

FaR 2021

International Forum “Freedom and responsibility in pivotal times”

**ANTHROPONYMS AS A SUBCLASS OF THE LEXICAL-
GRAMMATICAL CLASS OF NOUNS**Sergey I. Garagulya (a)*, Margarita Yu. Nikitina (b), Ekaterina I. Kugan (c),
Irina B. Svezhentseva (d), Olga O. Chernova (e)

*Corresponding author

(a) Shukhov Belgorod State Technological University, 46, Kostyukova Str., Belgorod, 308024, Russia,
garagulya@mail.ru(b) Shukhov Belgorod State Technological University, 46, Kostyukova Str., Belgorod, 308024, Russia,
ritanikitina@mail.ru(c) Shukhov Belgorod State Technological University, 46, Kostyukova Str., Belgorod, 308024, Russia,
kugan@intel.ru(d) Shukhov Belgorod State Technological University, 46, Kostyukova Str., Belgorod, 308024, Russia,
svezhentseva@yandex.ru(e) Shukhov Belgorod State Technological University, 46, Kostyukova Str., Belgorod, 308024, Russia, gooll-
gooll@yandex.ru**Abstract**

The present article reports on the study of English forenames. It focuses on the comparison between a noun and a forename, which is a type of an anthroponym, in accordance with the principles of categorization, and the determination of some specific features of the latter. The material studied shows that anthroponyms (forenames) do not exist in isolation. They are a subclass of nouns as they have the main lexical-grammatical and morphological features being typical of the latter: to a certain extent, anthroponyms (forenames) are characteristic of the processes applying to the rest of the representatives of the given class, and forenames are involved in all these processes as other types of nouns. They perform the same syntactic functions, have their derivational patterns, and reference to gender. If required, they can be additionally determined by an article, an adjective, etc. However, there are a lot of discrepancies in understanding a proper name and a forename in particular, as demonstrated by a lack of unanimity of views on these linguistic categories.

2357-1330 2022 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Anthroponym, anthroponymic derivation, categorization, forename, grammatical-morphological features, meaning



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1. Introduction

All words of any language can be systematized according to certain principles of categorization which “refers to the process by which people, in using language, necessarily categorize the world around them” (Taylor, 1995, p. 56). These principles are as follows: the determination of the general meaning of a word as representative of a certain lexical-grammatical class, its individual meaning, grammatical-morphological categories, and derivational-lexical-morphological patterns. According to the above principles, the parts of speech as lexical-grammatical classes of words have been established (Alexandrova & Komova, 1998, p. 28). A noun has correspondingly the general class meaning of a word denoting an object, a substance, etc., the grammatical-morphological categories of number and case (the category of gender is regarded as a lexical-grammatical one), and its derivational patterns. In traditional grammars, anthroponyms are recognized as a noun subclass related to proper nouns.

2. Problem Statement

A forename is a type of anthroponym, “as a person’s individual name, distinct from the surname, and usually given him or her at birth” (Room, 1996, p. 77). As all the types of nouns, forenames perform the same syntactic functions, have their derivational patterns, and reference to gender. If required, they can be additionally determined by an article, an adjective, etc. However, there are a lot of discrepancies in understanding a proper name and a forename in particular, as demonstrated by a lack of unanimity of views on these linguistic categories.

3. Research Questions

The problem to be studied brings up the research questions concerning the meaning of forenames, their grammatical-morphological features and anthroponymic derivation.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present article is to draw a comparison between a noun and an anthroponym (forename) in accordance with the principles mentioned above, and single out some specific features of the latter. The article focuses on the study of English forenames. The forename data come from British and American works of fiction, anthroponymic and encyclopedic dictionaries, and reference books.

5. Research Methods

In this study, the structural, functional-semantic, descriptive, comparative, semiotic and stylistic methods of research have been applied.

6. Findings

One of the disputable issues regarding forenames is the presence or absence of lexical meaning for them. According to O.S. Akhmanova, lexical meaning is the specific kind of content produced (or

engendered) by the reverberation of objective reality in the human consciousness which constitutes the inner (semantic) structure of linguistic units with respect to which their material form is the outer (or phonetic) structure (Akhmanova, 2004; Gvishiani, 2000).

