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Names as resources for gendering: Trends within the field

Emilia Aldrin

Abstract: This article discusses personal names as a crucial linguistic resource for the construction of gender-related identities. It identifies and discusses trends in research on naming and gender, aiming to highlight key publications, point out changes over time, and suggest fruitful areas for further research. Using a personal name constitutes a categorizing linguistic act that contributes to the construction of gender identities, as well as indexically linking assumptions about gender-related embodiments, roles, and identities to specific types of denominations. Moreover, name usage creates conditions for renegotiating or breaking existing gender-related norms. Research on naming and gender is a well-established international and interdisciplinary field of study. This article particularly emphasizes Nordic studies but does so based on references to a broad international research context.

Keywords: naming, gender, identity, norms, trends, personal names, socio-onomastics

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1. Introduction

The close relationship between names and identity is a well-established fact that many researchers have explored, especially during the 'identity paradigm' of recent decades (Edwards 2009; Aldrin 2016). But what role do names specifically play in the creation of gender-related identities? And how has the research field on names and gender developed over time? These questions will be discussed in this article, which gathers scientific studies on naming and gender. The Nordic countries are of particular interest in this article, although a wider international body of research is none the less included as comparative background. The article aims to provide an overview of the research field, to discuss the field's development over time, as well as to identify key publications and fruitful areas for further research. The article is not based on a systematic literature review, rather on qualitative observations from having followed the research in the field for a longer period of time and includes publications from the 1980s to 2024.[1]

The article is based on fundamental theories about names and identity as well as a social constructivist perspective on gender construction. These are initially presented to the reader. The following sections of the article describe the development of the research field over time, while identifying three overall trends. The article concludes with a summary of movements within the field and some thoughts about future development.

2. Naming and gender

Using a personal name constitutes a categorizing linguistic act (McConnell-Ginet 2003). The assignment of a given name often

[1] This article was developed from a keynote talk presented at the 11th Nordic Conference on Language, gender, and identity at Uppsala University, Sweden in October 2023. Another article version focusing on given names only and my own contributions to this field of research is included in the conference proceedings (see Aldrin, forthcoming).

implies consequently categorizing the name bearer by gender, linking particular types of denomination to assumptions about gender-related embodiments, roles, and identities. Many parents consciously seek a given name that fits into a particular social context, culture, nation – or gender role (Aldrin 2011). Since naming is also a highly performative act (Butler 1993), where the linguistic expression not only refers to, but constitutes, the individual, this means that the moment a given name is used, the individual 'becomes' both her name and an ascribed gender identity. Sociolinguists Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003:15–16) describe the naming of a child as being the starting point for a process in which the child learns to become a certain type of girl or boy: 'These early linguistic acts set up a baby for life, launching a gradual process of learning to be a boy or a girl, a man or a woman, and to see all others as boys or girls, men or women as well'. Naming a child thus entails the creation of an identity foundation for the individual – bringing both possibilities and limitations that all future work on 'doing gender' will need to relate to (cf. West and Zimmerman 1987, see also Aldrin 2011; 2015b).

Philosopher and gender researcher Judith Butler (1993) is one of the scholars to have first recognized the significance of naming for the creation and embodiment of gender – and also pointed to the aspect of power. Naming, Butler stated, is a form of power exertion where someone assumes the right to define someone else, and, to some extent, there is always a risk of being called by a new name and thereby having one's bodily identity redefined (Butler 1997:29–30). Empirical examples showing how this may take form are given in Gustafsson's (2016) study of modern everyday nicknames in Sweden. For example, a woman reports being called *Pelle* after cutting her hair in a style considered to 'resemble a boy' (p. 64), and another female informant reports being nicknamed *Kenneth* after a male film character (pp. 56–57).

Names are expressions of identity often attributed to us by others, but it is the name bearer who must live with the name, develop an attitude towards it, and bear the consequences of the expected identity others perceive on the basis of it. Names contribute to evoke expecta-

tions about gender-related identities, bodies, and behaviours (Pilcher 2017), and individuals – based on their names – can be held accountable for a perceived gender affiliation or deemed as being more or less authentic in their gender identity (Lind 2023). In recent years, studies in psychology have suggested that names may further influence how people develop a specific gender identity. In a large-scale quantitative survey, Alexander et al. (2021) asked individuals about personality traits and behaviours as well as perceptions of gender connotations to their names. The results showed that individuals who perceived their name as strongly gender-coded also preferred gender-stereotypical activities, while those who perceived the name as weakly gender-coded often preferred less gender-stereotypical activities. Although there are clear methodological limitations regarding the validity and generalizability of this kind of study, it does raise interesting questions about the significance that names may carry for personal identity development, which deserves further research.

Against this theoretical backdrop, I will now discuss how the research field on names and gender has evolved over time. I identify three trends that have emerged in recent decades and discuss them more thoroughly below:

1) From stable binary to flexible norm negotiation.
2) The significance of power perspectives on naming and gender.
3) Situated and intersectional perspectives on naming and gender.

3. From stable binary to flexible norm negotiation

The first trend I want to highlight concerns a gradual shift in theoretical focus among scholars, from an assumed stable gender binarity to rather flexible negotiations of gender norms. Early research on naming and gender, during the 1980s and 1990s, largely focused on how naming practices in different language cultures contributed to construct a binary gender perception, by which different given

names conventionally used for 'boys' and 'girls' served as a constant symbol for the binary norm and perceived differences between men and women. For example, Alford (1988) noted that the majority of the world's languages distinguish male from female names. Researchers were also interested in the types of names given to girls and boys, as well as the characteristics and expectations the linguistic form associated with gender roles. Studies from various linguistic areas showed that boys' and girls' names often bear distinct structural, phonetic, or semantic features. Early examples, primarily from the USA and Germany, found that given names used for women tended to be longer (Debus 1985; Barry & Harper 1995; Gerritzen 1999), contain a higher proportion of vowels to consonants (Barry & Harper 1995; Oelkers 2003), and more often end in a vowel than given names used for men (Barry and Harper 1995; Lieberson & Bell 1998). During the 2000s, these varying name structures also came to be linked to theories of sound symbolism. In a seminal study by Whissell (2001a), it was argued that phonological patterns in names can be linked to emotional symbols such as active–passive, pleasant–unpleasant, hard–soft, etc., implying that women's names, through their constituent sound structures, were often associated with pleasantness, softness, and some passivity, while men's names were instead associated with stronger activity, hardness, and to some extent unpleasantness. Oelkers (2003) presented a large quantitative study of German names and also argued that the observed phonological differences between men's and women's given names were related to gender stereotypes. She found that women's names symbolically conveyed a gender identity associated with softness, melodiousness, and vocalic diminutiveness. Nübling (2009) further developed this reasoning by proposing a 'scale of sonority' linked to given names and used this to show that German given names from the 1940s to the early 2000s seem to have undergone a process of degendering. Gustafsson (2017) has also illuminated the sound symbolism of given names in a Swedish study, based on given names in the Swedish nobility calendar 2015. Here it was found that both women's and men's names used by the Swedish

nobility were characterized by a more 'masculine' sound symbolism, separating them from the rest of the population.

The fact that given name phonology is actually perceived as key to information about gender has also been empirically confirmed, both by linguistic and psychologistic studies during the 2000s, with an increasing number of studies from the 2010s onwards. Researchers have conducted experimental studies where participants were asked to guess gender based on invented names (Whissell 2001b; Wright 2006) or attribute traits to names (Pitcher, Mesoudi & McElligott 2013; Sidhu & Pexman 2015), confirming that the phonological properties of given names are used as a basis for drawing various conclusions about gender. Similar results were obtained regarding brand names and their assumed connections to target groups (see, e.g. Klink 2009). A significant study by Cai and Zhao (2019) showed that not only do people use phonological cues to infer gender identities from given names in their own language, they also apply these experiences when encountering names from foreign language cultures that may actually have completely different gender norms. Furthermore, researchers have investigated parents' motivations for choosing names for girls versus boys, where in several cases differences in types of reasoning, values, and ideals related to gender have emerged (Gerritzen 1999; Bambek 2007; Aldrin 2011; Gao 2011; Bechsgaard 2015). Several studies indicate that girls names are more often motivated by fashion or originality while boys names are more often motivated by local tradition or family connections.

During the 2000s, studies from language areas other than the Germanic increased in prominence. With a wide multicultural perspective it becomes clear, as Alford previously articulated in an important theoretical contribution to the field in 1988 (pp. 66–68), that gender in given names can be marked in three different ways: a) structurally – through phonological and morphological structures, b) semantically – through the use of distinct semantic categories, or c) conventionally – through an arbitrarily based but traditionally established set of male and female names. For example, Kim and Obasi (2023) have compared the connection of phonological structures to gender in Korean

and American given names 1940–2020. They conclude that while names ending in *-a*, *-i* or *-e* were connected primarily with women in both countries during the 20th Century, Korean names showed a gradual decline of the connection between these phonetic traits and gender from the 1980s onwards and a rise of men changing to such names during the 21 st Century (which was not the case in America). Zuercher (2007) found that given names in Azerbaijan are characterized by specific semantic patterns: while male names often contain lexical meanings related to things like courage, justice, pride, religious faith, female names instead contain meanings related to nature, beauty, and attractiveness. Similarly, Gao (2011) found that attractive Chinese male names often contain semantic meanings related to strength, hardness, and combativeness, while attractive female names instead contain semantic meanings related to beauty, elegance, and flowers. Thus, it is evident from the existing body of research that the gender-marking structures that recur in several Germanic languages are far from universal. In Japan, for example, it is primarily men who receive long given names (Mutsukawa 2010), and in Korea, almost all names for both men and women are two-syllable (Kim & Obasi 2023), in contrast with the Germanic norm. In a large study covering eight Indo-European languages in Europe and Asia, Ackermann and Zimmer (2021) confirmed that most gender-marking phonological structures among given names differ between various language areas and language families. However, they also noted a recurring pattern of non-palatal vowels (such as [a], [o], [u], excluding the final sound) being linked to masculine names in all studied languages, suggesting a potential existence of certain universalities of sound symbolism. This is an important area for further research, not least including other than Indo-European languages.

Several recent studies have highlighted that the connection between name structures and gender changes over time. Hough (2000) has shown that today's gender-related name structures in many Germanic languages have their explanation in a historical pattern where female and male names have been borrowed from different languages at different times. While female names were often borrowed from Latin

or Romance languages (where the feminine is marked by the ending -a), Germanic names (where both female and male names can have a consonant ending) have mainly been preserved for men, which has led to a phonological discrepancy. Even in contemporary times, gendered patterns are changing. Nübling (2009) found that German boys' and girls' names have phonologically converged over time since the mid-20th century, with mainly by boys' names acquiring more feminine features (becoming longer and more sonorant). Kim and Obasi (2023) found that Korean informants in the early 2000s could not guess whether a name was carried by a boy or a girl in almost 50 per cent of cases, which was seen as linked to sociocultural changes and changing attitudes towards girls, boys, patriarchy, and gender roles. Gustafsson (2020) found that the structural differences between Swedish male and female names has also changed over time from the early 20th century to the early 21st century. However, Gustafsson does not see a clear process of degendering, but instead points to influence of various shifting name trends that fluctuate throughout the century (including shifting preferences for originality, number of syllables and various linguistic origins). Researchers' increased focus on the variability in structural gender patterns in the name inventory, has resulted in a shift in the theoretical approach and understanding of the gender-creating function of names: from seeing names as a stable marker for the reproduction of binary gender coding to perceiving names as a flexible resource for negotiating gender norms.

4. Names as resources for negotiation of gender norms

Both given names, surnames, and nicknames can be used as resources to renegotiate, surpass, or deliberately break existing gender norms, as well as to create new or expanded gender identities. This has been noted in a multitude of studies from the 2010s onwards. In some European countries, it is a legal requirement that a given name clearly signals one of two genders (e.g. Finland, Poland, Germany, see Leibring

2018). In countries where the gender coding of names is unregulated, such as in the United Kingdom and the USA, there is often a certain inventory of names that are used by both women and men. This also applies to most of the Scandinavian countries including Sweden (where *Kim* and *Robin* have been highlighted as two examples of this in the Name Law Inquiry 2013 ahead of the 2017 Swedish Personal Names Act). These 'gender-neutral names' or 'unisex names' have also been subject to inquiries (see Barry & Harper 2014; Leibring 2016; Leibring 2018; Schmuck 2018; Bechsgaard 2023). However, Swedish, American and German researchers have observed that it is often conventional boys' names that have started to be used for girls, rather than vice versa (some Swedish examples of this are *Alex* and *Sam*, see Leibring 2016), and that the names starting to be used in this way gradually become used less frequently in their original function as conventional boys' names (Lieberson, Dumais & Baumann 2000:1282; Barry & Harper 2014; Leibring 2016; Schmuck 2018). Thus, it appears that the starting point for transcending conventional gender boundaries in naming practices, at least within Germanic languages, is often a name lacking feminine marking (although occasional examples of the opposite also exist, see Bechsgaard 2023). In countries such as the USA where there is a relatively long tradition of unisex names, researchers have noted that the number of unisex names has not increased as expected based on the society's extensive changes in gender roles (see Lieberson, Dumais & Baumann 2000). A recent Swedish study of a selection of names that increased significantly in popularity during the years 2004–2018 in Sweden, showed that only one out of over 400 names was used by both men and women (namely *Tintin*, see Leibring 2023a). Whether the same unexpected relationship applies on a larger scale in more countries, and, if so, what this might depend on, remains for researchers to investigate. For example, it is possible that the gender-neutral names increase as a group without each individually ranking particularly high on the lists.

Some gender-neutral names are newly created innovations; those who choose to create a completely new name have a unique opportunity to also create new gender norms. Nevertheless, a Swedish study

(Aldrin 2015a) showed that the majority of new given names registered in Sweden were clearly gender-coded. This was partly due to use of gendered endings (particularly usage of vowel endings in girls' names i.e. often *-a*), partly due to similarity with existing gendered names (such as the new girls' name *Asiri* close to the established girls' name *Siri*). At the same time, there were also examples of clear renegotiation and norm-breakages in relation to conventional gendered naming patterns (such as new boys' names ending with *-a*), underlining that people do use given names as a resource to create gender in new ways. Another interesting question concerns the types of gender-neutral names used in different cultures and how these types relate to gender norms. Bechsgaard (2023), for example, has highlighted Danish gender-neutral names that are linked to weather phenomena and seasons, showing that both semantic meanings, phonology, and existing gender norms in naming practices seem to interact in these. Attitudes towards gender-neutral names are also a factor that is assumed to affect their prevalence and would be suitable for further investigations (cf. Mehrabian 2001).

A gender-neutral naming law has been in place Sweden since 2017, allowing everyone, regardless of legal gender, to bear every name, regardless of its' conventional gender connotations. Similar legislation has been in place in Iceland since 2019, which is particularly interesting considering that the Icelandic language has a case inflection system that traditionally assigns either a feminine or masculine ending to given names (neuter names are relatively uncommon, see Willson 2023). The Icelandic naming act further includes the neuter suffix *-bur* as an alternative for individuals who want to avoid the gendering suffixes *-son* and *-dóttir*. Gender-contrary naming (i.e. using a name that is conventionally associated with another gender) can be utilized as a resource to create gender in new ways (Leibring 2016; Hagren Idevall 2016). However, the extent to which this possibility is grasped is still unclear. Early attitude surveys among adults and youths in Sweden (see Leibring 2016) show that only half of those surveyed are positive about children being given gender-contrary names. So far, there are no signs of changed attitudes between generations, but this may

change over time. In other Nordic countries such as Denmark, Finland and Norway, gender-contrary names are not allowed (i.e. name laws prohibit a name conventionally associated with one gender to be given to a person of another legal gender). Instead, these countries have a separate set of unisex names allowed for everyone.

However, conventionally gender-coded names can also contribute to renegotiating gender norms, when consciously used. Aldrin (2015b) has highlighted that naming motivations among Swedish parents include examples of both maintenance and renegotiations of gender stereotypes. Approximately 5–10 per cent of the motivations could be seen as gender-expanding by linking 'new' or 'non-stereotypical' attributes to conventional girls' and boys' names. Similarly, Bechsgaard (2015; 2023) observed that parents in Denmark sometimes justify the choice of a name for their child in a way that breaks traditional gender norms, noting that both sons and daughters are associated with both 'feminine' and 'masculine' values. This everyday negotiation of what constitutes appropriate names for boys and girls forms an important contribution to (de)gendering and reduced structural differences in naming practices.

5. Names, gender and power

Choice of surname in connection with partnership or marriage is a further area that entails complex gender negotiations – as well as clear power perspectives. This leads us to the second trend that I want to point out in the research on naming and gender: an increased focus on the significance of issues related to power, hierarchies, and distribution of resources. Regarding 'married names' (cf. Sw. 'giftasnamn') couples are forced to negotiate and linguistically solidify their mutual relationships, both in relation to each other and in relation to various family communities: should both parties bear the same surname (if so, whose – or if double surnames, in what order?) or should each retain their own surname (if so, what will future children be called?) or should the couple adopt a new common surname (if so, which type)? The choice of married names also bring consequences for the

establishment of societal hierarchies and power distributions on a societal macro level. Pilcher (2016; 2017) has pointed out that choice of married names can lead to social inequalities. If women, more than men, change surnames several times during their lives (in connection with partnerships, divorces, or deceased partners), this creates greater uncertainty in women's identification, which also has consequences for embodied identity formation, Pilcher argues (2016:769). A similar line of argument has been put forward by Aldrin (2017), who, in a folk onomastic study of lifespan identities connected to names, noticed that primarily women reported narratives regarding changes in the name–identity relation due to changed partnership relations throughout adult life.

