

THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF ANTHROPONYMS IN “BEOWULF” AND “ALPOMISH”

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Abstract

This thesis examines the structural features of anthroponyms in the Old English epic Beowulf and the Uzbek heroic epic Alpomish. Anthroponyms, as linguocultural units, reflect historical memory, social hierarchy, mythological worldview, and ethnic identity. Through a comparative structural analysis, the study explores morphological composition, word-formation models, semantic motivation, patronymic constructions, and gender markers in both epics. The findings demonstrate that while Beowulf anthroponyms predominantly reflect Germanic compound name structures with heroic and martial semantics, Alpomish anthroponyms reveal Turkic naming traditions based on lexical symbolism, tribal identity, kinship relations, and cultural values. The structural similarities and differences highlight the typological features of Indo-European and Turkic anthroponymic systems and confirm the importance of epic discourse in preserving national onomastic heritage.

Keywords

anthroponym, structural analysis, epic discourse, Beowulf, Alpomish, comparative linguistics.

Annotatsiya

Ushbu tezisdagi qadimgi ingliz epik dostoni “Beowulf” hamda o‘zbek qahramonlik dostoni “Alpomish” dagi antroponimlarning struktur xususiyatlari tahlil qilinadi. Antroponimlar lingvomadaniy birliklar sifatida tarixiy xotira, ijtimoiy ierarxiya, mifologik dunyoqarash va etnik o‘zlikni aks ettiradi. Qiyosiy struktur tahlil orqali tadqiqotda har ikki dostonidagi morfologik tarkib, so‘z yasash modellarini, semantik motivatsiya, otaning ismi asosida yasalgan konstruktsiyalar (patronimik shakllar) hamda gender ko‘rsatkichlari o‘rganiladi. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, “Beowulf” dagi antroponimlar asosan german tillariga xos qo‘shma murakkab ism tuzilmalari hamda qahramonlik va harbiy ma’nolarni aks ettiradi. “Alpomish” dagi antroponimlar esa turkiy nomlash an’analari asosida shakllanib, leksik ramziylik, qabila mansubligi, qarindoshlik munosabatlari va milliy-madaniy qadriyatlarini ifodalaydi. Struktur o‘xshashlik va farqlar hind-yevropa hamda turkiy antroponimik tizimlarning tipologik xususiyatlarini yoritib beradi hamda epik diskurs milliy onomastik merosni saqlashda muhim ahamiyatga ega ekanini tasdiqlaydi.

Kalit so‘zlar

antroponim, struktur tahlil, epik diskurs, Beowulf, Alpomish, qiyosiy tilshunoslik.

Introduction. Anthroponyms constitute one of the most stable and culturally significant layers of the lexical system, serving not only as nominative units but also as repositories of collective memory, ethnic identity, and historical consciousness. Within the framework of literary onomastics, personal names in epic discourse perform complex structural and semiotic functions: they identify, characterize, symbolize, and encode sociocultural values. Unlike everyday naming practices, epic anthroponyms are rarely arbitrary; rather, they are structurally motivated and semantically charged, reflecting archaic worldviews and early stages of linguistic development. Epic literature, as a product of oral tradition, preserves archaic anthroponymic



models that often predate later linguistic transformations. In this regard, the Old English epic *Beowulf* and the Uzbek heroic epic *Alpomish* represent two monumental sources for comparative anthroponymic research. Although these works belong to different linguistic families—Indo-European (Germanic branch) and Turkic—they share structural similarities characteristic of heroic narrative traditions: emphasis on lineage, glorification of martial virtues, and symbolic representation of personal identity.

From a structural-linguistic perspective, anthroponyms may be analyzed in terms of morphological composition, word-formation patterns, derivational models, semantic transparency, phonological structure, and syntactic behavior within the text. Such an approach enables the identification of typological parallels and divergences between naming systems shaped by distinct historical and cultural environments. In *Beowulf*, personal names frequently follow the traditional Germanic dithematic compound model, combining two lexical stems that express heroic attributes, battle symbolism, or social prestige. In contrast, *Alpomish* demonstrates Turkic derivational productivity, lexical transparency, and the presence of culturally marked affixes reflecting gender, kinship, and social evaluation.