We hold the viewpoints of those linguists who think that in a language system a forename has no lexical meaning in its traditional understanding and the main function of a forename is naming, i.e. nomination (J.S. Mill, A. Gardiner, E. Pulgram, D.K. Reformatsky, F.F. Fortunatov, etc.); a forename does not express any concept as it does not contain any features of an object and it is not characterized by the property of generalization. The most general meaning of this subclass of the given part of speech is that it is a proper noun, as distinct from a common noun. Being a representative of the noun class, a proper noun has the most general meaning of this lexical-grammatical class. One can say that forenames have no connection with significant, they only have their referents.

Nevertheless, there are some forenames having a transparent structure, e.g. some Puritan names – Donatus (< Latin given), Desideratus (< Latin desired), Renatus (< Latin reborn), Beata (< Latin beatus happy), etc., or some forenames deriving from appellatives (common nouns) which have an abstract meaning, e.g. Faith, Prudence, Hope, etc. All biblical names are motivated, such as Samuel (name of God), Benjamin (son of the right hand, implying a favourite), Rebecca (binding, knotted cord, or noose, it may refer to the marriage bond), etc (Dunkling, 1977). As a matter of fact, all forenames are motivated. What is at issue is whether we perceive them motivated or not. Therefore, they have their meaning if it is correlated with appellatives. For example, the structure of the Welsh and English female name Gwendolen can be decomposed and each element can be studied: gwen white, fair, or blessed + dolen ring, or bow (Hanks & Hodges, 1996).

The above study of a forename enables one to understand the motivation of its structure and accordingly the motivation of its meaning. However, this meaning (the meaning of the original common noun a name derives from) estranges from a sound complex of a forename and is lost with the passing of the years. We no longer think about a bearer of the name Charity that she must show kindness and understanding towards other people only because her name derives from the appellative charity. If a person is called David, we do not think about the meaning of the name David beloved, and, clearly, a bearer of this name should not necessarily be loved by all people. It will be incorrect and unnatural to perceive or regard every person called Clement as merciful (Clement < Latin Clemens merciful) or every Agnes as chaste or holy (Agnes < Greek Hagne < hagnos chaste, holy, pure) (Rybakin, 2000). For example, some forenames come into fashion irrespective of their original meaning.

So, a forename has no lexical meaning: it is not directly related to the appellative from which it derived. On the one hand, a forename is not actually related to it, but, on the other hand, it is no coincidence that people bestow names based on a list of saints, angels or in honour of somebody, etc. Choosing such a name, they put a certain psychological content and their knowledge of its meaning and associations into it.

Thus, a forename contains a lot of components, such as linguocultural, historical, pragmatic, linguopsychological and others, and one of them can be inherited, repeated and reproduced. For example, in the history of England there were eight kings called Henry. Therefore, it was necessary to continue that family tradition and it really did. A very important content was put into this name used in subsequent generations. Later, that idea of name inheritance was changed for another one: the kings called George,

Edward, etc are well known. Similar naming practice was followed in many countries, not only in England. It can also be observed within a family. For example, a name is passed on from parents, and then if anything bad happens to the bearer of this name, it is not used for some time until the negative associations related to its bearer are forgotten; children will be given other names to bring positive associations. It turns out that a name has no lexical meaning, but it has a particular content.

The question of what constitutes the content of a name is not a simple one to answer. On the one hand, it is certain etymology expressed by the appellative from which a name derived and which gives it its content, but, on the other hand, this content is lost, reinterpreted, changed phonetically and structurally and filled associatively with a new content in the course of time. Like common nouns, forenames have the information attached to them. In terms of the content of forenames a form is closely connected with this content. For example, the phrases Jack Frost (a personification of frost or very cold weather), Jack the Lad (a self-assured young man), Jack Tar (a sailor), Jack Ketch (a hangman), Jack the Ripper (a brutal murderer of women), Union Jack (the national flag of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) have a different content, although the same name Jack, one of the most popular names in English-speaking cultures, is used. Such names are enriched with the content which brings them to the level of nationally recognized and nationally perceived names, i.e. they draw a national response. This occurs due to the broadening of the name content. One can say that a forename has historical semantics; its historicity is that nobody thinks about the lexical meaning of the name, the meaning is lost and is no longer perceived.

