

ANTHROPONYMS IN COMMUNICATIVE REGISTERS OF MODERN RUSSIAN

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after Gabdulla Tukay Department of General Linguistics and Turkology**ABSTRACT**

Russian anthroponyms operate as compact social signals that organise interaction, mark institutional distance, and stabilise identity across heterogeneous communicative environments. This article describes how the Russian anthroponymic system distributes forms of personal naming across registers, from bureaucratic documentation and academic discourse to everyday dialogue and digital platforms. Special attention is given to the interaction between structural components of the Russian naming formula first name patronymic surname and the pragmatic pressures of address, self presentation, and stance taking. The analysis integrates descriptive onomastics with corpus oriented observation and register based pragmatics, focusing on derivational mechanisms that generate hypocoristics, affectionate diminutives, evaluative nicknames, and Latin transliterated handles. Results demonstrate that the same referent may be represented by competing anthroponymic variants, each indexed to a specific social scene, participant roles, and expectations of politeness. The study also shows how contact settings in multilingual regions intensify hybrid naming practices, where Russian patronymics and surname morphology coexist with non Slavic given names.

Keywords: Anthroponymy, onomastics, patronymics, surnames, hypocoristics, pragmatics, identity, corpus.

INTRODUCTION

Across classrooms, clinics, courts, and family kitchens, a Russian personal name rarely remains a single form for long. One speaker selects the full formula Иван Сергеевич Петров to frame distance and procedural correctness, another chooses Иван Сергеевич to balance respect with interpersonal access, a third reduces the referent to Ваня or Ванька and thereby shifts the entire scene into intimacy or mild evaluation. The system is economical. It compresses biography, age assumptions, and role relations into a few syllables.

Digital communication complicates the picture without cancelling older norms. A person may write as maria smirnova in a formal email, appear as Masha Sm or mashenka 97 in a messenger, and still be addressed by colleagues as Мария Ивановна in an institutional

corridor. The coexistence of such variants raises a concrete research question: which structural choices in Russian anthroponyms reliably correlate with communicative register, and which choices merely reflect individual style. A second question follows immediately, future oriented and applied: how can these correlations be formalised for corpus annotation and for language technologies that must distinguish a name, an address form, and an evaluative nickname.

METHODS AND ANALYSIS OF SOURCES

This study operationalizes the Russian anthroponym as a context-bound naming expression whose form is selected under register pressure. For terminological grounding, I adopt a standard Russian onomastic definition: “An anthroponym is a single proper name or a set of proper names that identify a person” [4]. The analytical focus therefore remains on how one referent is mapped onto multiple legitimate surface variants, rather than on “names” as static dictionary units.

The material is arranged by communicative registers that differ in constraints on distance, accountability, and role symmetry. Institutional interaction is treated as a high-constraint zone where the full naming formula is reproducible and socially predictable; everyday dialogue is treated as a low-constraint zone that expands derivational inventories and increases evaluative loading. To keep the procedure replicable, each token is described through a compact parameter set: structural complexity of the naming formula, derivational mechanism, script choice, and pragmatic function in the local turn. A separate methodological layer addresses “identification” across variants, because register switching constantly produces near-equivalent forms that must be linked. Here I take the explicit onomastic definition used in documentary-name studies: “establishing correspondence between a base name and its derivative” [7]. This principle is treated as an annotation rule: diminutives, clipped forms, and orthographic variants are linked to the documentary form unless there is evidence of independent nomination (e.g., a stable nickname not derivable from the official name). Finally, patronymics are treated as an interactional operator rather than a purely genealogical marker, because their distribution is strongly shaped by politeness conventions. A normative formulation captures this directly: “in this case, the patronymic functions as an honorific, a grammatical category” [5]. In the analysis, patronymic presence is therefore coded as a register-sensitive device that can maintain distance while allowing interpersonal accessibility.

RESULTS

In institutional written and semi-written genres, the three-part formula behaves as a cohesive unit whose internal segmentation is pragmatically suppressed. This is not merely an intuition; a documentary-onomastics source states: “it has tight fusion of structural elements, impenetrability” [6]. That cohesion explains why forms such as Иван Сергеевич Петров, Мария Ивановна Смирнова, Алексей Николаевич Кузнецов, Елена Викторовна Орлова, Дмитрий Андреевич Соколов, Наталья Павловна Морозова are stable in orders, protocols, medical records, and official correspondence, where responsibility and traceability dominate. In workplace and educational interaction, a reduced but still respectful naming format is widely preferred, and it typically retains the patronymic. Speech routinely selects Александр Петрович, Ольга Сергеевна, Ирина Владимировна, Сергей Павлович, Анна Викторовна,

Борис Андреевич, leaving the surname implicit when the local group can identify the referent. Surname-only forms, by contrast, cluster in indexing environments such as lists and schedules: Петров, Смирнова, Кузнецов, Орлова, Соколов, Морозова. The pragmatic contrast is consistent: the list format privileges cataloguing, while face-to-face address privileges stance management.