In Sweden, Entzenberg (2004) examined the choice of surname after marriage among couples from Uppsala born in the 1960s and 1970s, and found that the vast majority (74 per cent) at that time chose to share the husband's surname. Similarly, most other European countries at this point in time, also showed a strong majority of couples bearing the husband's surname, while only a few countries like Belgium and Italy showed a clear majority of married couples with different surnames (Valetas 2001). However, in recent years, the trend in Sweden has changed significantly. Leibring (2023b) has showed that in 2020, 44 per cent of the couples who entered into marriage in Sweden chose to retain their original surnames, while 33 per cent chose to share the husband's surname, six per cent chose to share the wife's surname, four per cent took a new shared surname, and three per cent took a shared double surname. In Denmark, Bechsgaard (2023; 2024) interviewed couples on their choice of surname and found that regardless of the type of name chosen, it stemmed from different thoughts about 'me-identity' and 'we-identity'. Society's notions of individualism, families, and the relationship between personal identity and 'the common' seem to be important factors affecting marriage names, as well as notions of gender norms within the couple relationship. Similar patterns emerge in Norway (Grønstad 2020; 2024; Ellingsæter 2023) and in Finland (Castrén 2019; 2024). In a unique study focusing on men's perceptions of surname choices in connection with marriage,

Grønstad (2020 see also Grønstad 2024) finds that men who chose to retain their own surname often place great value on the family of origin and being tradition bearers, noting that some perceive changing the surname as a 'betrayal'. Men who chose to change their surname instead often actively resisted patronymy as tradition or emphasized the name's significance for gender equality in various ways. At the same time, the significance of the surname for individual identity was found to be important both for men who kept and for those who changed their surnames in Grønstads study (2020).

From an international perspective, the choice of surname in couple relationships is a well-researched area, which also includes same-sex couples' choice of surnames (Clarke, Burns & Burgoyne 2008; Underwood & Robnett 2021; Takashino, Davidson & Keeni 2024). Early studies often focused on women and the connection between the married name and more or less stereotypical or reactionary gender roles (Stafford & Kline 1996; Mills 2003), while later studies have emphasized how the choice of surname becomes part of the joint creation of a 'couple identity' (Kerns 2011), as well as a part of negotiating the couple's relationship to other family identities and traditions (Finch 2008). The latest studies in this area, however, increasingly highlight the individual perspective (Pilcher 2016; cf. Grønstad 2020). They underline the importance of surnames for the individual's identity formation, including its importance for maintaining an established professional identity (see also Laskowski 2010) and individual independence (see also Hamilton, Geist & Powell 2011), for maintaining or avoiding a personal identity associated with an unusual surname (see Ellingsaeter 2023), for the establishment of a gender-related mark of status as 'married' (see Thwaites 2020), and for the manifestation of a strong commitment within the relationship (see Kelley 2023). Other studies focus on how the choice of surname is perceived by others, and especially attitude studies from the USA have highlighted how married names may affects the degree to which a woman is perceived as 'loving' or 'dedicated to family life', but also explore how attitudes vary between various socioeconomic groups (Shafer 2017; Kelley 2023).

Another way to renegotiate gender norms while simultaneously asserting control over one's own gender identification is through new self-designations and change of given names on an individual level. In recent years, this has been highlighted in several studies from different countries, particularly focusing on self-chosen names of transgender individuals. In Sweden, Carin Leibring Svedjedal has recently conducted a dissertation project focusing on how transgender individuals use given names and pronouns (including the newly introduced gender-neutral pronoun *hen*) as resources for creating gender identities. Internationally, several studies have been conducted on this topic. In Germany, Lind (formerly Schmidt-Jüngst, 2023) conducted interviews and surveys with transgender people, in a context where legislation is much stricter than in Sweden and is reluctant to allow names that do not explicitly express gender. This piece of research highlights that name change is often part of an individual's process of 'coming out' as a transgender person, claiming and announcing a new gender identity (Schmidt-Jüngst 2018), but also that several problems can arise in connection to this type of name choice, illustrating how names are intertwined with power (Lind 2023) and discussing questions like: Who has sufficient authority to name? What criteria must be met for a name change to be accepted? and How does a name interact with other forms of meaning-making gender markers? Several studies of transgender name usage have also been conducted recently in the USA (Connell 2010; Sinclair Palm 2024), and include name-related challenges for transgender individuals in workplace settings (Dietert and Dentice 2009) as well as in research contexts (Thieme & Saunders 2018). An innovative perspective is presented by Sinclair Palm and Chokly (2023), who examine the narratives of young transgender individuals in relation to the name they were given at birth, sometimes referred to as 'deadnames', and establish that many find it painful to pronounce this name and report additional pain when others use the wrong name, while the youth employ various strategies to manage this. An interesting question for future linguistic research is how name changes are handled by surrounding people in private or professional settings and to what extent people apply various strate-

gies to respect or undermine name changes, acknowledging the role of time, place, recipient and the presence or absence of the name bearer in these practices. Especially important would be to explore if properties of the new name (such as phonetics, originality, fashion, etc.) are assigned value and related to gender expectations.

6. Situated and intersectional perspectives on naming and gender

The third identified trend within the field of research on naming and gender is an increasing interest in situated and intersectional perspectives, noticeable from the 2000s and onwards. Names always arise and will be used within specific social contexts, which also means that they are motivated by specific social and communicative goals and acquire specific local meanings. Sociolinguist McConnel-Ginnet (2003) was one of the first researchers to highlight this fact and demonstrate how the choice of address in everyday interaction (given names, nicknames, surnames, etc.) gains its significance in a particular context based on how gender-forming practices and the creation of relationships based on gender look and change within that context. Pilcher (2016) has also emphasized that name usage interacts with other social and embodied expressions in the creation of gender in a particular context. Name choice is not only about expressing identity, but also about which identity that is seen as appropriate for the situation. The use of nicknames (pet names and diminutives) is an area where the situated perspective becomes particularly clear. Gustafsson (2016) conducted a larger Swedish study examining how nicknames create gender identities. She found that adult women's nicknames were characterized by a higher degree of intimacy than men's nicknames, both because women are more likely than men to have nicknames at all, and because women's nicknames often arose in more intimate contexts. In addition, nicknames may create various situated gender identities, where adult women, for example, can be associated with family identities, childhood memories, and couple

relationships while adult men can be associated with sports identities, peer groups, and solidarity functions (Gustafsson 2016:81–83). Other studies on nicknames and gender formation have examined the use of informal names by teenagers in everyday contexts, through ethnographic approaches focusing on both physical interaction (Haggan 2008; Ping 2021) and digital platforms (Subrahmanyam, Greenfield & Tynes 2004). Here, it is often described how young people, through the use of nicknames, explore, challenge, and negotiate gender-related identities and power relations in everyday life, as well as how the significance of nicknames is mediated by the addressee's instant reaction, for example through reinterpretation or resistance (Ping 2021). Several studies on youth nickname usage (Lytra 2003; Haggan 2008) also highlight how the creation of gender identities and cultural identities can interact in young people's nickname usage, demonstrating how a situated perspective often also leads to an increased focus on intersectionality, i.e. how different expressions of identity interact. Gender formation is rarely an isolated act but normally operates in conjunction with other forms of identity construction.

When it comes to the choice of married names, as discussed more extensively above, in recent years, it has been highlighted that gender formation in this case interacts with identity formation linked to age, class, and ethnicity (see Pilcher 2017:817; cf. Gooding and Kreider 2010; Hamilton, Geist & Powell 2011). Studies on the situated meanings and consequences of surname choices are not yet plentiful, but in an innovative and experimental setup, Wofford and Knotts (2020) examined perceptions of politicians based on married names. They found that female politicians who kept their previous surnames after marriage were sometimes perceived as less honest, ethical, caring and intelligent than those who changed their surname upon marriage, especially in the eyes of less-educated men. Similar studies of, for example, job applications, housing queues, etc., as well as studies acknowledging national variations in marital naming practices would be interesting.

Another area where the interaction between gender and other identity categories has been noted is in the choice of given names in multi-

lingual families, a highly relevant topic for contemporary global society. A larger Norwegian study (Alhaug & Saarelma 2017) examined name choices in families where one or both parents come from Finland. It clearly showed that traditional Finnish names were given more often to boys than to girls. This was interpreted as multilingual boys being ascribed a cultural identity more closely tied to the parents' home country and that the boys were seen as carriers of this culture, while multilingual girls were ascribed a more open or outward-facing cultural identity tied to a more international context. At the same time, it was found that in families where one parent had been born in Norway and one in Finland, daughters more often received a Finnish name if the mother had been born in Finland, while sons more often received a Finnish name if the father had been born in Finland. Thus, the creation of cultural identities interacted with gender formation in several ways. Similar trends have been observed among immigrant groups in several countries, such as Germany (Gerhards & Tuppat 2021), USA (Sue & Telles 2007; Parada 2016), and Sweden (Aldrin 2009). Both situated and intersectional perspectives enable a refined understanding of the complex negotiations and potential meanings activated by gender-forming naming practices.

7. Discussion

This article has presented current research on naming and gender, focusing on Nordic countries. I have observed several developmental trends in the field, as highlighted in the discussion above: firstly, a gradual transition from the name as a symbol of stable binarity to a resource for flexible norm negotiation; secondly, an increased focus on power perspectives in relation to naming practices; and thirdly, an intersectional exploration of how gender interacts with other identities in specific situations.

- Trend 1: From symbol of stable binary to resource for flexible norm negotiation.
- Trend 2: Naming and gender from a power perspective.

- Trend 3: Situated and intersectional identity construction through names.

The development of these trends within the field of naming and gender appears to reflect larger processes of development that are also visible in adjacent fields of study. The first trend – where we have seen a transition from names being perceived as symbols of a stable, gender-binary to flexible resources for people's negotiation of gender norms – aligns with a previously established shift in focus within gender studies (see Risman & Davis 2013). Here, the scholarly focus shifted from paying attention to how gender was socialized through 'gender roles' to paying attention to how individuals 'perfomatively' were *doing* gender through active actions (see Butler 1993; West & Zimmerman 1987). This, in turn, mirror a broader paradigm shift within sociolinguistics, from the 'first wave' to the 'second wave' (see Eckert 2012; Nilsson 2023). While the first wave of sociolinguistic studies was characterized by a quantitative approach correlating linguistic variables with social variables (and therefore considering linguistic expressions to be symbols of social belonging), the second wave studies were characterized by ethnographic approaches focusing on how speakers in a specific environment perform social belonging through linguistic resources. In other words, there was a shift from essentialism to social constructionism. Therefore, it is not surprising that we also see a corresponding change of perspective on names and their relation to gender.

The second trend – identified as an increased focus on power perspectives in relation to issues of name and gender – also resembles a development within the broader field of gender research. However, while early gender research highlighted how the creation of gender is connected to access to social positions, distribution of power, and various forms of oppression, this was acknowledged much later within the field of naming and gender, as well as within sociolinguistics (see Eckert & Wenger 2005). Within gender research, the power perspective was an early starting point that motivated the implementation of research (Risman & Davis 2013), which was intensified when the con-

cept of 'intersectionality' was introduced during the 1980s and 1990s (see e.g. Crenshaw 1989 cf. Block & Corona 2016). At this time, studies emphasized how gender often interacts with other variables and therefore constitutes only one of several power structures that affect people's meaning-making. Within gender research, thus, the general development seems to have shifted from a) an individual focus to b) an institutional focus (including issues of power) and finally to c) an interactional/situated focus (see Risman & Davis 2013). However, the development in the area of naming and gender suggests that the power perspective was brought to the fore at a later stage here, probably inspired by the 'third wave' of sociolinguistics (Eckert 2012; Nilsson 2023). The third wave, which is generally considered to be the current paradigm within sociolinguistics, presented an increasing focus on the context-bound nature of meaning-making, how people create different identities in different contexts, and how linguistic and non-linguistic expressions interact in meaning-making, with power perspectives included as one part of the analysis.

This leads us to the third identified trend in research on name and gender: an acknowledgement of the situated and intersectional aspects of meaning-making surrounding naming and gender. Within sociolinguistics, the development seems to have moved from a) an individual level to c) an interactional/situated level and from there to b) an institutional level (including power perspectives). In research on naming and gender, on the other hand, the development seem to have taken place in different directions simultaneously: we have seen a general development from a) an individual level to either c) an interactional/situated level, or concurrently to b) an institutional/intersectional level (including power perspectives). At the same time, in recent years, especially in research on married names, a reverse direction has been noted from b) the institutional level to a) the individual level, (although being approached in new ways).

To conclude, the development of trends in the field of naming and gender seem to be highly interdependent of developments in other fields, and, until now, especially sociolinguistics. Although there have been occasional studies on the topic from other disciplines for a

long time, the field as such seem to have become more heavily influenced by other disciplines over the last few decades. Today, research on naming and gender is a highly interdisciplinary field, involving sociologists, ethnologists and psychologists – alongside linguists and others. This will undoubtedly impact the future development of the field, where central questions within sociology and social psychology, for example, can be expected to have a significant influence on the choice of topics.

Finally, it can be stated that research on naming and gender is a vibrant, international field, where the Nordic region currently holds a prominent position with numerous influential studies on various topics. From the discussion above, it has become apparent that despite the rather extensive available research thus far, a number of important question still remain to be investigated. This applies particularly to how gender formation through naming is linked to societal changes over time, how legislation affects usage, how names interact with other forms of identity expressions, comparative studies across language barriers, and further exploration of how gender constructions through naming manifests in various situational contexts, including contexts throughout the diversity of contemporary digital platforms, chatbots, and AI tools.

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Attitudes towards the adaptation of foreign personal names

Eduardo Tadeu Roque Amaral

Abstract: This study examines the attitudes of a group of native Spaniards towards aspects concerning the necessity of adapting foreign names to the official languages of the country and towards the legal regulations governing name assignment and modification. The research adopts theoretical principles from socio-onomastics and linguistic attitude analysis, also incorporating social and anthropological concepts. Data were collected in person through interviews conducted in the city of Salamanca during April and May 2023. This study analyses the responses of 40 participants, stratified by gender (male and female) and age group (18–29 years; 30–45 years; 46–64 years; 65 and older). In general, the results indicate a recognition of names as an identity sign that the state should acknowledge and respect. Nevertheless, it is possible to observe both agreements and disagreements regarding the adaptation of names, as well as the influence of the social factor of age on attitudes.

Keywords: socio-onomastics, attitudes, personal names, foreigners, Salamanca

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1. Introduction

Spain is a multicultural and multilingual country. According to data from the National Statistics Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística – INE), on October 1, 2023, the country had a resident population of over 48 million, of which more than six million were foreigners, mainly from other European countries as well as Central and South America. The province of Salamanca, from which the data under analysis come, had 326 886 residents, 6.34 per cent of whom were foreigners, understood as those who do not possess Spanish nationality.

Regarding multilingualism, Article 3 of the Spanish Constitution establishes that Castilian (or Spanish) is the country's official language and other languages are recognized as official in their respective autonomous communities, in accordance with their Statutes (Spain 1978). This possibility has been adopted by various communities, such as the Basque Country with regard to Basque; Catalonia with regard to Catalan and Aranese; Galicia with regard to Galician; the Valencian Community with regard to Valencian; part of Navarre with regard to Basque; and the Balearic Islands with regard to Catalan (Ministerio de Política Territorial y Memoria Democrática 2024). Additionally, according to the 2021 Survey on Essential Characteristics of the Population and Housing (ECEPOV-2021) published by the INE, there are 10 languages in the country that are spoken by at least one per cent of the population (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2023). The most frequent are Castilian (96.0 per cent), English (14.7 per cent), Catalan (14.2 per cent), Valencian (5.6 per cent), Galician (5.2 per cent), French (3.7 per cent), Basque (2.3 per cent), Arabic (1.6 per cent), Romanian (1.1 per cent) and Italian (1 per cent).

In this multiculturalism and multilingualism context, it is natural that anthroponyms of different origins coexist and that speakers develop distinct attitudes towards personal names. This study aims to conduct a qualitative analysis of this kind of attitude presented by native Spaniards residing in Salamanca regarding the maintenance or adaptation of foreign names and surnames. The data are analysed based on the theoretical framework of socio-onomastics and linguistic attitudes (Ainiala 2016; Ainiala & Östman 2017; Garrett 2010). More-

over, in line with the development of sociolinguistic studies, this work acknowledges that judgments and opinions about linguistic facts are inherent to human beings, their worldview, and the culture in which they are embedded (García Marcos 1999).

This paper is structured as follows: The next section addresses the relevant legal and theoretical framework for the study, mentioning previous research in onomastics on attitudes. Then, the methodological procedures adopted in this study are detailed, focusing on the collection and analysis of oral language data. After outlining these procedures, the results obtained are presented and discussed in two other sections. Finally, the conclusions derived from this work are presented, advocating greater respect and tolerance for the name of others, for the way others wish to be addressed, no matter how different their name may be or how difficult it may be to pronounce.