The relevance of this study is determined by several factors. First, comparative research on anthroponyms contributes to broader discussions in linguoculturology and historical linguistics concerning the interaction between language structure and cultural identity. Second, epic anthroponyms represent fossilized linguistic forms that preserve archaic morphological patterns no longer productive in modern usage. Third, the structural analysis of names enhances our understanding of characterization techniques and narrative strategies in epic discourse.

Therefore, this article aims to conduct a detailed structural analysis of anthroponyms in *Beowulf* and *Alpomish*, focusing on morphological composition, derivational mechanisms, compound structures, patronymic constructions, and gender marking. By examining these elements comparatively, the study seeks to reveal how epic naming systems reflect broader linguistic typology and cultural worldview, thereby contributing to the development of comparative anthroponymy and literary onomastics.

The results of the structural analysis demonstrate that anthroponyms in *Beowulf* and *Alpomish* are not merely nominative elements but structurally organized linguistic units that reflect deep typological and cultural distinctions. The discussion of these findings highlights how language structure, social organization, and epic worldview interact within two different linguistic families.

First, the predominance of dithematic compounds in *Beowulf* confirms the stability of the early Germanic naming tradition. The combination of two lexical stems—often associated with battle, glory, protection, or animal symbolism—demonstrates that personal identity in Anglo-Saxon society was ideologically linked to martial valor and heroic reputation. The structural density of these compounds reflects an abstraction of heroic qualities: instead of directly descriptive names, we observe compressed semantic structures where meaning is embedded in archaic lexical elements. This partially opaque structure suggests historical depth and the preservation of inherited Indo-European naming models.

In contrast, the anthroponyms in *Alpomish* reveal a different structural logic rooted in Turkic agglutinative morphology. The transparency of lexical roots and productive affixation indicate a naming system in which meaning remains immediately accessible. Rather than abstract compounds, names frequently present clear semantic motivation—bravery, beauty, wealth, nobility—through derivational or descriptive structures. This transparency reflects a worldview in which the individual is directly associated with socially valued traits expressed explicitly in the name itself.



The comparative findings also shed light on the concept of identity construction. In *Beowulf*, the frequent patronymic formulas emphasize genealogical legitimacy and tribal continuity. Identity is reinforced through repeated reference to ancestry, suggesting that heroic authority derives from lineage as much as from individual achievement. The structural repetition of “son of” constructions strengthens this collective-historical dimension.

In *Alpomish*, while kinship and tribal belonging are equally important, identity appears less syntactically dependent on formulaic patronymics and more integrated into descriptive and symbolic naming practices. The structural use of affixes and lexical modifiers reflects a social model in which communal identity is embedded in semantic clarity rather than genealogical repetition.

Gender marking further illustrates typological divergence. The presence of explicit feminine suffixes in *Alpomish* demonstrates morphological sensitivity to gender distinction within the anthroponymic system. In *Beowulf*, however, gender is not morphologically encoded within names, which suggests that the Germanic system relied more heavily on contextual and syntactic markers. This difference reflects broader typological contrasts between agglutinative and fusional language systems. Another important interpretative dimension concerns the relationship between poetic form and name structure. In *Beowulf*, anthroponyms function within an alliterative metrical system, influencing their phonological shape and narrative placement. Structural compounding aligns with poetic economy and formulaic expression. In *Alpomish*, the oral-performative tradition supports rhythm and repetition but allows greater lexical expansion and descriptive clarity within names.

Overall, the discussion confirms that while both epics share universal epic principles—heroic glorification, lineage preservation, and symbolic naming—the structural mechanisms differ significantly due to linguistic typology and cultural ideology. Germanic anthroponyms tend toward semantic compression and inherited compound models, whereas Turkic anthroponyms favor derivational transparency and explicit semantic motivation.

