons elaborates: "The relationship of reference (often referred to as denotation) is an essential element of any adequate semantic theory..." Specific lexical elements in every language may be associated with distinct 'properties' of the physical world" [Lyons 1978: 449].

Linguist A. D. Shmelev distinguishes between the terms denotatum and referent, rather than considering them synonymous. An extra-linguistic entity that can function as the referent of a specific verbal statement is termed its denotatum. [Shmelev 2002a: 28].



The referent is defined as the object or group of objects linked with a linguistic term in a particular speech context [Shmelev 2002: 28].

Reference serves as the focal point of a thought or statement; it functions to identify an individual or object and aids the listener in comprehending the speaker's intended meaning [Maslianikienė 2006: 11]. G. Yule defines reference as "the act by which a speaker or writer employs linguistic forms to facilitate a listener or reader's identification of something." The term "table" denotes the object referred to as a table. The term refers to a piece of furniture featuring a flat surface supported by legs. Reference is thus linked to the speaker's aim to identify an individual or object [Yule 1996: 24].

Reference is a procedure that involves two participants: the speaker identifies an object and subsequently employs a suitable referring term to assist the addressee in interpreting the intended referent as the speaker intends [Yule 1996: 17]. If the recipient recognizes the intended object, the reference is successful; otherwise, the interpretation of the referring expression advances through processes of meaning negotiation.

Reference denotes the symbolic relationship between a language statement and a particular object, or the connection between two linguistic expressions, wherein the former supplies the requisite information for interpreting the latter. The prevailing consensus identifies three categories of reference: coreference, endophoric reference, and exophoric reference [Heim 2011: 49]. Reference is commonly understood as the identification of individuals or organizations within a certain context [Maslianikienė 2006: 29].

METHODS

This study investigates the linguistic, semantic, and linguocultural aspects of the disparity between anthroponyms and their referents through several integrative techniques. The descriptive linguistic method was employed to examine the structural-semantic characteristics of English and Uzbek anthroponyms, emphasizing their denotative and connotative dimensions. Denotative meaning represents objective fact, while connotative meaning includes emotive, evaluative, and stylistic elements, as observed by Arnold [1981: 105–106].

The approach of referential analysis was employed to assess the correlation between an anthroponym and its real-world referent in context, as well as to investigate the "rigidity" of this association. Kripke's (1980) idea of "rigid designators" established the basis for examining referential stability across contexts. Shmelev's (2002) differentiation between denotatum and referent offered a supplementary theoretical framework.

Third, a linguocultural study was utilized to ascertain how names serve as vessels of cultural memory, ethnic values, archetypal imagery, and historical connotations, frequently resulting in a dissonance between the name and its referent. Theoretical insights from Teliya (1996), Maslova (2001), and Wierzbicka (2001) were employed to elucidate the cultural semantics of anthroponyms.

Furthermore, English and Uzbek corpora, literary works, folklore, and historical documents were employed for comparison research. This research is grounded in foundational works on English anthroponymy, including Withycombe (1995), Hanks



(2003), Coates (2000), Reaney (1991), and Leonovich (2018), alongside studies on Turkic and Uzbek anthroponymy by Radlov, Baskakov, Sattorov, and Jonuzoqov.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

The disparity between an anthroponym and its referent is a difficult semantic phenomena prevalent in numerous languages. While anthroponyms primarily serve as identifiers for individuals, their referential behavior in conversation is frequently shaped by cultural, historical, semantic, and environmental influences.

1. Disparity resulting from cultural implications. Numerous anthroponyms possess profoundly ingrained cultural significances, causing the name to elicit a culturally established image rather than the real referent. For instance: in English, "Layla" conjures the notion of sensual beauty (as seen in Byron's *Don Juan*), yet in Arabic culture, it represents sad love. In Uzbek culture, "Tohir" denotes both a historical figure and the mythical hero of *Tohir va Zuhra*. This validates Searle's [1969: 47] assertion that the referential impact of names is contingent upon the listener's prior knowledge. Consequently, cultural memory frequently supersedes referential accuracy.

2. Diminution of semantic transparency. Numerous names derive from old linguistic strata, the original meanings of which are now obscured. Consequently, their denotative meaning no longer aligns with the actual referent:

"Cecilia," signifying blind, bears no meaningful connection to contemporary holders of the name.

In Uzbek, "Oybarchin" initially represented the imagery of lunar purity; however, this connotation is no longer prevalent in contemporary usage. This discrepancy illustrates the diachronic divergence between denotative and connotative levels as articulated by Arnold (1981).

3. Discrepancy between actual referents and intertextual connections. A name closely linked to a literary or cinematic persona may eclipse its possessor: "Sherlock" now symbolizes intellect and investigative prowess, irrespective of the individual in question. In Uzbek tradition, "Otabek" symbolizes the national awakening hero from *O'tkan kunlar*.

This phenomena exemplifies Yule's [1996: 24] assertion that reference constitutes a context-dependent interpretive operation.

4. Disparity resulting from factual inaccuracies

Occasionally, the referent of a name is misinterpreted due to historical oversimplifications or prevalent cultural notions. For instance, "Shakespeare" is generally regarded as the exclusive creator of all works attributed to him. Contemporary textual studies (Wells 2013) reveal a more intricate authorship scenario. The simplification engenders a referential discord between the nomenclature and historical veracity.

5. Generalization of nomenclature via metonymy. In certain instances, a personal name transitions from identifying a particular individual to symbolizing a generalized concept:

"Einstein" refers to an exceptionally intelligent individual, not exclusively the physicist. "Don Juan" → a philanderer, detached from the original figure. Teliya [1996: 87]



characterizes this as a comprehensive process of cultural metaphorization, resulting in referential expansion and semantic incongruity.

The analysis of the semantic and linguocultural disproportion between anthroponyms and their referents reveals that personal names, despite functioning as fundamental identifiers, often extend far beyond their primary denotative role. As shown through the works of Kripke (1980), Lyons (1978), and Searle (1969), the referential behavior of names is not limited to direct designation but is shaped by historical evolution, cultural associations, intertextual layers, and the cognitive background of language users.

CONCLUSION

The results reveal that anthroponyms frequently experience semantic extension, generalization, and metaphorization, resulting in referential shifts where the name no longer properly aligns with its real-life counterpart. Teliya [1996: 34] characterizes this phenomena as cultural metaphorization, demonstrating that personal names can signify concepts, social positions, or collective memories rather than specific referents. The investigated examples—such as Don Juan, Sherlock, Otabek, and others—demonstrate that the referential identity of names is significantly shaped by cultural precedents and communication environment.

Furthermore, a comparative research of English and Uzbek anthroponyms reveals that the mechanisms of referential mismatch are ubiquitous, however they manifest differently within various linguocultural contexts. English names often exhibit metaphorical generalization (e.g., Einstein, Judas), while Uzbek names typically reflect mythopoetic or folklore reinterpretation (e.g., Oybika, Tohir). This underscores the significance of cultural context in ascertaining the referential capacity of names.

The disparity between an anthroponym and its referent is not an anomaly but a natural result of the interplay of language, culture, cognition, and historical memory. Anthroponyms function as identifiers and as culturally significant symbols, encapsulating collective experiences and meanings. This renders them essential subjects of examination in both referential semantics and linguocultural studies.

The study's results may enhance theoretical investigations in semantic theory, onomastics, and cultural linguistics, while also offering a methodological framework for more comprehensive assessments of anthroponymic systems in additional languages.

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