2. Legal and theoretical framework

Since the 20th century, there has been an increasing recognition of rights related to personal names, in addition to other individual rights acknowledged in various international treaties (UNICEF 2019). The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe emphasizes the right of individuals to be recognized as persons and to have their names officially registered. It recommends that '[p]ersons belonging to national minorities have the right to use their personal names in their own language according to their own traditions and linguistic systems. These shall be given official recognition and be used by the public authorities' (OSCE 2009 [1998]:5). The same institution recommends that 'persons who have been forced by public authorities to give up their original or ancestral name(s) or whose name(s) have been changed against their will should be entitled to revert to them without having to incur any expenses' (OSCE 2009 [1998]:14).

In the case of Spain, the country underwent strong regulatory restrictions on name selection during the 20th century (Fernández Domingo 2017; Fernández Pérez 2015). During the Francoist period, the Order of 18 May 1938, prohibited the registration of 'abstract,

biased names, or any others that are not contained in the Roman Martyrology for Catholics' and stated that 'in the case of Spaniards, names must be registered in Castilian' (Spain 1938). According to Article 54 of the Law of 8 June 1957, on Civil Registration, in the case of Spaniards, names should continue to be registered in Castilian. The permission to register names in the different languages of Spanish territory began with legislative changes in 1977, while for foreign names following suit in 1994 (Spain 1994). These restrictive norms have left marks on Spanish society, as evidenced in the analysis that follows.

Currently, Spain's civil registration law explicitly adopts the principle of free choice of name, which is included in the title of Article 51 of Law 20/2011, of 21 July on Civil Registration. According to this regulatory provision, a name may be chosen freely and will be subject only to the following restrictions: a) attributing more than two simple first names or one compound name; b) registering names that are contrary to the dignity of the human person or that make their identification confusing; c) naming an individual with the full name of a living sibling. Article 50 of the same law allows an individual to replace the first name with the equivalent in any of the languages of Spain.

Among the hypotheses for changing a surname through a declaration of intent allowed by the law, as provided by Article 53, Paragraph 4, the registry officer may authorize the change of a surname to '[t]he spelling regularization of surnames to any of the official languages corresponding to the origin or residence of the interested party, and the graphic adaptation to these languages of the phonetics of also foreign surnames' (Spain 2011)[1].

People who acquire Spanish nationality are allowed to keep their previous surnames, but to do so, they must express their interest at the time of acquisition or within the two months following the acquisition or reaching the age of majority. This short two-month period prioritizes state interest over individual interest, as pointed out by Fernán-

[1] In the original: 'La regularización ortográfica de los apellidos a cualquiera de las lenguas oficiales correspondiente al origen o domicilio del interesado y la adecuación gráfica a dichas lenguas de la fonética de apellidos también extranjeros' (Spain 2011).

dez Domingo (2017). The names and surnames must not be contrary to international public order, as stipulated by Article 56 of the aforementioned law.

In terms of theoretical foundations, this study can be included in the set of contemporary socio-onomastics research and is based on linguistic studies of attitudes, adopting the assumption that attitudes can provide a significant contribution to understanding the relationship that speakers establish with proper names, in this case, foreign personal names. Due to the issues raised by the collected data, some concepts from social and anthropological studies will be used to complement the socio-onomastic analysis.

Garrett (2010:20) considers attitude as an evaluative orientation towards some social object. More specifically, Blas Arroyo (2012 [2005]:322) defines linguistic attitudes as 'critical and evaluative positions that speakers adopt regarding specific phenomena of a language or even about varieties and languages conceived as a whole'.[2] The same author points out that it is neither linguistic nor aesthetic differences that are at the origin of attitudes, but rather stereotypes and prejudices related to the people who speak one linguistic variety or another.

In this type of analysis, the concepts of opinions and values are also important. Garrett (2010) notes that many researchers often use the concept of opinions as equivalent to that of attitude, but he emphasizes that opinions are expressed in a discursive manner, while attitudes, at least in certain cases, can be more difficult to articulate. This reveals situations where a person's opinion does not necessarily reflect their underlying attitude. In this study, it will be seen that differences like this can generate contradictory attitudes towards people's names. In the case of the concept of values, these are broader and more general and shared by members of a linguistic community. For our purposes, they can be related to legal principles, which, although

[2] In the original: 'posturas críticas y valorativas que los hablantes realizan sobre fenómenos específicos de una lengua o, incluso, sobre variedades y lenguas concebidas como un todo' (Blas Arroyo (2012 [2005]:322).

not always nominally cited, are perceptible in the social groups in which the participants are embedded.

Although studies in different fields have demonstrated the relationship between the perception of personal names and the discrimination against individuals (Amit & Dolberg 2023; Martiniello & Verhaeghe 2023; Molla, Rhawi & Lampi 2022), there is limited research within onomastic studies addressing attitudes toward anthroponyms. One work that deserves mention is Knoblock (2019), which analyses the attitudes of Russian-speaking Ukrainians towards the Ukrainization of traditionally Russian proper names (personal names and toponyms). The author collected attitude data from Ukrainians who had fled the war in their homeland, seeking refuge in the Russian Federation and living in temporary housing provided by the Russian government. The author's work confirms the importance of the freedom to use proper names in a person's first language and shows that people who expressed the intention to return to Ukraine were less likely to report some negative feelings caused by the Ukrainization of proper names, whereas those who planned to stay in the Russian Federation were more likely to do so. According to the results obtained, the rigid policy of Ukrainization as an action of national affirmation, which even infringed upon parents' control over naming their children according to the language they used in the family, indeed seemed to cause some resentment in the group studied.

In a recent work, Waldispühl (2024) explores the relationship between personal names and migration, providing an overview of research on this subject. As the author observes, 'adult immigrants typically prefer to retain their original given names and surnames, as these are intimately connected to their identity and cultural heritage' (Waldispühl 2024:27). The author further notes that the adaptation of names may be viewed as strategies for integration into a host community or as responses to societal pressures, a theme that will be important for the analysis of the data in this study.

With data from the Spanish language, though with very different objectives, the studies by Salamanca and Pereira (2013), Salamanca Gutiérrez, Millán Contreras and Rodríguez Gutiérrez (2015), and

Campo Yumar (2023) can be cited. None of these, however, analysed responses from sociolinguistic interviews. The works we have been publishing based on the results obtained in Spain can therefore contribute to filling a gap in the field (Amaral 2024).

Regarding the specific theme of this study, namely the adaptation of names, some clarifications are needed. During the interviews, the methods of which will be explained in the next section, no nuances of types of adaptation were established, as the aim was to allow the interaction to be as spontaneous as possible without falling into technicalities. The initial interviews had already shown that, as the questions approached technical or legal matters, many participants stated they were unable to express themselves. Therefore, the solution found was to allow participants to answer the questions and, subsequently, to perform the most pertinent analysis. For this, it is important to note that the adaptation of foreign names can take different forms. As pointed out by Julià-Muné (2017:33), it is possible to use the name in the Latin alphabet or, depending on the origin of the name, resort to transliteration (from other alphabets, such as Cyrillic) or to transfer or conversion (such as from pinyin for Chinese). In this regard, as explained by Waldispühl (2024), name changes can occur at different levels, including phonetic, orthographic, lexical, and semantic alterations.

It is also important to mention that the maintenance or adaptation of people's original names should be considered from the perspective of social studies on discrimination. Therefore, the question raised by Paula Guerra, former president of SOS Racism, is of crucial relevance: 'What we need to ask ourselves is why there are people who feel the need to change their name to have a trouble-free life in another country' (Giménez Lorenzo 2019)[3]. The decision, according to the approach we advocate here, should always come from the bearer themselves and never from another person who claims a possible need to facilitate pronunciation. The same author argues: 'Having

[3] In the original: 'Lo que tenemos que preguntarnos es por qué hay personas que se ven con la necesidad de cambiar su nombre para tener una vida sin problemas en otro país'.

a name imposed on you implies a horrendous dehumanization […] it is to infantilize someone, as if they belonged to you: "I change it because it is hard for me to pronounce"' (Giménez Lorenzo 2019)[4].

The previous issue is well discussed by Bucholtz (2016), who considers personal names as sites of struggle for linguistic autonomy and the right to self-definition. Considering that these elements involve issues of personality and power, and using the notion of indexical bleaching, which implies a removal of contextually marked ethnoracial meaning, the author analyses student discussion data regarding Hispanic-origin names used by English speakers. Among her arguments, Bucholtz contends that strategies used to designate an individual differently from their given name should not be seen as mere linguistic accommodation or cultural assimilation, but as acts of ethnoracial performance that demonstrate the assertion of the right to be designated as one wishes. These issues will be revisited in the discussion section, which will relate the results to studies on linguistic hierarchies and raciolinguistics.

3. Methods

The data from this work are part of a broader project aimed at analysing the attitudes of speakers from different backgrounds towards the assignment and change of personal names, establishing possible relationships with recent legal changes and the social transformations of the last decades (Amaral 2024). The general objective is to qualitatively analyse the variation of anthroponyms, considering social variables such as gender and age, as well as other factors that may influence the treatment of this topic. The inclusion of these variables follows common procedures in sociolinguistic studies, including those

[4] In the original: 'Que te impongan un nombre implica una deshumanización atroz […] es infantilizar a alguien, como si te perteneciera: 'te lo cambio porque a mí me cuesta pronunciarlo'.

on attitudes (Cestero & Paredes 2018)[5]. Moreover, the variable of age will be used to observe potential differences in attitudes between individuals who were born and lived under stricter name registration rules and those from generations with more flexible rules.

The data analysed in this study were collected in person in the city of Salamanca in 2023[6]. The participants, all of Spanish nationality and residents of the Salamanca capital, were invited to participate in a sociolinguistic survey in which they were asked to express their attitudes, beliefs, and opinions regarding the assignment and change of personal names. For this purpose, a script previously prepared by the researcher was used, but recordings developed in a semi-spontaneous manner. The surveys were conducted individually, in different locations (university, town square, or cafeteria), according to the availability and comfort of each participant. A total of 17 hours of audio were collected, and a sample of 151 951 words was obtained.

This study analyses the responses of 40 participants, who were stratified into groups (G) based on gender and age. Women were assigned to odd-numbered groups, while men were assigned to even-numbered groups. Age groups were defined as follows: G1 and G2 include participants aged 18 to 29; G3 and G4 cover those aged 30 to 45; G5 and G6 include individuals aged 46 to 64; and finally, G7 and G8 comprise participants aged 65 or older. Notably, there is a minimum age difference of 8 years between groups, ensuring proper classification. Table 1 presents the participant stratification, identified by specific codes. The coding system is as follows: in the code SLM05-F22, for example, SLM represents the data collection city (Salamanca), 05 is an internal number assigned by the research team,

[5] In addition to the selected variables, it is believed that other factors, such as social class, profession, or education level, may influence attitudes toward personal names, though these were not controlled in this research. Future studies with a larger sample size may establish criteria for controlling variables like these.

[6] The project was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Minas Gerais (CAAE: 59802322.0.0000.5149).

F indicates a woman participant (M for man), and 22 corresponds to the participant's age.[7]

Table 1. List of participants in the Salamanca (Spain) interviews.

Female participants		Male participants	
1 st age group G1 (18–29 years)	SLM05-F22 SLM14-F21 SLM20-F21 SLM28-F22 SLM36-F21	1 st age group G2 (18–29 years)	SLM02-M21 SLM04-M22 SLM07-M19 SLM17-M21 SLM19-M21
2nd age group G3 (30–45 years)	SLM09-F42 SLM15-F41 SLM24-F41 SLM25-F41 SLM39-F41	2nd age group G4 (30–45 years)	SLM10-M37 SLM30-M30 SLM31-M37 SLM32-M35 SLM37-M43
3rd age group G5 (46–64 years)	SLM08-F48 SLM11-F56 SLM16-F56 SLM18-F58 SLM34-F51	3rd age group G6 (46–64 years)	SLM03-M59 SLM13-M52 SLM21-M54 SLM27-M54 SLM33-M53
4th age group G7 (65 and older)	SLM12-F77 SLM22-F71 SLM23-F77 SLM40-F83 SLM41-F80	4th age group G8 (65 and older)	SLM42-M68 SLM43-M79 SLM44-M93 SLM45-M84 SLM46-M78

To achieve the established objective, this text analyses the responses provided to questions that are related to the issue of foreign names. Initially, each participant was asked: 'In your opinion, should foreign proper names be adapted to national languages?' Whenever necessary, that is, when it was noted that the participant did not fully understand the question, the following examples were given: '*Mary* to *María* or *Johann* to *Juan*'. Subsequently, it was asked: 'Should people who wish to acquire Spanish nationality be able to keep their original surnames, or should they adapt them to Spanish regulations?' It is important to highlight that these questions were asked after a series of previously presented questions on the assignment and change of

[7] For ethical reasons, in this text, names or any data that could identify the participants have been removed.

individuals' names, and the participants were, therefore, immersed in the topic of proper names and had examples in mind.

The questions about foreign names were presented in a general manner, meaning that the interviewer mentioned only a few examples, as previously mentioned. This approach was adopted to avoid bias or influencing the responses. It seems plausible that attitudes toward, for example, white American academic names on the one hand and Latin American worker names on the other could differ[8]. However, investigating such differences, which are important to study, would require a different methodology.

4. Results

Before discussing the actual results of the issues raised, it is important to highlight that several participants, throughout the interviews, demonstrated an awareness that the names are closely linked to the identity of their bearer, as observed in examples (1) and (2). In example (3), a participant, an 83-year-old woman, even goes so far as to sanctify the given name[9]:

> (1) los nombres deben mantenerse como son, ¿no? porque yo creo que también es un poco parte de la **esencia de cada persona** (SLM07-M19).[10]
>
> [Names should be kept as they are, right? Because I believe that they are also a bit part of each **person's essence**. (SLM07-M19)]

> (2) Yo creo que no se tiene que hacer cambio porque es **una cosa que te define también**, con lo cual, tal cual te lo han puesto (SLM04-M22).

[8] I thank one anonymous reviewer for pointing out this hypothesis.

[9] The given name is also considered a sacred element in other cultures (Frazer 1950 [1922]:245).

[10] All the bolded text in the examples is my own emphasis.

> [I believe that no changes should be made because it is **something that also defines you**, so it should be left as it was given to you. (SLM04-M22)]

> (3) Yo creo que si tú tienes un nombre, te deben respetar. Es **como cuando cuando vas a un país musulmán y te tienes que descalzar y taparte la cabeza** para entrar a una mezquita (SLM40-F83).
>
> [I believe that if you have a name, it should be respected. It's **like when you go to a Muslim country, and you have to take off your shoes and cover your head** to enter a mosque. (SLM40-F83)]

It is worth noting that the beliefs expressed in (1) and (2), unlike in (3) are those of university students. Although young people generally demonstrate a more favourable attitude towards the freedom of assigning and changing names[11], the perception of the name as a fundamental element of personality is shared by speakers across different age groups in the population under analysis. Respect for individual rights related to the name is more evident in more abstract situations than in concrete cases, especially regarding the names of transgender individuals (Amaral & Anastácio forthcoming).

Still regarding the relationship between name and identity, during the interviews, several participants expressed opposition to changing surnames for women who marry abroad, as seen in example (4). In example (5), a participant associates this change with a loss of identity.

> (4) Por eso me refiero a su identidad, ¿no? (…) Porque, porque claro, aquí tenemos dos apellidos, pero en el resto de Europa (sic) tienen un apellido o en Estados Unidos tienen un apellido. Entonces lo único que **me molesta es que la mujer pierda su apellido**, pero por lo demás todo está bien (SLM23-F77).
>
> [That's why I'm referring to her identity, right? (…) Because, because of course, here we have two surnames, but in the rest of Europe (sic) they have one surname, or in the United States they have one surname. So the only thing that **bothers me is that the**

[11] Leibring (2018) found results in this direction, despite using data from a limited number of Swedish teenagers.

woman loses her surname, but otherwise everything is fine. (SLM23-F77)]

(5) en Estados Unidos, por ejemplo, si te casas, tu apellido ya pasa a ser el de tu marido. (…) en ese sentido, es que **es como perder un poco tu identidad**, ¿no? (SLM34-F51).

[In the United States, for example, if you get married, your surname becomes that of your husband. (…) in that sense, it's like **losing a bit of your identity**, isn't it? (SLM34-F51)]

Considering the awareness of the relationship between name and identity as explained above, it is not surprising that, during the interviews, participants shared accounts of people complaining about old norms and restrictions from times when the choice of names was much more controlled by the state, as explained earlier. In (6), for example, the participant recalls being denied the right to register the desired name.[12]

(6) El problema de España con esto de las lenguas es que tenemos, han politizado demasiado, **en el tiempo Franco se politizó demasiado las lenguas**, ¿no? (…) Por ejemplo, yo no me pude inscribir como X en el registro civil. […] a mí me tendrían que haber inscrito como X, porque estaba bautizado en la Iglesia como X, pero **se negaron en el registro** (SLM03-M59).

[The problem with Spain and the issue of languages is that they have become overly politicized. **During Franco's time, lan-**

[12] Cases of critical evaluation of the naming process are also recorded, as seen in the example (i). However, this type of evaluation will not be addressed in this paper.