The structural analysis of anthroponyms in *Beowulf* and *Alpomish* revealed both typological similarities and significant morphological differences reflecting their respective linguistic systems.

1. Structural Types and Distribution

The findings show that anthroponyms in *Beowulf* are predominantly dithematic compounds, consisting of two lexical stems. These compounds frequently encode martial and heroic semantics (e.g., glory, battle, strength, protection). The dominant structural model is:

$$N_1 + N_2 \rightarrow \text{Compound Heroic Name}$$

In contrast, anthroponyms in *Alpomish* primarily follow an agglutinative derivational model, where a lexical root is combined with affixes or descriptive elements. The most productive patterns include:

Root + Suffix

Adjective + Noun

Symbolic Lexeme + Qualifier

Thus, compounding dominates in the Germanic system, while affixation and lexical transparency dominate in the Turkic system.

2. Patronymic Constructions

The analysis indicates a high frequency of patronymic identification in *Beowulf*. Heroes



are regularly introduced through lineage formulas (“son of...” constructions), emphasizing genealogical legitimacy and tribal hierarchy. Patronymics function as structural extensions of identity.

In Alpomish, kinship and tribal references are present but less formulaic. Identity is connected more broadly to clan affiliation and social group rather than strictly syntactic patronymic repetition.

3. Semantic Transparency

Another significant result concerns semantic opacity versus transparency.

In Beowulf, many compounds preserve archaic Germanic elements whose meanings are partially opaque to the modern reader, although structurally analyzable. In Alpomish, most anthroponyms remain semantically transparent, with lexical roots directly expressing bravery, wealth, beauty, or symbolic animal imagery. This demonstrates a higher degree of immediate lexical motivation in the Turkic epic tradition.

4. Gender Marking

Clear structural gender markers were identified in Alpomish, where feminine names frequently contain specific affixes indicating affection, beauty, or status.

In Beowulf, grammatical gender distinctions are not morphologically marked within anthroponyms themselves; gender identification relies on contextual reference rather than derivational morphology.

5. Symbolic Elements

Both epics demonstrate the use of animal symbolism (particularly the wolf) and heroic attributes embedded within name structure. However, the structural realization differs:

Germanic symbolism appears through compound stems.

Turkic symbolism appears through transparent lexical roots and descriptive combinations.

Thus, anthroponyms in both traditions function as intersections of language structure, poetic convention, and sociocultural identity. The comparative perspective not only reveals typological contrasts between Indo-European and Turkic systems but also demonstrates how epic discourse serves as a repository of archaic naming patterns that preserve national worldview and historical memory.

Conclusion. The structural analysis of anthroponyms in Beowulf and Alpomish demonstrates that personal names in epic discourse function as systematically organized linguistic units reflecting both typological features and cultural ideology. The comparative approach confirms that anthroponymic systems are deeply shaped by the morphological structure of the language and the sociocultural environment in which they developed. The findings reveal that Beowulf preserves the traditional Germanic dithematic compound model, characterized by semantic compression, martial abstraction, and strong genealogical emphasis. Personal identity is structurally reinforced through compound formations and frequent patronymic constructions, highlighting lineage continuity and heroic legitimacy. The anthroponymic system reflects an Indo-European naming tradition rooted in warrior aristocracy and collective memory.

In contrast, Alpomish demonstrates a Turkic agglutinative model distinguished by lexical transparency, derivational productivity, and explicit gender marking. Names are semantically



motivated and often directly express bravery, beauty, social status, or tribal affiliation. Identity construction in this epic is closely tied to descriptive clarity and communal values embedded in morphological structure. Therefore, the study confirms that anthroponyms in epic literature are not arbitrary labels but structured linguistic forms encoding historical worldview and national identity. Comparative structural analysis contributes to the development of literary onomastics and comparative linguistics by demonstrating how language structure and cultural consciousness intersect within epic naming traditions. Future research may expand this investigation through quantitative corpus analysis, diachronic etymological reconstruction, or broader cross-cultural comparison of epic anthroponymic systems.

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