Forenames are characterized by the following grammatical-morphological features: they are used in the singular form, they do not have determiners like this, a, the, some, each, and they are of specific character. As soon as a forename ceases to denote one referent, a movement from a singulative name toward a bearer of general character takes place. In this case, forenames acquire some new grammatical features: the use in the plural form and with the article.

The following examples taken from some dictionaries illustrate the uses of a name with the article:

- 1) "This painting is a Rembrandt" (a piece of art or literary works with reference to its author/creator);
- 2) "They say the young actress is a (new) Marilyn Monroe!" (a person similar to someone famous);
- 3) "There is a Mr. Tom Wilkins on the phone for you" (a stranger to the speaker);
- 4) "You can't be the Paul McCartney!" (a person who is famous, well-known, important, the best, etc.);
- 5) "the Honourable Edward Brown" (a person having a title);
- 6) "written by the young Hardy" (a name having a limiting adjective) (Collins Dictionary of the English Language, 1986, p. 937; Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1987, p. 456).

In its deictic function, the article determines a forename in a different way. But in this case, the common fact is that a name used with the article acquires a new property. Its use without the article means that it is particularized and has no markedness. Performing the function of representation, a forename acquires various markings and accordingly, it receives some additional features determining the level of the depth of its psychological perception. So, the perception of a forename in the people's community becomes important, as in the following context:

A new Theresa will hardly have the opportunity of reforming a conventional life, any more than *a new Antigone* will spend her heroic piety in daring all for the sake of a brother's burial: the medium in which their ardent deeds took shape is for ever gone. But we insignificant people with our daily words and acts are preparing the lives of many *Dorotheas*, some of which may present a far sadder sacrifice than that of *the Dorothea* whose story we know. (Eliot, 1994, p. 180)

Initially, Old English names as the nouns of that time were marked in reference to gender; the gender marker was their second element. Later, as the English anthroponymicon had developed, that marker disappeared. In the modern anthroponymic usage the gender of a forename is mainly determined by referring it to the sex of the bearer. However, gender-distinctive formants became widely used. They were drawn from the Latin, Spanish, French and Italian languages and used for creating full female names from both male and female names: *Augusta* (< m. Augustus); *Antonia* (< m. Anthony); *Louse* (< m. Louis); *Paulette* (< m. Paul); *Danielle* (< m. Daniel); *Andrewina* (< m. Andrew); *Charleen* (< m. Charles); *Jacklyn* (< m. Jack); *Lucilla* (< f. Licia); *Anita* (< f. Anne); *Clarice* (< f. Clara), etc (Withycombe, 1963).

Let us consider some derivational processes applied to forenames. Various derivatives based on forenames are a specific group of new lexical units; they demonstrate an example of the broadening of the name content, its narrowing or other changes of the name form.

Anthroponymic derivation conditioned pragmatically shows how a forename is perceived in a community or in the context of the whole nation. It is a possible source of augmenting the English language lexicon. Not all forenames can equally serve as a derivational stem; only the names of famous people and characters, socially significant and nationally recognized names can do. Here are the examples of some groups of eponyms:

- 1) biblical characters: Adam > Adamitism, pre-Adamites; Benjamin > Benjaminites; Thomas > neo-Thomism, Thomist; Judah > Judahite;
- 2) religious figures: Augustine > Augustinian, Augustinism; Jerome > Jeromian; Paul > Pauline, Paulism; Basil > Basilian; Vincent > Vincentian;
- 3) mythological characters: Apollo > Apollonian, Apolline; Achilles > Achillean; Narcissus > Narcissistic, Narcissist; Cassandra > Cassandrian;
- 4) monarchs: George > Georgian, neo-Georgian; Edward > Edwardian, Edwardine; Arthur > Arthurian, Arthuriana; Henry > Henrician;
- 5) statesmen: Oliver > Oliverian; Julius > Julian;
- 6) artists: Leonardo > Leonardesque; Raphael/Raffaello > Raphaelism, pre-Raphaelite; Michelangelo (Buonarroti) > Michelangesque;
- 7) writers: Jane (Austen) > Janeite/Janite; Lucian > Lucianic; Terence (Publius Terentius Afer) > Terentian (Garagulya, 2018).