(i) E I., tengo entendido su nombre anglosajón I. [deletrea el nombre] y sin embargo la, este tipo de gente suele ponerlo, los padres, muchos padres lo registran como suenan, ¿no? fonéticamente y [deletrea el nombre] cosas así. A mí personalmente me parece una cosa muy ridícula, pero sí, claro que, que lo transcriban como quieran (SLM30-M30).

And 'I', I understand that their English name is spelled 'I' [spells it], and yet these types of people often register it, the parents, many parents register it as it sounds, right? Phonetically, and [spells it] things like that. Personally, I think it's a very ridiculous thing, but yes, of course, they can transcribe it however they want. (SLM30-M30)

> **guages were excessively politicized**, right? (…) For example, I couldn't register myself as X in the civil registry. […] They should have registered me as X, because I was baptized in the Church as X, but **they refused at the registry**. (SLM03-M59)]

4.1 Adaptation of foreign names to national languages

Regarding the specific responses to the questions in this study, the results generally reveal that the vast majority of respondents – 78 per cent (n= 31) – express clear opposition to adaptations of foreign names. However, various attitudes towards this phenomenon warrant further analysis within the context of onomastic studies. The data reveal that some participants recognize the importance of making an effort to correctly pronounce someone else's name, as observed in (7).

> (7) No, porque cada uno tiene su nombre y hay que respetar la, la identidad. La identidad de cada uno, no, **por difícil que nos sea**, hay veces en España ya sabes que somos muy malos para los idiomas, bastante (risas) (…) (SLM34-F51).
>
> [No, because everyone has their own name, and we need to respect the, the identity. Each person's identity, right? **No matter how difficult it might be for us**, there are times in Spain, as you know, we are quite bad with languages, really (laughs). (SLM34-F51)]

On the other hand, although less frequently, there is a certain normalization of adapting foreign names. In these cases, participants view the adaptation as natural, without questioning the other person's preference for being referred to by their original name or a form resembling it. This normalization of adaptation, though rare, is not confined to any specific group and is observed both in the speech of a young person, as exemplified in example (8), and an older person, as shown in example (9). In (10), a participant reports ambiguity regarding a friend's name. The young person reveals that an American friend prefers to be called by her own name but is referred to differently. Interestingly, the participant believes that the friend is not bothered by this discrepancy, despite it being clear that she would prefer her original name to be used.

(8) Bien, eh aquí entramos en la fonética española, porque **nosotros lo adaptamos todo, todo**. […] y ayuda mucho cuando estos mismos estudiantes chinos, pero puede ser de cualquier país, pues ya traen pensado y te dicen su nombre en español, lo que significa en español, entonces si una se llama Chan Wan Ying te dicen que se llama Nube, pues hombre **es más fácil** decir Nube que… (SLM17-M21)

[Well, here we enter into Spanish phonetics, because **we adapt everything, everything**. […] and it helps a lot when these same Chinese students, but it could be from any country, already come with it planned out and they tell you their name in Spanish, what it means in Spanish. So, if one is called Chan Wan Ying, they tell you that they are called Nube, well, **it's much easier** to say Nube than… (SLM17-M21)]

(9) Los españoles los adaptamos todo a nuestro idioma, desde siempre, […] quiero decir que lo lo, **lo castellanizamos todo**, entonces sí, normalmente. (…) Vale, yo creo que eso es indiferente, que es un poco, claro esta castellanización estaría en el ámbito familiar (SLM23-F77).

[Spaniards adapt everything to our language, it has always been like that, […] I mean, **we Castilianize everything**, so yes, normally. (…) Okay, I think that's indifferent, it's a bit, of course this Castilianization would be in a family setting. (SLM23-F77)]

(10) *Participante*: También tengo otra amiga que se llama *Lyra*, o le llaman *Lera* o le llaman *Lara*.[13]

Entrevistador: ¿De dónde es?

Participante: De Estados Unidos también y, y vamos o sea, **ella no se molesta, pero lo que ella querría que le llamasen por su nombre**, que es Lyra (SLM17-M21).

[Participant: I also have another friend named *Lyra*, or they call her *Lera* or they call her *Lara*.

Interviewer: Where is she from?

Participant: From the United States as well, and, well, I mean, **she doesn't get upset, but she would prefer that people call her by her name**, which is Lyra. (SLM17-M21)]

[13] For this example, mock names were used to make the lecture more accessible.

Regarding the influence of extralinguistic factors, participants from Group 8 (older men) exhibit clearly an attitude in favour of adaptation. In (11) and (12), the participants do not even raise the issue of the name the bearer wishes to be called by:

(11) Yo sería más bien **partidario de que se permitiera poner la traducción**, por ejemplo, en vez de *Elizabeth*, llamarla *Isabel*, porque sí estaría bien. Estaría bien. Yo ahí si te digo sí (SLM45-M84).

[I would rather be **in favour of allowing the translation**, for example, instead of *Elizabeth*, calling her *Isabel*, because that would be good. It would be good. There I would say yes. (SLM45-M84)]

(12) Hombre, si los quieren usar, **debieran adaptarse**, porque sin adaptación me parece peor (SLM44-M93).

[Well, if they want to use them, **they should adapt**, because without adaptation it seems worse to me. (SLM44-M93)]

4.2 Retaining or adapting original names to acquire Spanish nationality

Regarding the second question of whether people seeking to acquire Spanish nationality should adapt their surnames to the Spanish system, 80 per cent of the 40 participants (n= 32) clearly express opposition to the need for adaptation. Many of these statements reflect attitudes aligned with the principle of autonomy of will, as exemplified in (13) and (14). In the latter case, the participant argues that there is no necessary connection between acquiring nationality and changing one's name and surname.

(13) Si lo quieren mantener, o sea, creo que ahí también **depende de la voluntad de la persona** […] Es que tu nombre es algo muy personal, muy particular (SLM39-F41).

[If they want to keep it, I mean, I think that also **depends on the person's will** […] It's just that your name is something very personal, very specific. (SLM39-F41)]

(14) Yo creo que también **es libre de si quiere hacerlo o no lo quiere hacer**. Yo creo que el hecho de que cambies de nacionalidad no tienes por qué cambiar tu nombre ni tu apellido (SLM11-F56).

[I believe **it's also up to the individual whether they want to do it or not**. I think that just because you change your nationality, it doesn't mean you have to change your name or your surname. (SLM11-F56)]

Similarly to the previous examples, in (15), the participant defends the same principle. However, he attempts to distinguish between administrative, linguistic, and social factors – a topic we will revisit later.

(15) Pero vuelvo al terreno de que eso yo creo que ya es una **cuestión más administrativa**, ¿no? En cuanto a lo lingüístico y a lo social, pues que cada uno decida cómo se quiere llamar y si lo adapta o no adapta (SLM32-M35).

[But I return to the idea that I believe that's more of **an administrative issue**, right? As for linguistic and social aspects, let everyone decide what they want to be called and whether they adapt it or not. (SLM32-M35)]

As observed in other studies conducted with data from the same population (Amaral 2024), the imposition of norms for maintaining or changing given names and surnames is often justified by the need for legal and administrative security. In examples (16) and (17), participants of different genders clearly express this concern. However, in the second case, the female participant shifts their argument to emphasize respecting the will of the name bearer.

(16) Vale, eh entra en juego la administración, que es terrible con el nombre porque (…) Sí, en este caso mira, aquí me voy a hacer un poco de lo que he dicho hasta aquí. Yo creo que se debe adaptar **porque es un, es un lío**. (…), entonces no sé es muy espinoso, pero yo diría que sí, en este caso [múltiples apellidos] al menos debería adaptarse para evitar confusiones (SLM17-M21).

[Okay, the administration comes into play, which is terrible with names because (…) Yes, in this case, look, I'm going to deviate a bit from what I've said so far. I think it should be adapted **because**

> **it's a mess**. (…), so I don't know, it's very tricky, but I would say yes, in this case [multiple surnames] it should at least be adapted to avoid confusion. (SLM17-M21)]
>
> (17) La gente con, con muchos nombres y no, no, no caben, no, no caben en los títulos, no cabe (en nada). Entonces una cosa normal, pero bueno, si también un poco eso con ciertos límites, porque el espacio es limitado. (…) Pero, pero bueno, un poco también dentro de lo que la persona quiera (SLM25-F41).
>
> [People with, with many names and no, no, they don't fit, no, they don't fit on titles, they don't fit (on anything). So, a normal thing, but well, also a bit of that with certain limits, because space is limited. (…) But, but well, also within what the person wants. (SLM25-F41)]

Along the same lines, concerning the legal-administrative control of given names and surnames, it is worth noting the attitude expressed in example (18). In this case, the participant acknowledges that the name is not the primary means of individual identification. Therefore, the state should not impose excessive obstacles or restrictions on the selection or adaptation of names and surnames, as there are, according to the participant, other means of identifying citizens.

> (18) Estamos en el siglo 21 y (hay) **formas de poder regular o de identificar esa persona con un sistema distinto**, no sé, yo lo [adaptar los nombres y apellidos] veo una estupidez (SLM31-M37).
>
> [We're in the 21st century and there are **ways to regulate or identify that person with a different system**, I don't know, I see [adapting names and surnames] as foolish. (SLM31-M37)]

Beyond the justification based on the need for legal-administrative control, notable attitudes emerge regarding the relationship between names and feelings of nationality. In this context, the attitude of the participant exemplified in (19) is particularly significant. This participant views the adaptation of names as a means of facilitating integration between foreigners and nationals, valuing potential integration over the principle of individual choice. Similarly, examples (20) and (21) illustrate this perspective:

(19) Bueno si adquiere la nacionalidad a efectos de documentación española, estaría bien que tenga dos apellidos como cualquiera. Entonces te haga registrado. Mantenga uno para su nacionalidad de origen y tenga la construcción igual que nosotros, al igual el orden de los apellidos para identificarle, **precisamente (eso) también es un elemento de integración**. Porque si solo tiene uno, parece que queda marcado que ha sido extranjero, aunque es extranjero. A mí me parece, no sé si hasta el punto obligarle, pero bueno, si se podría obligar, tú te nacionalizas, necesitamos dos apellidos, traes la afiliación de tu padre, de tu madre, pon el orden que sea y ya está. Y si trae más de dos, que se quede con dos (risas) (SLM27-M54).

[Well, if someone acquires nationality for the purpose of Spanish documentation, it would be good for them to have two surnames like anyone else. Then get registered. Keep one for your nationality of origin and have the same structure as us, including the order of the surnames to identify them, **precisely (that) is also an element of integration**. Because if you only have one, it seems that it marks that you have been a foreigner, even though you are a foreigner. To me, it seems, I don't know if to the point of forcing them, but well, if it could be enforced, you get naturalized, we need two surnames, bring your father's and mother's names, put them in any order and that's it. And if you bring more than two, keep two (laughs). (SLM27-M54)]

(20) Sí, si te haces, desde luego la idea de adquirir una nacionalidad extranjera, debes de **acomodarte a todos los indicios de ese país**, incluso el cambio del nombre (SLM45-M84).

[Yes, if you go through with the idea of acquiring foreign nationality, you should **adapt to all the aspects of that country**, including changing your name. (SLM45-M84)]

(21) Deberían adoptar sus apellidos, pues, no sé, yo creo que debería ser optativo. Igual, ¿no? si uno quiere verdaderamente **sentir la experiencia completa española**, ¿no? vienes a España y dices "voy a ser un español más como otro y con todos los detalles", pues igual sí puedes hacer, puedes adaptarlo (SLM07-M19).

[They should adopt their surnames, well, I don't know, I think it should be optional. The same, right? If one truly wants **to feel the**

> **complete Spanish experience**, right? You come to Spain and say, "I'm going to be just another Spaniard, with all the details," then maybe yes, you can do it, you can adapt it. (SLM07-M19)]

Attitudes like those observed in (19), (20), and (21) are not very common in the data, but it is interesting to note that these attitudes come from male participants, and, with the exception of (21), from individuals over the age of 50. This suggests an influence of the generational factor, as there is no similar connection between name adaptation and Spanish nationalism among younger and middle-aged groups. Moreover, the differences between the perceived need for adaptation by foreigners versus Spaniards are quite revealing. In example (22), the participant focuses solely on the benefit to the native population of the host country, rather than considering the interests of the foreigner.

> (22) Hay gente, por ejemplo de sobre todo asiática que cuando viene sí que se cambien los nombres y apellidos, pero es, es casi más comodidad. Es es para que resulte **más fácil a nosotros adaptarnos a sus, a sus nombres** (SLM10-M37).
>
> [There are people, especially from Asia, who when they come here do change their names and surnames, but it's almost more for convenience. It's so that it's **easier for us to adapt to their names**. (SLM10-M37)]

Similar to example (22), other participants report examples of natives from Asia who adopt new names as a naturalized practice to integrate into the host country. However, there is one case where the attitude is in the opposite direction: the participant in (23) advocates for the adaptation of surnames by natives of the host country:

> (23) Cada uno tiene sus apellidos y dependiendo de dónde venga, pues si, si en su país, por ejemplo, Portugal, que tienen un montón de apellidos y luego pues nada, pues nosotros, **yo creo que nos tenemos que adaptar** (SLM09-F42).
>
> [Everyone has their surnames, and depending on where they come from, well, if in their country, like Portugal, they have a lot of surnames, then well, we, **I think we have to adapt**. (SLM09-F42)]

One participant reports that in the Basque Country the names of immigrants are often replaced with *Iñaki*. Although the participant does not explicitly relate their account to the issue of identity, it is evident that this practice serves to obscure the immigrants' identities in the eyes of the host country's inhabitants. This erasure seems to occur more due to external necessity or discrimination than by the individual's own interest, as the name, as seen, is considered an important element of personality. This issue will be revisited in the next section.

5. Discussion

This work presents results from an analysis of the attitudes of native Spaniards toward the maintenance or adaptation of foreign names. Generally, the data reveal a strong recognition of names as an integral component of identity that should be respected. However, there are cases that deviate from this trend, and this result deserves to be discussed in greater depth.

One notable aspect in the analysis is the naturalization of adapting foreign names by some participants. In these cases, interviewees view adaptation as a natural process and do not question whether the other person prefers to be addressed by their original name or a form resembling it. In this regard, the findings of Chang Vargas and Chaves Chang (2022) in the field of anthropology are relevant. Their analysis of the anthroponymic context among Chinese and their descendants in Costa Rica reveals generational differences. First-generation individuals, born in China, use a Chinese name in intimate and family contexts, while adopting another name for social integration purposes. In contrast, third-generation individuals (with 25 per cent Chinese ancestry) demonstrate a renewed pride in their Chinese heritage by naming their children or businesses with Chinese names.

When contrasting the results of the cited authors with those of this study, it is important to highlight the significance of names in reaffirming identity, despite the different aspects they address. On one hand, some participants in our research, particularly older individuals, associate given names with national integration. On the other

hand, younger and middle-aged participants place greater importance on the principle of the autonomy of will. This shift suggests that, following decades of stringent state control over names, the current freedom to choose a name (Law 20/2011, of 21 July) is largely justified by the need to affirm personal identity.

The more conservative attitudes toward the adaptation of foreign names may be related to the appreciation of the Spanish language at the top of what is considered a linguistic hierarchy – a discursive construction that establishes the local relative status of different languages in relation to transnationally circulating ideas of multilingualism (Hult 2012). In the case of Sweden, for example, Hult (2012) discusses the position of Swedish and English at the top of the linguistic hierarchy, followed by other European languages and the languages of national minorities. For Spain, it is possible to place the Spanish language (or Castilian) at the top of this hierarchy, especially in the case of Salamanca, a city that hosts the oldest and one of the most prestigious universities in the country. In this sense, some participants reinforce a discourse that values Spanish in the use of personal names. By emphasizing the relationship between names and identity while simultaneously advocating for the adaptation of foreign names regardless of the bearer's will, the participants position the language of these names at a lower rank within the hierarchy. Their attitudes reveal the belief that foreign names serve to identify their bearers among themselves but not for communication within Spanish territory. This demonstrates the assertion by Bucholtz (2016), already presented, according to which personal names are sites of struggle for linguistic autonomy and the right to self-definition.

In a way, the results discussed in the last paragraph can also be related to studies on raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores 2021; Rosa & Flores 2017), which 'conflate certain racialized persons with linguistic deficiency irrespective of their empirical linguistic practices' (Rosa & Flores 2017:177). Generally, the premise is that these individuals need to modify their linguistic practices to gain approval from another socially privileged group. From this perspective, Rosa and Flores (2017) examine the ways in which discourses of accom-

modation, which permeate resource-based approaches to language teaching, contribute to the normalization of the reproduction of the white gaze by marginalizing the linguistic practices of minority populations in the United States. The authors observe that the linguistic practices of heritage language learners are devalued not because they fail to meet a specific linguistic standard but because they are spoken by racialized bodies and are thus heard as illegitimate by the white subject who listens to them. The white subject, in this case, should be understood as an ideological position and a mode of perception that shapes society. In the authors' study, it is observed that the skills of racialized English learners are ignored or erased, along with the maintenance of the concepts of linguistic purity and racial purity as powerful ideological constructions.