In everyday dialogue, the derivational expansion of first names produces dense families of hypocoristics with fine-grained affective and evaluative potential. Александр yields Саша, Сашенька, Сашка, Санёк; Екатерина circulates as Катя, Катюша, Катенька, Катюнька; Михаил appears as Миша, Мишенька, Мишка; Дмитрий as Дима, Димка, Димон, Митя; Елена as Лена, Леночка, Ленка; Анна as Аня, Анечка, Анька. These alternations are structurally regular, yet their social meaning is interactionally calibrated, because the same suffix may index tenderness in supportive talk and irritation in conflict.

Surnames contribute a second, morphologically predictable layer that matters for both linguistic description and future corpus processing. Productive formants such as -ов/-ев (Иванов, Петров, Смирнов, Попов, Фёдоров), -ин (Пушкин, Ильин, Карамзин), and adjectival -ский/-цкий (Достоевский, Вяземский, Рождественский) guide inflectional behaviour in running text and influence the perceived stylistic “weight” of a nomination in some contexts. The practical implication is concrete: reliable lemmatization and named-entity normalization depend on formant-aware handling of Russian surname morphology, especially in oblique cases where endings are less transparent.

Digital self-naming adds an orthographic and platform-constrained axis that frequently leaks back into offline communication. A person may self-present as Ivan Petrov, ivan petrov 1992, IvanSergeevich, masha smirnova, smirnova mi, dmitrii sokolov, while colleagues continue to use Мария Ивановна or Дмитрий Андреевич in institutional space. Small groups further stabilize evaluative nominations that operate as compressed social narratives: Лена Рыжая, Саша Доктор, Миша Филолог, Катя Турбо, Дима Тихий, Аня Север. In contact settings, hybrid formulas combine non-Slavic first names with Russian patronymics for institutional compatibility, as in Дильноза Абдуллаевна Юлдашева, Шахзод Шавкатович Ниязов, Бахтиёр Рустамович Каримов, Саидахон Отабековна Рахимова, while transliteration variance creates additional normalization tasks for bilingual corpora.

Anthroponymic form type	Structural pattern	Typical register	Dominant function	Illustrative examples
Full official formula	first name + patronymic + surname	administration, academia, medicine, law	legitimacy, accountability, maximum distance	Иван Сергеевич Петров, Мария Ивановна Смирнова
Respectful address	first name + patronymic	education, workplace services	politeness with accessibility	Александр Петрович, Ольга Сергеевна
Indexing label	surname only	lists, schedules, reporting	cataloguing and role assignment	Петров; Смирнова, Кузнецов
Hypocoristics	truncation + suffixation	family, peers	intimacy and evaluation	Сашенька, Катюша, Митя, Ленка
Evaluative nickname	epithet + name / modified surname	small groups, online communities	stance and group memory	Дима Тихий, Лена Рыжая, Петровичик
Platform handle	transliteration, compression, digits	messengers, social media	searchability and branding	ivan petrov 1992, smirnova mi, IvanSergeevich
Contact hybrid	non-Slavic first name + Russian patronymic (+ surname)	multilingual institutions	institutional legibility	Дильноза Абдуллаевна Юлдашева, Шахзод Шавкатович Ниязов

DISCUSSION

The results support a register-sensitive model in which the “official” anthroponym behaves as a unit with reduced internal permeability, which directly predicts resistance to truncation in high-accountability genres. The cited characterization of tight structural fusion and “impenetrability” captures the linguistic reality that speakers treat the three-part formula as the default documentary representation of the person. For corpus work, this implies that the official formula should be stored as a privileged anchor form, with systematic links to variants rather than flat equality between all forms. Patronymics require dual treatment: they are identity components in full naming formulas and pragmatic operators in address. The explicit statement that the patronymic functions as an honorific category legitimizes coding patronymic presence as a politeness strategy, not merely as biographical content. From a forward-looking perspective, this distinction is crucial for educational and service corpora, where the same patronymic string can mark either respectful address or distancing control. The identification problem becomes central as soon as one moves across registers, scripts, and orthographic variants. The onomastic definition of identification as correspondence between a base name and a derivative provides a disciplined rule for linking hypocoristics and documentary forms. For Russian NLP, this translates into a practical requirement: normalization must be derivation-aware, patronymic-aware, and script-aware, otherwise the system will remain formally accurate while socially insensitive.

CONCLUSION

Russian anthroponyms form a structured repertoire whose variants are distributed by register and whose selection encodes distance, intimacy, evaluation, and institutional legitimacy. The official three-part formula is treated as a cohesive unit in high-accountability contexts; patronymics function as honorific operators in address; hypocoristics and nicknames provide fine-grained stance control; digital handles and contact hybrids expand variability while increasing normalization demands. The next step, methodologically, is a register-annotated corpus layer that links each anthroponymic token to its pragmatic function and to a stable anchor form, enabling both robust linguistic inference and reliable computational processing.

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