Derivational patterns singled out for these forenames can also be used for the others. Potential derivation is possible for the majority of forenames, although, as a rule, it is restricted by their real functioning in speech.

The components of the content of a forename reflect the main physical and moral qualities of the bearer of this name. They are created following the generalization in terms of specific impressions of the

person, overshadowing his/her inessential traits. In each particular case, the correlation of these components depends on the special features of the communicative loading and “social life” of the forename. It is the subjective-private component that creates certain types of appropriate associations with a person and his/her socially significant life. In view of the above, the forenames of more or less famous people, as well as the initial specific historical contexts in which they were used are of special interest. It is obvious that a forename of a well-known statesman, politician, writer, mythological or biblical character, etc. always brings up certain associations related to its bearer: his/her moral qualities, private life, social activities, beliefs, success, etc. Here are some examples illustrating the above:

“There was something preternaturally grave about her, almost *Victorian*...” (Fowles, 1980, p. 9). The association with the historical epoch is introduced by the phrase “preternaturally grave”. *Victorian* means “from or connected with the time when Queen Victoria ruled in the UK, from 1837 to 1901; used to describe the style of building and furniture during the Victorian period; having the strict moral attitudes that are believed to be typical of the Victorian period” (Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture, 1998, p. 528); here *Victorian* means *reserved, prim*.

“Henry’s chauffeur dropped him in front of a *Georgian* house in a new suburban section” (Fitzgerald, 1979). In this context, there is no inner additive sense, there is only some objective information packed in the name. *Georgian* means “of the period of the four British kings called George, from 1714 to 1830. Georgian buildings are considered to be very attractive, and are often built in a Neoclassical style (Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture, 1998, p. 310); here a *Georgian* house means *a house built from red brick with white stone decoration*.

Anthroponymic affixal derivational patterns can be adjective, substantive, adverbial and verbal ones, as well as the elements of compound words in preposition and postposition. They are similar to the patterns of the derivation of nouns, but they are not as productive as the latter, and they are fewer: *-an, -ist, -ize, -ation, -dom*, etc. For example: *Victoria* > *anti-Victorian, pre-Victorian, post-Victorian, sub-Victorian, un-Victorian, mid-Victorian, neo-Victorian, pseudo-Victorian, quasi-Victorian, Victoria-like, Victorian, a Victorian, Victorianism, Victoriana, Victorianize*.

Such patterns demonstrate the degree of the spread and openness of the class of nouns. In terms of categorization, it is an open class of categorizing names. *A categorizing name* is a socially significant and symbolic name, i.e. a name of the epoch, style, fashion and its social perception of both the positive and the negative (*Benjamin* > *Benjaminite, Julius* > *Julian, Oliver* > *Oliverian*, etc.). The derivation resulting in the transition from the domain of a forename having a certain volume of content to the domain of a categorizing name indicates a high degree of social and cultural significance of this name and accordingly it is related to its “social life”. For example, using the derivative *Edwardian*, we do not speak about *Edward* as such, we mean a certain historical epoch, trends in literature, music, arts, architecture and fashion; in many spheres of life we can find the use of the given feature. The forenames being the basis for derivation create such derivatives which bring out individual features as categorizing ones.

In addition to the categorizing type of anthroponymic derivation, one can single out a morphological type (the formation of names by affixation in correspondence with certain derivational patterns: *Jacob* > *Jacobean, Jacobite, Jacobitical, Jacobitish, Jacobitism*) and an expressive type (the formation of shortened

and hypocoristic forenames as a sign of affection or familiarity: David > Dave, Davie, Davy, Davey; Alexander > Alex, Alec, Alick).

7. Conclusion

In closing, it should be pointed out that anthroponyms (forenames) do not exist in isolation. They are a subclass of nouns as they have the main lexical-grammatical and morphological features being typical of the latter: to a certain extent, anthroponyms (forenames) are characteristic of the processes applying to the rest of the representatives of the given class, and names are involved in all these processes as other types of nouns.

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