Although the authors' perspective differs from that adopted in this study, it is worth highlighting how the rejection, by some participants, of the use of the foreigner's registered name and the unreflective advocacy for adaptation also mark a form of identity erasure for this individual. Furthermore, the idea of linguistic purity also emerges in the interviews, expressed by some participants who argue for the need to maintain Spanish as the dominant and prestigious language in interactions with foreigners. In this case, one can observe the explicit manifestation of a *language ideology*, which, as defined by anthropologists, can be understood as a 'set of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use' (Silverstein 1979:193). These beliefs materialize in attitudes that are employed as attempts to use language as a space to promote, protect, and legitimize interests, generally those of a hegemonic standard that benefits certain social groups to the detriment of others (Kroskrity 2010; see also Milani 2007). In the end, as pointed out by Blas Arroyo (2012 [2005]), mentioned earlier, stereotypes and prejudices related to the people who speak one linguistic variety or another are at the origin of attitudes. More conservative attitudes like these, as seen, are found in the responses of some participants.

6. Conclusions

This study explored the hypothesis that legislative changes over recent decades could lead to greater acceptance and assimilation of foreign anthroponyms among participants. It was observed that past norms regarding name assignment have left lasting social impacts, prompting individuals to seek greater freedom today. Specifically, participants from older generations, who were born and registered under now-repealed laws, express dissatisfaction with the former rigidity of state control over anthroponyms. In this context, the defence of the autonomy of the will is also evident when addressing foreign naming systems that some participants view as sexist. Evidence suggests that speakers tend to value their own anthroponymic system, often due to limited exposure to other systems or a lack of consideration regarding potential improvements.

The data from this study confirm previous findings regarding the influence of social factors on onomastic issues. Young people tend to be more liberal regarding rules concerning anthroponyms, while women are generally more sensitive to interests related to the attribution or adaptation of names. Additionally, the study observed that generational factors contribute to attitudes linking name adaptation with the integration of foreigners. This observation, particularly among male participants over 50 years old, suggests that further research with a larger sample size is needed to determine the extent and specific cases in which adaptations are more or less accepted. Similar to studies conducted in other communities, such as those by Amit and Dolberg (2023), Bucholtz (2016) and Kim (2007), it is also crucial to include the perspectives of foreigners themselves in the integration process in Salamanca. This approach would help understand how the forms used to designate them relate to their linguistic autonomy and the right to self-definition.

Additionally, future studies could contribute to promoting greater respect and tolerance for others' names, also considering the recommendations of the OSCE mentioned at the beginning of this work. In line with since Bucholtz's (2016) recommendations on the use of foreign names, it is important to refrain from modifying names to

make them easier to pronounce or to accommodate personal preferences unless the bearer explicitly permits or requests it; as previously stated, the adaptation of names can be seen as a strategy for integration into a host community or as a response to societal pressure (Giménez Lorenzo 2019; Waldispühl 2024). After all, previous studies on this topic have demonstrated that it is essential to ask individuals how they prefer to be addressed, without questioning whether their preferred form aligns with standard conventions, and to avoid placing blame on others for their names or on oneself for a lack of familiarity with them.

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”*S* med en liten fjång nertill”: Det dagliga bruket av diakriter hos namnbärare med invandrade namn

Märit Frändén

Abstract: This article presents a qualitative study based on interviews with Swedes with Turkish, Kurdish, Croatian or Vietnamese names. It addresses the level of knowledge and daily use of diacritics in the name bearers' own names, and it becomes evident that diacritics are seldom used. In some cases, the knowledge of the diacritics in the original name form becomes lost in younger generations; in others, informants are aware of the diacritics in their own name, but choose to omit them to facilitate life in Swedish society. While this is of no importance to some informants, others deeply regret the omission. The author discusses conditions and possible future development for the use of diacritics.

Key words: onomastics, personal names, diacritics, foreign letters, immigrant names

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1. Inledning

I en tidigare artikel (Frändén 2024) har jag undersökt i vilken utsträckning diakritiska tecken i invandrade efternamn är registrerade i den svenska folkbokföringen. I den här artikeln vill jag i stället lyfta fram ett namnbärarperspektiv, och undersöka namnbärares dagliga bruk av och tankar kring diakritiska tecken i invandrade namn. Har de parallella uttalsformer av invandrade namn, som beskrivits i Frändén 2017, någon skriftspråklig motsvarighet?

Undersökningarna baseras på intervjuer med personers vars efternamn har kommit till Sverige genom invandring. Arbetet är en del av projektet Släktnamn i smältdegeln, som har finansierats av Riksbankens Jubileumsfond. Projektet uppfyller de forskningsetiska krav som ställdes vid tiden för dess beviljande.

2. Diakritiska tecken

Diakritiska tecken, eller diakriter, är en benämning på tecken som läggs till en bokstav för att modifiera uttalet, t.ex. den betoningsangivande accenten i ordet *idé*. Accenten kan tas bort, och ger oss då ordet *ide*, som har ett annat uttal och en annan betydelse. Bokstavsräckan *i*, *d*, *e* kan alltså skrivas både med och utan accent på *e*:et, och accenten innehåller information om vilket uttal som ska användas. Men vårt alfabet innehåller också bokstäver med fasta diakritiska tecken, nämligen *å*, *ä* och *ö*. För oss är det självklart att ringen över *å* och prickarna över *ä* och *ö* har en starkare ställning än accenten över *é*. De förstnämnda är en del av bokstäverna, den senare är på tillfälligt besök.

Men det här ser olika ut i olika språk. De informanter som kommer till tals i den här artikeln har förnamn och/eller efternamn med upphov i kroatiska, kurdiska, turkiska och vietnamesiska. Alla dessa språk har bokstäver som saknas i det svenska alfabetet. I kroatiskan används bokstäverna č, ć, đ, š och ž (Dahl & Gustafsson 2001:X). Det nordkurdiska alfabetet (som använder latinska bokstäver) innehåller ç ş, ê, î och û. Ç och ş har egna ljudvärden, medan ê, î och û är långa

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varianter av e, i och u (Wikipedia: *Kurdiska alfabeten*). Det turkiska alfabetet innehåller bokstäverna ç, ğ, ı, i, ş och ü (där i och ı anger främre respektive bakre i, och därför skrivs med respektive utan prick oberoende av om det är en versal eller en gemen) (Müser 2005:5). Det vietnamesiska alfabetet, slutligen, innehåller bokstäverna ă, â, đ, ê, ô, ơ och ư. Dessutom används diakriter för att ange fem av språkets sex tonaccenter: akut accent (såsom á), grav accent (à), underställd punkt (ạ), krok (å) eller tilde (ã). Tecken för tonaccent kan också kombineras med bokstäver som har diakrit, som i det vanliga efternamnet *Nguyễn* (Wikipedia: *Vietnamesiska*).

Med termerna *diakrit* och *diakritiskt tecken* avser jag alla tecken som läggs till en bokstav, men inkluderar också en bokstav som utmärker sig genom att sakna diakrit, nämligen turkiskans *ı*.

3. Teori

3.1 Namn i skrift

Det finns ett starkt samband mellan personnamn och identitet (se t.ex. Aldrin 2016), och det gäller inte bara den talade formen av namnet, utan även den skrivna. Jozef M. Nuttin (1985) har konstaterat att försökspersoner som får välja mellan parvis uppställda bokstäver, uppvisar en preferens för de bokstäver som ingår i det egna namnet. Detta har kallats ”the name letter effect”. Hoorens & Todorova (1988) gjorde en liknande undersökning på bulgariska studenter, som hade en primär namnform skriven med kyrilliskt alfabet, men som också var förtrogna med sina namn i latinsk transkription, vilken de dock lärt sig senare. Det visade sig då att preferensen för bokstäverna i det egna namnet gällde oavsett alfabet.

Den brittiske lingvisten Mark Sebba (2007; 2009) har intresserat sig för skrift och stavning ur ett sociolingvistiskt perspektiv. Skriftsystem, ortografier och diakritiska tecken har inte bara funktionell betydelse, framhåller han, utan är ”an integrated part of a culture, endowed with the powerful symbolism of identity” (Sebba 2009:40). Ortografiska element får ofta ikonisk status, i synnerhet diakritiska

tecken ”due to their distinctiveness” (Sebba 2009:38). Ortografier i allmänhet, och diakritiska tecken i synnerhet, kan alltså ha ett stort värde som kulturella markörer.

3.2 Namn i förändring

Namn som har uppstått i en viss språklig kontext, och sedan används i en annan, påverkas ofta av den nya språkliga omgivningen, bland annat genom uttalsförändringar (se t.ex. Frändén 2017). Vera Lif (1999:228) har ställt upp en modell för hur namnbärare stegvis tar till sig ett anpassat uttal av det egna namnet:

1. Försöka lära ut det ”egentliga” uttalet
2. Ge upp, vänja sig vid och lystra till det anpassade uttalet
3. Anpassa sitt eget uttal efter detta
4. Bli omedveten om förändringen.

Modellens tredje steg, att anpassa sitt eget uttal, behöver inte vara ett ”antingen eller”, eftersom namnbärare ofta kan använda sig av parallella uttalsformer i olika sammanhang (se vidare Frändén 2017). Det sista steget, att bli omedveten om förändringen, kan tolkas på två sätt: antingen att man har anammat ett nytt uttal utan att själv vara medveten om det, eller att man är inte känner till någon annan namnform, det vill säga att man är omedveten om att en förändring ens har ägt rum.

I vårt skriftspråkssamhälle är den officiella stavningen av namn mycket viktig och kan inte utan vidare ändras på exempelvis en identitetshandling. Men om ett namn innehåller diakritiska tecken som inte är vanliga i Sverige kan dessa ofta utelämnas, antingen konsekvent eller i vissa sammanhang. Man kan tänka sig en skriftspråklig parallell till Lifs modell:

1. Försöka lära ut det ”egentliga” skrivsättet
2. Ge upp och vänja sig vid att se det egna namnet skrivet på det nya sättet

3. Anpassa sitt eget skrivsätt efter detta
4. Bli omedveten om förändringen.

Precis som i talspråksmodellen kan man tänka sig att steg tre ger utrymme för parallella skriftspråksformer av namnen, med eller utan diakritiska tecken. Och precis som i talspråksmodellens fjärde steg, kan en namnbärare antingen ha börjat utelämna diakritiska tecken utan att själv tänka på det, eller sakna kunskapen om att sådana kan användas.

Både vad gäller uttal och skrivsätt kan personnamn som härrör från modern invandring befinna sig antingen i eller efter denna process. Om en namnbärare varken saknar eller känner till någon annan namnform än den anpassade, är processen avslutad. Men innan dess kan många namnbärare förhålla sig till två variantformer, en mer ”ursprunglig” (som här inte ska tolkas som ursprunglig i etymologisk mening, utan som en normalform i det land namnet tidigare har använts) och en anpassad form. Vad som är ”rätt” eller ”fel” namnform går inte att svara på, eftersom båda formerna är korrekta på sitt sätt och i sitt sammanhang. En enskild namnbärare kan förstås uppfatta den ena eller den andra formen som sitt ”riktiga namn”, men mina undersökningar fokuserar inte på rätt och fel, utan på förändringsprocessen i sig. När sker förändringar, hur sker de, och vad är namnbärarnas syn på vad som händer?

4. Tidigare forskning om diakriter i personnamn

En grundligare sammanställning av tidigare forskning om diakriter i personnamn ges i Frändén 2024:60–62. Här vill jag endast lyfta fram Vera Lifs artikel från 1999, som handlar om invandrares namn i Sverige. Hon konstaterar att för invandrade namn skrivna med latinskt alfabet, brukar det vara just eventuella diakritiska tecken som vållar problem. När Lif granskade namn på klasslistor för Svenska för invandrare (SFI) från mitten av 1990-talet, fann hon att det bland de bosniska och kosovoalbanska eleverna fanns endast ett diakritiskt

tecken i efternamnen, nämligen <é> i *Wirén*, som en av eleverna bar som giftasnamn. Lif (1999:229) skriver:

> Redan innan invandraren kan slå sig till ro i sin nya tillvaro i Sverige, har namnet gått igenom ett antal instanser och skrivits av många olika tjänstemän. Det är då inte ovanligt, att detaljer – ja, även bokstäver – tappas bort eller kastas om i hanteringen, eftersom de diakritiska tecknen inte ger den svenska skrivaren den avsedda informationen. Tecknen kan rent av upplevas som besvärliga och man tar sig inte tid till att få någon förklaring.

Ett <é> i ett svenskspråkigt efternamn kan alltså av en svenskspråkig tjänsteman uppfattas som relevant och självklart att få med, medan diakriter man inte förstår innebörden av kan uppfattas som mindre viktiga och vara lättare att missa. Lif (ibid.) fortsätter:

> Ett diakritiskt tecken får läsaren att stanna upp och tänka efter ett ögonblick, får man hoppas. I och med att stavningen av namnen genomgående nonchalerades gjordes heller inga allvarliga försök att uttala dem rätt. Namnbärarna fick mycket ofta höra och se sina namn förvrängas, vilket kan vara både tröttande och irriterande. Så länge språksvårigheterna hindrar kommunikationen, är det svårt att på ett hövligt sätt tillrättavisa personer, som man är beroende av – i detta fall kommunens tjänstemän.

Lif (1999:230) konstaterar att de undersökta SFI-eleverna följer ett mönster där man inte korrigerar namnet, utan snarare är generad över sitt svåra namn, att man ursäktar den försvenskade namnformen med att namnet är svårt för svenskspråkiga, samt att man i många fall också försvenskar sitt eget uttal.

5. Material och metod

Inom forskningsprojektet Släktnamn i smältdegeln har jag intervjuat personer i Sverige vars efternamn har kommit till landet genom invandring. Intervjuerna har varit semistrukturerade och berört olika teman. Materialet har i den här artikeln avgränsats till informanter

vars namn innehåller andra tecken än det svenska alfabetet. Med denna avgränsning ingår intervjuer med 13 informanter, 9 kvinnor och 4 män, i åldrarna 20–60 år, vars namn ursprungligen kommer från kroatiska, kurdiska, turkiska eller vietnamesiska. Nio av informanterna är födda i Sverige av utlandsfödda föräldrar, medan fyra själva har invandrat till Sverige som barn, ungdomar eller vuxna. Två av informanterna har intervjuats vid samma tillfälle. Informanterna är slumpmässigt valda med utgångspunkt i efternamnen, och har varken direkta eller indirekta beröringspunkter med mig själv. De har kontaktats med ett brev med några korta meningar om projektets tema, men har inte fått någon fördjupad information om frågeställningen inför intervjutillfället.

Jag har tagit fasta på de delar av intervjumaterialet som berör diakritiska tecken, oavsett om det gäller informanternas egna för- och efternamn eller andra personnamn, till exempel på familjemedlemmar, som nämns under samtalet. Materialet har sorterats under tematiska rubriker (6.1–6.9 nedan), vilka delvis överlappar varandra.

Intervjuerna innehåller känslig information om bland annat namn, etnicitet och religion, varför jag har gjort flera åtgärder för att minimera risken att någon informant ska kunna identifieras. I anslutning till exemplen ges viss information om den aktuella informanten, men inte mer än vad som behövs för att sätta in exemplet i ett sammanhang. Jag vill inte presentera informanterna som ”typer”, och är därför avsiktligt otydlig med vilka informanter som återkommer i flera exempel. Delar som innehåller personlig information har uteslutits eller maskerats, och samtliga informanter omtalas med det könsneutrala pronomenet *hen*.

I intervjutranskriptionerna används fetstil för att markera betoning och citattecken för att markera förändrat röstläge, exempelvis när man återger en replik. Hakparenteser används för förtydliganden eller information om vad som sker, såsom [skratt]. Uteslutna delar av samtal återges med [---]. Vissa responssignaler, upprepningar och självkorrigeringar har, för läsbarhetens skull, tagits bort utan att det har markerats. Snedstreck (//) används för att markera uttal och hakar (<>) för att markera skrifttecken.

6. Resultat

6.1 Diakritlös form som enda namnform

Allra först möter vi en informant i 30-årsåldern med ett turkiskt efternamn. Namnet innehåller ursprungligen ett <ı>, som på turkiska uttalas /ɨ/. Informanten är inte turkisktalande, och uttalar namnet med svenskt /i/-ljud. När jag ber informanten skriva sitt namn, gör hen det med <i>. Jag frågar:

Exempel 1.
MF: Eh, vet du om det går att skriva … på nåt annat sätt?
Inf.: Det vet jag inte.
MF: Näe. För det, det jag undrar är om det går att skriva med sånt här turkiskt i … som inte har nån prick.
Inf.: Mhm. Det **vet** jag faktiskt inte.

Eftersom informanten varken känner till eller saknar någon annan namnform, kan namnanpassningsprocessen för den här individen konstateras vara avslutad.

Nästa informant är i 20-årsåldern. Båda föräldrarna kommer från Vietnam och flyttade till Sverige innan informantens födelse. Informanten har vietnamesiska som förstaspråk, men säger själv att hen har lite svårt att skriva och läsa vietnamesiska. Informantens efternamn skrivs på vietnamesiska med två diakriter, men hen skriver det själv utan diakriter, och kommenterar:

Exempel 2.
Inf.: Det **brukar** ju annars va så här … apostrofer och sånt där i namn och sånt, men …
MF: Jaa?
Inf.: Dom här **finns** inte, dom här **har** inte.

Trots att informanten uppger att namnet skrivs utan accenter, är hen ändå medveten om accenternas existens och funktion i vietnamesiskan, och förklarar det för mig:

Exempel 3.
Inf.: Om man säger typ … Jag vet att det stavas så men jag är inte säker på vilken apostrof det är. Det här [skriver] är 'fisk', då säger man … man säger "/gá/". Det är ganska ljust där.
MF: Ja.
Inf.: Går **upp**. Och sen om du säger, typ, 'tomat'. Som är "/gà/". Då är det typ **så**! [skriver]
MF: Och då gick det **ner**?
Inf.: Ja, exakt. Så det är verkligen … **svårt**, man måste liksom **bemästra** det här.

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MF: Ja, jag förstår.
Inf.: Och hur man ska skriva, det är typ bara [frustrerat:] ”Aaah!”
MF: Men du har inga såna i **ditt** namn?
Inf.: Nej, jag har inga.
[---]
MF: Tror du att du **skulle** skriva ut dom om du hade dom, eller skulle du bara strunta i dom?
Inf.: Oj! Jag tror nog jag **skulle** skriva ut det.

Trots att informanten är modersmålstalare, har kunskap om accenter generellt och är positivt inställd till att använda sådana, saknas alltså kännedom om diakriterna i det egna namnet. Det kanske kan låta märkligt, men som vi ska se finns det förhållanden som förklarar liknande situationer.

6.2 Vetskap om att diakriter finns

Två informanter med samma vietnamesiska efternamn har intervjuats vid samma tillfälle. Båda är i 20-årsåldern och uppväxta i Sverige. De är inte släkt, men känner varandra sedan länge och har bland annat haft modersmålsundervisning tillsammans. När jag ber dem skriva ner sina namn, säger en av dem: ”Jaha. Jag … lägger inte till accenterna.” När jag ber hen skriva ut dem för att visa för mig, börjar båda informanterna skratta:

Exempel 4.
Inf. 1.: Eh, jaa … [skratt] [skämtsamt till Inf 2:] Gör det du!
[Skratt]
Inf. 2: **Jag** vet inte, det är ditt namn!
[Skratt]
Inf. 1: Kolla, min mamma och pappa har **aldrig** skrivit namnet ut liksom så här på papper med alla accenter och såna saker, jag har bara sett mitt namn … skrivet på, typ … ”svenska” sättet. Och jag har ju aldrig frågat dom bara: ”men hur är det med alla accenter” för att jag har aldrig **behövt** skriva alla accenter.
MF: Mm.
Inf. 1: Så … [viskande:] jag kan faktiskt inte göra det.
MF: Det går bra, jag kan inte heller!
Inf. 1: Jag kan **säkert**, typ, göra nån så här, ja men det är typ så här ”tungt”, och då måste det va prick här nere och såna saker, men det …
Inf. 2: Sen kommer den här hemspråksläraren[1] och bara: ”No no!”
[Skratt]

[1] Under informanternas skoltid användes benämningen *hemspråk*, som 1996 ersattes med *modersmål*.

Även hos dessa båda informanter finns god generell kunskap om diakriterna och vilken typ av analys som kan användas för att hitta rätt diakrit. Men samtidigt är det tydligt att just detta omges av en stor osäkerhet – och uppenbarligen också är något de är vana att få korrigerat.

Med tanke på att dessa informanter både har talat vietnamesiska som förstaspråk i hemmet och läst vietnamesiska som modersmål under hela skoltiden, är det förståeligt att informanten i exempel (2) och (3), som är trygg i talspråket men inte hade möjlighet att få modersmålsundervisning, kan uppfatta att det egna efternamnet saknar diakriter.

En informant i 30-årsåldern, som är född i Vietnam men kom till Sverige under förskoleåren, har demonstrerat diakriterna i sitt eget förnamn. När jag frågar om diakriter i efternamnet, svarar hen: ”Jo, det ska finnas nån krumelur, jag … kommer inte ihåg, eftersom jag nästan aldrig använder det.” Informanten skriver ner även sina syskons namn, med kommentaren ”Jag kan inte alla krumelurer, inte **deras** krumelurer”. Här behärskar informanten alltså diakriterna i det egna förnamnet, men för efternamnet och syskonens förnamn finns enbart vetskapen om att diakriter existerar, inte vilka eller var.

6.3 Konsekvent diakritanvändning

Informanten i nästa exempel är i 35-årsåldern, född och uppväxt i Sverige med turkiska som språk i hemmet. Efternamnet innehåller den turkiska bokstaven <ı>, som informanten uttalar på turkiskt vis, som /ɨ/.

Exempel 5.

MF: Om du skriver ditt namn. Hur gör du då?

Inf.: Då brukar jag skriva … [skriver efternamnet med <ı>] … **rätt**, så att säga. Då brukar jag ju inte skriva … Och ibland har nån, så där, sagt att ”men du har skrivit utan, du har glömt pricken på i:et”, **då** förklarar man att ”jae, men det är inte ett i”.

MF: Mm.

Inf.: Så.

MF: Men väcker det annars frågor att du skriver så där?

Inf.: Näe, nej, men som sagt var, **om** det är nån som frågar varför det inte är ett i, **då** kommer man in på det, men, sällan, det är väldigt sällan.

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Den som inte är van vid en distinktiv skillnad mellan <i> och <ı> registrerar kanske inte en utelämnad prick, och möjligen är det också lättare för namnbäraren att, jämfört med svenska bokstäver, ta bort en diakrit i stället för att lägga till en.

6.4 Bortvalda diakriter

En informant i 60-årsåldern, som flyttat till Sverige från Vietnam som vuxen, är väl förtrogen med vietnamesiska i både tal och skrift. När jag ber informanten skriva ner sitt namn, gör hen det dock utan diakriter. Jag frågar om namnet kan skrivas även med diakriter:

Exempel 6.
MF: Om man skulle skriva det här i Vietnam, visst skulle man kunna ha nån slags små …?
[Inf. skriver ut namnets diakriter]
MF: Jaa. Skriver du **ut** dom nån gång, i Sverige?
Inf.: Näe.
MF: Näe?
Inf.: Eh, det vållar bara problem! [Skratt]

Här är utelämnandet av diakriterna följden av ett aktivt val, eftersom de upplevs ”vålla problem”.

En Sverigefödd informant i 20-årsåldern berättar om sina föräldrar, som båda är uppväxta i Vietnam:

Exempel 7.
MF: Hur gör dina föräldrar, skriver **dom** nånsin ut … du sa att dom inte skriver ut accenter på **ditt** namn?
Inf.: Nej dom skriver inte ut på **sitt** namn heller, för att dom **vet** att det kommer inte hänga med, eller, dom kommer inte fatta då, så dom skriver … bara uttal. Nånting.

Informantens två första ”dom”, på rad tre, syftar på föräldrarna, men man får gissa att det ”dom” på rad fyra, som ingår i ”dom kommer inte fatta”, syftar på den svenska allmänheten, som erfarenhetsmässigt antas strunta i de vietnamesiska accenterna.

För att få en uppfattning om hur vanligt det är att medvetet utelämna diakriterna, frågar jag den äldre vietnamesiska informanten, som jag gissar har hunnit få större erfarenhet än de yngre informanterna:

Exempel 8.
MF: Har du nån aning om hur andra vietnameser i Sverige **gör**? Är det vanligt att … Jag tänker, det här med tecken, till exempel, eller dom här … liksom extratecknen.
Inf.: Mhm?
MF: Vet du nån som skriver ut dom?
Inf.: Nej, jag tror inte det. Eh … Eh, jag tror inte det. Eftersom man vill ju undvika … krångel. Så skriver man inte ut.
MF: Jaa.
Inf.: Det är ungefär som å, ä, ö på svenska, då, om man är i USA så skippar man dom där. Det är exakt samma. Det är samma förfarande, då.

Enligt denna informant är det alltså vanligt även hos andra vietnameser i Sverige att välja bort diakriterna – man vill ”undvika krångel”.

En kurdisk informant i 40-årsåldern, som kom till Sverige från Turkiet som tonåring, bär ett efternamn innehållande den turkiska bokstaven <ğ>: ett ”mjukt g” som oftast saknar ljudvärde och i stället förlänger föregående vokal. Informanten både skriver och uttalar efternamnet med svenskt *g*:

Exempel 9.
Inf.: Jag tycker faktiskt att det är mycket enklare att bara köra med g än att hålla på och säga, ja men … Det skulle va krångligt att hålla på och förklara för folk … ”det ska va ett g med streck över” och att ”det ska uttalas så här”, utan jag väljer mer det enkla. Och bara säger [svensk namnform med uttalat g]. Straight forward.
MF: Mm.
Inf.: Inte hålla på och behöva förklara hur det ska … stavas eller uttalas. Faktiskt, det blir ganska jobbigt i längden om man ska försöka förklara det för varenda … myndighetsperson som man träffar, till exempel.
MF: Jo.
Inf.: Så [skratt], jag föredrar faktiskt g! Så som det är nu.
MF: Mm. Hellre ett g än ett krångel?
Inf.: Ja, precis!

Informanten menar att det är enklare att både uttala och skriva namnet med vanligt *g*, eftersom man då slipper förklaringar. Ett liknande resonemang finns hos nästa informant. Hen är i 30-årsåldern och uppväxt i Sverige med föräldrar från turkiska Kurdistan. I hemmet har det talats både turkiska och kurdiska. Informanten bär ett turkiskspråkigt efternamn innehållande ett <ş>, som familjen uttalar /s/. Så här beskriver hen namnbruket:

Exempel 10.
Inf.: Men då är det liksom ett s med en liten fjång nertill. Och den finns ju inte på svenska. Eller i svenska alfabetet, så

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den togs ju bort liksom, så det blev ju bara som ett vanligt s. Ehm … Men det uttalar vi som /s/, vi säger liksom inte /ʃ/ för att då skulle dom … eller folk som skulle typ skriva **mitt** namn skriva typ som s, h, för att det låter som … /ʃ/ då. Så att vi valde liksom bara att ta bort det, så att det blev som ett vanligt s.

När jag ber informanten skriva ner sitt namn gör hen det med, som hen själv säger, ”bara vanliga bokstäver”. Jag frågar om det förekommer att hen använder diakriten:

Exempel 11.

MF: Den här krumeluren som du beskrev … händer det …?
Inf.: Den [skriver ut diakriten], den är typ **där**. Ser typ ut så **där**.
MF: Händer det nån gång att du skriver ut den?
Inf.: Näe, jag har aldrig **gjort** det.
MF: Näe.
Inf.: Ja, inte i Sverige, men jag har liksom aldrig fått skriva mitt namn heller i Turkiet, jag har liksom aldrig behövt göra det.
MF: Mm.
Inf.: Jag bara kom att tänka på, vi fixade ju ID-kort i Turkiet, men då minns jag inte heller om jag fick skriva **ut**, men hade jag gjort det så hade jag väl gjort liksom ett s med … fjången. Men annars har jag liksom aldrig behövt göra det.

Resonemanget hos båda dessa informanter tycks vara att när man väl har gått över till det svenska uttalet, är den ursprungliga diakriten inte längre befogad. Temat fortsätter hos nästa informant, som är i 25-årsåldern och född och uppväxt i Sverige. Det turkiskspråkiga efternamnet innehåller ett <ç>, som i informantens svenska namnform uttalas som /k/.

Exempel 12.

MF: När du ska skriva det, själv … Hur skriver du?
Inf.: Jag kan visa. Alltså nu som vanligt. Så här: [skriver namnet utan diakrit]
MF: Mm. Så du hoppar över den lilla krumeluren.
Inf.: Ja. I Turkiet: **så** [skriver namnet med diakrit].
MF: Mm. Men du använder aldrig den i Sverige?
Inf.: Näe, aldrig.
MF: Mm. Varför inte?
Inf.: Nej, jag vet inte … Alltså, i alla mina, alltså ID-kort och pass och … ända sen jag var liten så har ju jag liksom skrivit med ett c. Och jag har ju uttalat det som ett … som att det **är** skrivet med ett vanligt c. Så jag har **aldrig** liksom … ens tänkt tanken på att jag skulle lägga till den där krumeluren, just för att … den **finns** ju liksom inte i svenska alfabetet på det sättet.
MF: Mm, näe. Så det står med vanligt c i passet?
Inf.: Jaa, **allting** som har med Sverige att göra är skrivet på det här sättet. Alltså, med … med vanligt c.

Denna informant har mycket tydligt två parallella namnformer, en för ”allting som har med Sverige att göra” och en för användning i Turkiet. Gränsen mellan formerna tycks vara skarp.

En annan Sverigefödd informant i 25-årsåldern bär ett turkiskt efternamn innehållande ett <ğ>. Informanten har redan berättat att både hen själv och övriga familjemedlemmar skriver namnet med svenskt <g>.

Exempel 13.

MF: Finns det **nåt** sammanhang där du skriver **ut** … g-krumeluren?
Inf.: Nej, alltså, inte **här**. Eh … inte nåt jag kan, alltså nån gång jag kan komma på att jag har gjort det, men … skulle jag vara i Turkiet så … Eller, skulle det vara nånting, nån blankett jag skulle fylla i i Turkiet, det hände en gång när jag skulle besöka sjukhuset där, och då var det ju … då stavade jag det … **så** [pekar på namnet med diakrit]. Så som det egentligen **ska** stavas.
MF: Mm.
Inf.: Så. Men inte ofta **alls**, och inte **alls** här i Sverige. Nej.

En turkisktalande informant, som själv utelämnar diakriter i sitt namn, kommenterar ett annat turkiskspråkigt namn:

Exempel 14.

Inf.: Jag … pluggade med en tjej som hette Çiçek i efternamn. Vilket betyder ’blomma’, på turkiska. Men hon stavade ju det med ett vanligt c. ”Cicek”, så. Och hon uttalade det även … på det svenska sättet. /’si:sek/.
MF: /’si:sek/?
Inf.: Ja.
MF: Ja. Hur låter det i dina turkiska öron?
Inf.: Inte bra **alls**! [Skratt] Nej men, jag förstår ju att man gör så.
MF: Mm. [Paus] Tänker du just … av praktiska skäl?
Inf.: Praktiska skäl. För jag gör ju **själv** det, liksom. Så … Det är förståeligt.

Informanten uttrycker förståelse för att utelämna diakriter av praktiska skäl, men har ändå reagerat på kurskamratens svenska namnform. Kanske är försvenskningen av det egna namnet invand, men försvenskningar av andra namn mer iögonenfallande, i synnerhet om de sammanfaller med vanliga appellativ.

6.5 Problem kopplade till diakriter

Som vi har sett har många bärare av namn med diakriter accepterat det svenska sättet att både uttala och skriva namnen. Men andra är mindre nöjda – och alla namn är heller inte så enkla att försvenska. En informant i 20-årsåldern, uppväxt i Sverige i ett turkisktalande hem, berättar om sin yngre systers namn:

Exempel 15.

Inf.: Min lillasyster heter så här. [Skriver ”Tuluğ”]
MF: Okej.
Inf.: Det **här** [pekar på ğ] menas att man förlänger u:et lite. Så att, det här är oftast en bokstav som förlänger nån annan bokstav. Den finns inte heller [i Sverige].
MF: Näe.
Inf.: Henne blir det ju **jädrans** massa problem [för]. [---] ”Tu-lugg”! Det är ju nåt **helt** annat, och det är ju, det blir hon ju … ”Varför har ni döpt mig till det **här**?” Men det är **så** fint, på turkiska. Det betyder gryning. Och då blir det så här … eh, ja, ”kom upp i åldern, så börjar du vänja dig med ditt namn” [skratt]. Eh, annars så, hon säger ju ”jag heter /tulu/”. Och då blir det t, o, l, o. Därför ändras det **också**. Hon har ju **mycket** svårare än vad jag har, för jag har ändå ett internationellt namn [---]. Men, hos henne är det en **massa** problem.
MF: Jaa.
[Paus]
Inf.: Ja näe, det **är** lite svårt.

Informanten konstaterar att det egna namnet går att anpassa till ett svenskt uttal, men inte systerns:

Exempel 16.

Inf: Mitt namn kan, det **går** att uttala så här [dvs. i en anpassad form]. Varför går inte min systers namn? Så det var så här, ”vad tänkte ni på?”
MF: Jaa.
Inf.: Varför döper ni henne till det **där**? Alltså, varför har ni **den** stavningen, för att det finns, annars **kan** man ju stava det så här också, t, u, l, u. **Den** stavningen finns ju **också** på turkiska. Men, det blir liksom en sån hära … en annan variant av det här namnet.
MF: Jaa, okej.
Inf.: Alltså, tänk dig ”Oskar”. Kan både stavas med c och k. Det blir typ **så**. Så att dom bara: ”Nej men det här är den **riktiga** stavningen, **den**.”

Informanten ifrågasätter att man valt varianten *Tuluğ* framför den enklare *Tulu*, medan föräldrarna försvarar valet med att den längre stavningen är ”den riktiga”. Två ideal, ett namn som uppfattas som mer korrekt eller ett namn som är mer lättanvänt, krockar därmed.

En informant i 25-årsåldern, som är född och uppväxt i Sverige med föräldrar från turkiska Kurdistan, bär ett kurdiskt förnamn med två diakriter, som hen inte skriver ut i Sverige. Namnet innehåller ett enkeltecknat <l>, som många felaktigt dubbeltecknar. Informanten kommenterar skrivningen med dubbeltecknat <l> såhär:

Exempel 17.
Inf.: Näe. Det skulle också va liksom att … att jag hela tiden måste … anpassa mitt namn. Till att det ska bli lättare för **folk**. Det gör ju liksom, det får mig att känna liksom att då tappar jag lite av min identitet på vägen dit också, bara för att jag ska anpassa mig för att det ska bli **lättare** för andra. Det **är** ju så här det ska … Alltså, jag **har** ju redan, vi **har** ju redan anpassat oss … i och med att vi har tagit bort dom här strecken och så, jag vill inte anpassa mig **ännu** mer. [Paus] För att det ska bli lättare. Utan, så här **är** det, liksom.

Informanten uttrycker att familjen redan har anpassat sig genom att ta bort diakriterna, och att det därför inte är rimligt att anpassa sig ännu mer, eftersom hen menar att hen då ”tappar lite av sin identitet på vägen”. Man kan förenkla namnet till en viss gräns, men inte hur långt som helst.

6.6 Tekniska begränsningar

I exempel (5) mötte vi en informant som skriver sitt turkiska <ı> utan prick. Men förutsättningarna är som bekant annorlunda när man skriver för hand och vid tangentbord. Jag frågar samma informant hur hen skriver namnet vid datorn.

Exempel 18.
MF: Om du skriver på en dator. Hur skriver du då?
Inf.: Ja men då finns det ju bara i [med prick]. Eller, det … det går väl komma åt på nåt sätt antar jag, men … Nej, jag gör mig inte det besväret [skratt].
MF: Nej det är **det**, alltså: det mesta går att komma åt, men det kanske inte är så smidigt. Så det är, när du skriver för hand som det blir …
Inf.: Mm, när jag skriver mejl kanske, till turkiska släktingar. Då kan jag … Då går jag nästan in på en turkisk sida och klipper och klistrar.

Trots att informanten konsekvent skriver <ı> för hand, används svenskt <i> när hen skriver på tangentbord. Undantaget är i kon-

takt med turkiska släktingar, då informanten ser till att använda rätt tecken genom att klippa in det från någon turkisk sida.

En informant med kroatiskt efternamn som ibland skriver ut diakriten i sitt namn för hand, säger:

Exempel 19.

Inf.: Det är ju asjobbigt när man ska försöka, alltså jag skriver ju **aldrig** ut det i dokument, jag hade gärna **velat**, men jag har ju inte den bokstaven på tangentbordet, då måste jag gå in i ”symboler”, och **hitta** det här, på Word liksom, genom hela **listan**, på symboler som finns.

En informant som är född och uppväxt i Sverige med turkiska som språk i hemmet, bär ett efternamn innehållande det turkiska ordet *küçük* ’liten’. Jag frågar hur informanten gör med det <ç> som finns i namnet:

Exempel 20.

MF: Men hur gör du själv med ditt c … eller ditt ”tje” eller vad man ska kalla det.

Inf.: Jag **skriver** inte det. Jag skriver c. Jag är tvungen att skriva ett c för att den här … Man måste leta **på** den lite, man måste ändra tangentbordet. Och det har inte jag tid med att göra varje gång. Så att, det blir [bokstaverar efternamnet]. Som vanligt. Ett vanligt c, ett vanligt u.

MF: Jaa, så dom här [prickarna över ü] försvinner också?

Inf.: Mm.

Eftersom <ü> är mer bekant i Sverige än <ç>, kunde man tänka sig att <ü> oftare skrivs med diakrit. Men informanten väljer ändå att utelämna prickarna över <ü>:

Exempel 21.

MF: Om **svenskar** ska skriva ditt namn. Hur …?

Inf.: Då blir det så här: [demonstrerar ett antal olika felstavningar, skrattar uppgivet]. Nej det går inte. [Paus] Det är ju sällan jag … har träffat på en person som kan stava mitt namn helt rätt. Eller, jag har **aldrig** träffat på en person. Eller, en svensk.

MF: Mm.

Inf.: Som … som kan göra det, och det är … [ironiskt:] **helt** normalt.

Informanten visar några av de felskrivningar som förekommer, där varken <ç> eller <ü> får diakriter, och bokstaverar därför själv namnet med enbart <c> och <u> i svenska sammanhang.[2]

6.7 Selektiv användning

Även om man har kunskap om namnformen med diakriter, kan kunskap och praktik som bekant skilja sig åt. Jag frågar en sverigefödd informant med föräldrar från Vietnam om föräldrarnas diakritbruk.

Exempel 22.
MF: Dina föräldrar, som väl ändå var vuxna när dom kom hit?
Inf.: Ja.
MF: Har **dom** såna här krumelurer som dom skriver ut?
Inf.: Dom skriver aldrig ut **krumelurer**.
MF: Näe. Så dom skriver bara med … vanliga bokstäver, så att säga?
Inf.: Ja. Eller, dom, när dom ska skriva till vietnameser, då skriver dom med sina krumelurer.
MF: Mm.
Inf.: Men när dom ska bara skriva till svenskar, då … tar dom inte med dom.
MF: Näe. Jag förstår. Mm.
[Paus]
Inf.: För det är oftast ingen idé att lära dom mitt språk, om man säger, när dom ska träffa nån.

Informantens föräldrar använder alltså namnens diakriter i kontakt med andra vietnameser, men aldrig annars. Det tycks finnas en känsla av att det är meningslöst att ens försöka använda diakriter i vietnamesiska namn i Sverige.

En informant i 25-årsåldern, som kom till Sverige som liten och har haft kroatiska som språk i hemmet, bär ett kroatiskt efternamn som inleds med <Š>. När jag frågar hur hen skriver namnet, får jag en motfråga:

Exempel 23.
Inf.: Eh, på riktigt? Eller som jag brukar skriva det?
MF: Båda delarna.
Inf.: Aa. [skriver namnet utan diakriter] Så **här** skriver jag ju det alltid när … när det bara är på papper och grejer, men … Mitt efternamn skriver jag ju på **riktigt** så här [skriver namnet med diakriter].

[2] Detta kan jämföras med SVT:s reporter Johan Kücükaslan, vars efternamn brukar återges just så, med anpassat <c> men bibehållet <ü>.

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MF: Mm. [Paus] Använder du på-riktigt-stavningen nån gång i Sverige? Eller, när använder du det ena och det andra?
Inf.: Eh, jag tecknar mycket serier. Och när jag signerar en stripp så gör jag det med mitt … med riktiga stavningen, men då brukar det oftast bli initialer, men det är alltid det riktiga Š. Bokstaven.
MF: Jaa.
Inf.: Eh, men **det** är nog dom enda tillfällena när jag faktiskt stavar det på riktigt. I Sverige.
MF: Mm. [Paus] Näe, det är, alltså …
Inf.: [För sig själv:] Hur signerar jag? [Paus, informanten testskriver namnet] Ja, precis, när jag signerar också. [---] Så **det** gör jag ju. [---] **Då** lägger jag alltid … på s:et. Det är en liten …
MF: Ja just det, det är … aa.
Inf.: Så det är **det** jag gör. Det gör jag **också**, faktiskt, i underskriften.
MF: Ja. Alltså, om du skriver under papper och …
Inf.: Ja, precis, min signatur gör jag med riktiga … s:et. Så det är **så**.
MF: Men annars, om du ska skriva upp dig på en lista för nåt så …
Inf.: Mm, då är det [pekar på namnet skrivet utan diakriter].
MF: Aa.
Inf.: Svensk-stavningen! [Skratt]

Många av dem jag har intervjuat har en primär namnform, och nämner andra möjligheter först när jag frågar. Men informanten i exempel (23) gör omedelbar skillnad på ”på riktigt” och som hen ”brukar skriva det”, och opererar alltså aktivt med två former även i Sverige. Hen är genast medveten om diakriten i initialsignaturen, men behöver däremot prova sig fram innan hen konstaterar att hen använder diakrit även i namnteckningen.

I exempel (24) möter vi en informant i 25-årsåldern som är född och uppväxt i Sverige med turkiska som språk i hemmet. Informantens hela namnräcka består av tre turkiskspråkiga namn: ett förnamn, ett mellannamn och ett efternamn. Både mellannamnet och efternamnet innehåller <ğ>. När jag ber informanten skriva ner sitt namn, skriver hen för- och efternamn, utan diakrit.

Exempel 24.
MF: Så då skriver du inte ut …
Inf.: Näe.
MF: Näe, du skriver utan …
Inf.: Eh, utan den här kråkan, för att den inte finns i det svenska alfabetet.
MF: Mm, mm. Skriver du alltid så där?
Inf.: Jaa.
MF: I Sverige?
Inf.: Jaa. Det gör jag. Det kommer jag att tänka på nu [skrattar till]. Nej men, jaa, det blir så. För vissa kan ju … För

nån gång när jag gjorde en sån kråka så … trodde nån, eller en lärare som jag hade förut, att det var den **här** bokstaven [pekar på ÿ]. Som inte heller finns … eller inte vad **jag** vet, i det svenska alfabetet. Ett y med två prickar på.

MF: Näe. Näe.

Inf.: Hon trodde att det var nåt sånt. Eh, och så blev det helt fel här, [feluttal] blev det då. Ehm, så jag slutade med den där kråkan [skratt] därefter.

MF: Men, du gjorde alltså den, du skrev den i början?

Inf.: Ja. Och då skrev jag även [mellannamnet] också, hela mitt namn.

MF: Mm, med kråka på båda g:na?

Inf.: Kråka på båda, ja.

MF: När slutade du med det?

Inf.: Jag tror att det var i samband med att jag … började söka jobb. När jag … fyllde 16. 15–16 nån gång. Eh, då märkte jag att det blev krångligt. Så ville jag göra det så enkelt som möjligt.

MF: Ja. Krångligt på så sätt att folk inte förstod namnet, eller, hur?

Inf.: Precis, och inte visste vad mitt tilltalsnamn var. Så dom kanske, dom blandade ihop [mellannamn] och [förnamn], och sen så blev det så långt.

MF: Mm.

Inf.: Så här, jag tyckte det såg snyggare ut med [för- och efternamn, utelämnat mellannamn]

MF: Aa. [Paus] Lättare att få folk att förstå vad som är vad?

Inf.: Ja.

Flera yttre faktorer har fått informanten att ändra sitt sätt att skriva namnet. Hen övergick till att skriva <g> i stället för <ğ> efter att en lärare misstolkat tecknet och gjort ett lite löjligt feluttal. Dessutom började informanten utelämna mellannamnet i samband med att hen började söka jobb, när hen ”märkte att det blev krångligt” och ”ville göra det så enkelt som möjligt”. Även om informanten säger att hen ”tyckte det såg snyggare ut” med enbart för- och efternamn, dessutom skrivet utan <ğ>, kan man misstänka att det inte främst handlar om hur det ser ut i informantens egna ögon, utan i andras. Det verkar vara först när jag explicit frågar, som informanten uppmärksammar sin egen praxis, eftersom hen skrattar till och tillägger ”kommer jag att tänka på nu”.

6.8 Diakriter som påverkansfaktor vid namnval

Det har tidigare konstaterats att förnamnsval kan påverkas av namns skriftbild, inte minst när det finns flera språk att ta hänsyn till (se

Aldrin 2009:90–91; Aldrin 2011:121–124; Frändén 2015:113–116). Som exempel (25) visar, kan även diakriter spela in. Informanten är i 20-årsåldern och uppväxt i Sverige med turkiska som språk i hemmet. Informantens pappa kom till Sverige som barn; modern i tonåren. Jag frågar om det var självklart att familjens barn skulle få turkiska förnamn.

Exempel 25.

Inf.: Mm, mm. Det är självklart, och, hm … det börjar förändras, för att … **numer** så börjar den nya generationen liksom ta mer **modernare** namn, lite **lättare** namn. Speciellt, till exempel, min storebror. Dom fick barn. De heter [två enkla, tvåstaviga namn utan diakriter]. Så det är liksom **bara**, det är vanliga … det är inga turkiska **bokstäver** i det, det är ingen turkisk **stavning** i det, eller … Så som man läser, så säger man det. Ungefär.

MF: Mm.

Inf.: Så dom har ju inte alls … svårigheter, så **dom** tänkte ju på det. Men det tänkte ju inte min **farfar** [som valde förnamn till informanten och hens syskon] på.

MF: Mm, näe. [Paus] Att, liksom tänka på bokstäverna?

Inf.: Ja, han tänkte väl att, ”ja men jag jobbar här några år, och sen åker vi tillbaka”. Men vi blev **fast** här. Vi trivdes här så pass **bra**, så att vi kände, ”nej men vi behöver inte åka tillbaka än”.

MF: Mm, mm.

Inf.: Och då, sen, på det giftermål, och barn och sånt, så att det, det fortsätter bara vidare, och det är nog så **jag** tänker också, för bara: ”Mamma vet du, när jag skaffar barn så tänker inte jag döpa dom till **såna** svåra …” [Härmar modern, irriterad röst:] ”Jaha! Vad ska man använda **då**, då? Då försvinner ju **alla** våra namn!” [Paus] Med tiden. Och då blir det så här: ”Ja. Det är ju också sant.” Så att …

MF: Mm.

Inf.: Men det **blir** att dom börjar anpassa sig till svenskan **mer**. Den nya generationen.

Exempel (25) demonstrerar två skilda förutsättningar för förnamnsval. Både den äldre och den yngre generationen vill ha turkiska namn, men medan den äldre generationen var inställd på att återvända, planerar den yngre generationen för ett fortsatt liv i Sverige, vilket också påverkar vilka namn som uppfattas som lämpliga. Jag frågar informanten hur hen själv tänker om framtida namnval.

Exempel 26.

MF: Men du, om **du** får barn i framtiden. Tror du att du kommer att undvika dom här …

Inf.: **Ja**.

MF: … svåra bokstäverna?

Inf.: Garanterat. För jag **vill** inte att, alltså jag vill att mitt barn ska kunna … presentera sitt namn så som det låter. [Paus] Men tyvärr så försvinner namnen då. Dom gör det.
MF: Mm.
[Paus]
Inf.: För det är ju, det är ju svårt att … [paus] **Jag** tänker, jag är född här. Jag är uppväxt här, jag ska förmodligen liksom fortsätta mitt liv här. Kommer bosätta mig här livet ut. Tills jag dör. Och då … vill jag att det ska va så pass **enkelt** för mina barn. Så mycket som det går. Jag vill inte att dom ska behöva **skämmas** över sitt namn. Vilket jag gjorde i ungdomen. Alltså, jag gjorde det ända fram till … mellanstadiet. **Sen** började det gå över.
MF: Mm. [Paus] Men tänker du då att dom ska ha … att dom ska heta Anna?
Inf.: Nej. Dom ska ju heta turkiskt, men det ska inte va sån här … /tj/ [ç], /sj/ [ş], det där g:et [ğ], till exempel, det ska inte va svåra bokstäver i det.
MF: Näe. Alltså hitta turkiska namn som …
Inf.: Som inte **har** turkiska **bokstäver** i sig.
MF: Mm, just det.
Inf.: Som har vanliga, latinska bokstäver, så. Såna namn blir det förmodligen.

Med utgångspunkt i erfarenheterna från den egna uppväxten är informanten bestämd på att de egna barnen ska få turkiska namn med enbart ”vanliga bokstäver”, så att de ska få det så enkelt som möjligt. Men hen är samtidigt medveten om att detta innebär en utarmning av onomastikonet: vissa namn riskerar att försvinna på grund av att de innehåller ”svåra” bokstäver.

En informant med kurdiskt förnamn, som själv utsattes för en del tråkningar för namnet under uppväxten i Sverige, säger så här om namn till framtida barn:

Exempel 27.
Inf.: Jag vet inte, jag vill att det ska bli så enkelt som möjligt för mina barn, samtidigt som, jag vill inte att … det **ska** va så enkelt heller, att man ska behöva anpassa sig på det sättet, att andra ska få det lättare, för jag **vill** ju att dom ska ha kvar lite av det kurdiska också. Så … nånting som … är kurdiskt, men … lätt att uttala och … det ska inte va större problem att skriva det, liksom.

De båda informanterna har alltså samma grundtanke: de vill ge barnen namn som anknyter till rötterna, men som ändå är lätthanterligt i Sverige, inte minst genom att undvika diakriter. Men informanten i (27) tar också upp den principiella frågan hur långt man egentligen ska anpassa sig för att ”andra” ska få det lättare.

6.9 Tradering av diakriter

Kommer diakriter i invandrade namn att leva kvar? Vi har sett flera fall där informanter antingen inte själva vet hur det egna namnet ursprungligen skrivits, eller vet att diakriter kan användas, men inte vilka eller var. I dessa fall har kunskapen redan gått förlorad.

Den enda informant som konsekvent använder namnets originalstavning, åtminstone så länge det skrivs för hand, bär ett turkiskt efternamn innehållande ett <ı>. Vi pratar om informantens son, som uttalar namnet med /ɨ/ men inte kan skriva än.

Exempel 28.
MF: Tror du han kommer att skriva … med eller utan prick när han växer upp?
[Paus]
Inf.: Nja, det är svårt att säga, jag kommer ju ändå att **lära** honom rätt.

Det här är en parallell till att många som bär namn med flera uttalsvarianter säger att de vill lära barnen namnets originaluttal, även om det kanske inte används till vardags (Frändén 2017:146). Det finns ett värde i att tradera kunskapen, även om det dagliga bruket ser annorlunda ut.

Utdraget i exempel (29) kommer från en intervju med en informant med barn i tonåren. Barnen är uppväxta i Sverige med två vietnamesiska föräldrar, men talar i stort sett ingen vietnamesiska. Efternamnet innehåller flera diakriter. Jag frågar om barnens diakritbruk.

Exempel 29.
MF: Skulle, jag tänker om dina barn skriver efternamnet, skulle dom skriva ut dom där tecknen?
Inf.: Nej, dom skriver utan.
MF: Utan?
Inf.: Eh, ja, jag vet inte om dom … om dom **kan** skriva med … med dom här tecknena.

Informanten är alltså säker på barnens skrivsätt, men tvekar vad gäller kunskapsnivån, även om hen lutar åt att kunskapen saknas. Vi pratar vidare generellt om de vietnamesiska efternamnens framtid i Sverige, i förhållande till att så få svenska namnbärare använder diakriter. Jag tar upp möjligheten att kunskapen om diakriterna försvinner:

Exempel 30.
MF: Då kanske dom **där** [diakriterna] är …

Inf.: Dom kommer att försvinna.
MF: … helt bortglömda.
Inf.: Jag tror det. Ja. Och till och med, jag ser, i vietnamesisk **tidning** idag. Är det nån … vietnames som bor utomlands och kommer tillbaka. Och så hamnar dom på tidningen, så skriver man **utan** också.
MF: [förvånat:] Okej?
[Inf. Skrattar]
MF: **Det** är ju lustigt!
Inf.: I vietnamesisk tidning! Så skriver man **utan** accent, **också**.

Det informanten berättar, att även vietnamesiska tidningar kan utelämna accenterna i utflyttade vietnamesers namn, är intressant. Det visar dels att diakriterna har en tendens att försvinna även i andra land än Sverige, dels att de vietnamesiska tidningarna hanterar detta som en typ av namnbyten: namnformen utan diakriter är inte en tillfällig, praktiskt motiverad eftergift, utan behandlas som det riktiga namnet.

7. Diskussion

De intervjuer som ligger till grund för den här studien är av begränsad omfattning, men trots att informanterna har skilda bakgrunder och förutsättningar råder det stor samstämmighet på en punkt: Diakriter används sällan i Sverige. Vissa namnbärare vet inte att det egna namnet någonsin har innehållit diakriter, andra vet inte vilka eller var, och ytterligare andra väljer bort dem för att de skapar problem, signalerar ett uttal man ändå inte använder, eller blir för krångliga vid tangentbordet. Den enda informant hos vilken ursprungsstavningen dominerar är den som konsekvent skriver <ı> för hand, men även där är tangentbordet ett hinder.

Applicerar man Lifs (1999:228) modell för namnanpassning, har samtliga informanter i denna studie lämnat de första två stegen: ingen försöker lära ut den ursprungliga stavningen; alla är vana vid den anpassade. De flesta har passerat även det tredje, att anpassa sitt eget bruk, men vissa informanter använder en namnform med diakriter i åtminstone några sammanhang, och uppvisar därmed prov på parallella skriftspråksformer. Det sista steget i Lifs modell representeras, beroende på hur det tolkas, dels av informanterna i exemplen (1), (2)

och (3), som skriver namnet utan diakrit och är ovetande om eller rentav förnekar att diakrit kan användas, dels av informanten i exempel (24), som bekräftar att hen alltid skriver namnet utan diakrit i Sverige och som sedan skrattar till och tillägger: ”Det kommer jag att tänka på nu”.

Till Lifs modell kunde läggas ytterligare en aspekt, nämligen namnbärarens känslor inför utvecklingen. Vissa informanter uttrycker att de har slagit sig till ro med det förändrade namnet, med kommentarer som ”jag väljer mer det enkla” (exempel 9) eller att ”aldrig ens ha tänkt tanken” att använda diakrit i Sverige (exempel 12). Andra identifierar sig i stället starkare med originalformerna, med kommentarer som att man ”gärna hade velat” kunna använda diakrit på dator (19) eller det faktum att man använder diakriten i sin namnteckning (exempel 5 och 23). Enligt Nuttins (1985) ”the name letter effect” är det rimligt att namnbärare har en positiv relation till de bokstäver som ingår i det egna namnet, men Hoorens & Todorovas (1988) undersökningar av namn i transkription visar att man mycket väl också kan ta till sig en annan variant av dessa bokstäver.

Mark Sebba (2007; 2009) har framhållit diakriternas kulturella värde. Sannolikt kan synen på en namnform med respektive utan diakriter påverkas av hur man ser på sin egen kulturella identitet – men samtidigt kan man förstås ha en stark kulturell identitet, och ändå ha ett pragmatiskt förhållningssätt till diakritiska tecken som inte är kända i det land man bor i.

Samtalet om *Tuluğ* i exempel (15) och (16) illustrerar en konflikt mellan två stavningar, en mer uttalsnära och en som uppfattas vara mer korrekt. Detta kan jämföras med Aldrins (2011:121) positioneringsskala för förnamnsval med ytterpolerna ”praktisk” respektive ”estetisk”. I den här kontexten finns kanske en skala mellan ”praktisk/pragmatisk” och ”traditionell/ursprungstraderande”, där informanten hade föredragit en mer pragmatisk linje, medan föräldrarna försvarar sitt mer traditionella val. Ett par informanter uttrycker att de vill ge framtida barn namn från den egna kulturella bakgrunden, men som har stavningsenligt uttal och inte innehåller ”svåra bokstäver” (exempel 26 och 27). Liknande tankar har konstaterats vid en tidigare

undersökning av sverigefinnars förnamnsval, även om det då inte gällde diakriter (Frändén 2015:129–130). Men som påpekat i exempel (25) och (26) innebär detta att namnförrådet begränsas. I många fall utvecklas sannolikt ett ”diasporaonomastikon” med namn som visserligen har rötter i ett invandrarspråk, men som ändå måste uppfylla vissa funktionella kriterier för att komma i fråga i boendelandet.

I den svenska folkbokföringen kan bara ett begränsat antal diakriter registreras. En tidigare undersökning (Frändén 2024:64−67) visar dock att även de tecken som kan registreras ofta saknas i folkbokföringen. Kanske är det många som resonerar som informanterna i exempel (9) och (10): Man har ändå anpassat uttalet, och en utelämnad diakrit gör att stavningen och det nya uttalet överensstämmer. Då har man fullt ut accepterat namnets nya uttalsform, och låter den vara vägledande för skriften. Av de informanter som citeras i Frändén 2024 (s. 69−72) tycker några att folkbokföringens teckenuppsättning borde utökas, medan andra menar att möjligheten till registrering knappast skulle påverka det faktiska bruket av diakriter. Så länge attityden, både från många namnbärare och från allmänheten, är att diakritiska tecken är något svårt och onödigt, spelar det kanske ingen roll vad som står i registren. Den svenska språkrådgivningen förespråkar användning av diakriter (Frändén 2024:53), men namnbärarna själva tycks i stor utsträckning ha gett upp. Diakriter orsakar för mycket besvär, och att försöka få med dem ger ändå inga bestående resultat – man ”vet att det inte kommer hänga med” (exempel 7).

Namn och namnbruk påverkas av omgivningen, men ibland kanske i snabbare takt än namnbäraren själv hade önskat. ”Namnen förändras i sin språkliga miljö under ett längre tidsförlopp, men individen bör själv få vara med och påverka förändringen”, skriver Lif (1999:233). I det sammanhanget kan man notera informanten i exempel (24), som uppger att hen slutade använda diakriter dels sedan en lärare missförstått namnet, dels i samband med att hen började söka jobb. Att diakriterna har försvunnit är en följd av hur informanten har bemötts, och av det förmodade bemötandet från presumtiva arbetsgivare. Och när namnbäraren själv utelämnar diakriterna, finns det

heller inga modeller för personer i omgivningen som annars eventuellt hade kunnat använda dem.

Om man vill att diakriter ska bevaras, bör man börja med att fråga sig varför namnbärarna utelämnar dem, och om det går att påverka dessa omständigheter. Mycket i mitt material tyder på att diakriter kunde ha använts oftare, om det omgivande samhället hade varit mer diakritvänligt. Samtidigt finns det namn från hundratals olika språk i Sverige, så hur ska man kunna bejaka alla diakriter när man inte vet vad de står för? En informant som studerar till lärare menar att man i skolan skulle kunna presentera även bokstäver från andra språk än svenska. ”För mig är lösningen faktiskt att man … i alla fall **börjar** där. [---] Dom behöver inte lära sig exakt **alla**. Men att dom ändå ska va lite **bekanta** med dom.” Kanske skulle en högre kunskapsnivå om tecknen i våra stora invandrarspråk göra att fler blev medvetna om den information som diakriterna innehåller.

Samtidigt som mycket talar för att utländska diakriter kommer att försvinna i framtidens Sverige, finns det också omständigheter som kan verka i motsatt riktning, bland annat att de tekniska möjligheterna förbättras. I Frändén (2024:54–56) diskuteras två rättsfall där föräldrar valt förnamn till sina barn som innehåller tecken från det tjeckiska alfabetet. Inget av dessa tecken ingår i Folkbokföringens uppsättning, men Skatteverket använder numera en mjukare linje, där det finns möjlighet att tilldelas ett namn med icke-registrerbara tecken, med en notering om att dessa inte kommer att synas i folkbokföringen. Det faktum att föräldrar kan välja att ge sina barn förnamn med diakriter, trots att dessa inte ens går att registrera, illusterar Mark Sebbas (2009:38) beskrivning av diakriter som distinkta och potentiellt ikoniska kulturella markörer.

Oavsett framtiden kan man konstatera att det i dagens Sverige redan finns många namn som ursprungligen skrivits med diakrit, men som nu används i en ny form utan diakriter. Därmed har det faktiskt bildats nya namn – om än kanske inte som en aktiv och medveten handling.

Summary

This paper explores the use of diacritics in personal names of non-Swedish origin, borne by Swedish citizens. It is a qualitative study based on interviews with Swedes with Turkish, Kurdish, Croatian or Vietnamese names, and discusses the level of knowledge and the daily use of diacritics. Despite the names of all the informants originally using diacritics, some were unaware of their existence in their own name. Others know that their names can be written with diacritics, but not which sign, nor where to place it. Of the informants who know their diacritics, many never use them in everyday life, explaining this by suggesting 'it just causes problems', 'I want to avoid complications' or 'I prefer the easy way'. Since the majority pronounce their names in a 'Swedish' way, as though the diacritics did not exist, some informants argue that their name may as well be written in accordance with that pronunciation. Those who use diacritics in some situations, such as their signature or in contact with relatives or friends speaking the language in question, nevertheless encounter technical issues when using keyboards.

Diacritics may also influence the choice of first names in minority communities, as the choice of name is affected by the complexity of the names' written forms. The author suggests the term 'diaspora onomasticon' for names that convey the desired linguistic and/or cultural background while fulfilling certain practical conditions, such as avoiding any 'difficult letters', enabling the names to be used in various linguistic environments.

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Fostering inclusivity in education: Addressing challenges for trans pupils' pronoun choice in Swedish schools

Karin Milles

Abstract: The article delves into the critical issue of integrating pronoun awareness in Swedish educational settings to cultivate more inclusive environments. Through a mixture of surveys and interviews, the research examines teachers' experiences and attitudes towards pupils who identify with new pronouns, illuminating the challenges that educators may encounter and assessing the extent to which schools are equipped to support transgender pupils. The findings indicate that while many educators recognize the importance of using the pronouns pupils identify with, recognizing it as a vital component of an inclusive educational approach, there is also resistance within the teaching profession. The study also uncovers significant obstacles stemming from school culture and administrative frameworks that hinder transgender pupils from fully expressing and developing their identities alongside their peers. Based on these insights, the article proposes actionable recommendations for school leaders, aimed at enhancing support systems and develop

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policies that better accommodate the needs of transgender pupils and foster a truly inclusive educational environment.

Keywords: inclusive language, pronoun use, school culture, transgender pupils

1. Introduction

Recognizing and validating young people's individuality is critical to their development. For transgender youth who do not align with binary notions of gender or who explore identities beyond it, affirming their authentic gender can involve significant effort that includes the adoption of new names and pronouns. In Swedish contexts, the traditional pronouns *han* (*he*) and *hon* (*she*) have been complemented by gender-neutral alternatives such as *hen*, *den*, and *dom*. Many schools regard honouring the names and pronouns students use to identify themselves as essential to fostering an inclusive, non-discriminatory environment, yet challenges remain. This article explores teachers' experiences and attitudes towards initiating the use of a new pronoun for a pupil, and examines the difficulties stemming from school culture and administrative systems in doing so.[1]

There is substantial new research dedicated to the analysis and discussion of the challenges inherent in adopting these practices. This body of work emphasises the argument that recognising the pronouns pupils identify with in educational contexts is not merely a linguistic formality, but a fundamental aspect of acknowledging and respecting the complex spectrum of gender identities. As such, the academic discourse around pronouns extends beyond semantics, framing inclusive language as a cornerstone for creating equitable and supportive learning environments. This article argues that the conscientious use of pronouns is an essential practice for educators and institutions committed to fostering inclusivity and respect for all pupils.

[1] The author designed the study, collected the empirical data, and conducted the analysis and interpretation. Additionally, an AI tool (ChatGPT, versions 4, 4o, 4.5) was used to edit the text.

Pronouns are the focus of this study, even though the choice of a new name may be the primary concern of the trans youth. In Sweden, honouring transpeople's right to decide which pronoun to identify with has emerged as a significant symbol in societal discussions, likely because singular personal pronouns in Swedish have traditionally adhered to the gender binary, and cis-normative perceptions are now being renegotiated.

This sets the stage for analysing evolving language norms. While there is an increasing body of research being published on the significance of names and personal pronouns for trans youth, there is less understanding of how schools, which are critical to the wellbeing of these youths, are addressing this issue within their institutional contexts.

2. LGBTQ+ pedagogy and pronouns

In Sweden, the integration of the gender-neutral pronoun *hen* into everyday language, alongside the traditional feminine *hon* and masculine *han*, signifies a substantial shift towards linguistic inclusiveness. This change reflects wider societal efforts to respect and validate the identities of non-binary and transgender individuals.

There is a growing body of Swedish and Finnish research on the significance of names and pronouns in relation to gender and LGBTQ+-issues (Aldrin 2014; Rancken 2017; Wenner 2020; Leibring Svedjedal 2025) to which this study aims to contribute. Many organizations within the Swedish LGBTQ+ community are at the forefront of advocating for recognition and there is evidence of a growing interest in LGBTQ+-friendly pedagogy in Sweden (Björkman et al. 2021). Numerous guidelines and investigations into the conditions of transgender individuals in Sweden emphasize the importance of respecting the pronouns a trans person identifies with (Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare 2015; SOU 2017; RFSL 2024). There are also specific guidelines for how school staff and others should handle the implementation of a pupil's new pronoun, including strategies for addressing potential misstatements and mistakes. These

guidelines are published on websites or in newly printed textbooks that address the latest curriculum requirements for including sex, consent, and relationships in education. Furthermore, the stance of the Language Council of Sweden underscores a growing consensus: the pronoun with which an individual identifies – be it *hen*, *den*, *dom*, *han*, or *hon* – must be recognized and respected (Language Council of Sweden 2023:51). Thus, respect for personal pronoun preferences is increasingly seen as an imperative, not just a courtesy, for fostering an environment of equality and diversity.

However, an increasing number of studies also indicates that Swedish transgender people are experiencing problems, both at school and elsewhere (Schmitt 2023; Pastor Bravo & Linander 2024). The Swedish Equality Ombudsman has processed at least two cases where teachers have refused to use the pronouns with which the trans pupils identify.

Numerous studies from other countries report similar findings (Kennedy 2022; Bettcher 2014; Bhatt et al. 2022). Studies from the United States indicate that teachers lack the knowledge or will to use transgender pupils' preferred pronouns (Burnham 2020; Eckes 2020; Killelea McEntarfera & Iovannone 2022). There is also an international heteroactivist movement that employs freedom of speech arguments to oppose LGBTQ+ rights (Nash et al. 2019).

The struggle for trans recognition involves a significant aspect of language (Sinclair-Palm & Gilbert 2018:322). Sinclair-Palm (2024) examines how trans youth use names to strategically navigate gender norms, cisnormativity, and transphobia. Through interviews with trans youth in Australia, Ireland, and Canada, the study highlights how naming practices serve as tools for safety, access to resources and agency, while also enabling resistance against norms, creative expression and joy in being trans.

Linguistic practices can be used both to validate and invalidate a person's gender. Leibring Svedjedal (2025) shows that self-chosen names and pronouns play a central role in how trans individuals express and navigate their gender identities in Sweden. This study confirms that while these linguistic choices affirm agency within

trans communities, they are often contested in broader societal and media discourses. Pronoun use in particular becomes a site of both recognition and resistance, reflecting ongoing struggles over the legitimacy of trans identities. Leibring Svedjedal shows that many trans individuals experience how people around them often find it more difficult to adapt to and use correct pronouns compared to new first names.

Previous research has demonstrated the value of respecting the pronoun choice of trans children and youth. Articles (McGlashan & Fitzpatrick 2018; Ashley et al. 2022) suggest that pronoun use is a vital part of expressing identity, and other studies have found lower rates of depression and suicide among trans youth whose names and pronouns are respected (Russell et al. 2018), thus highlighting the importance of correct pronoun use. Sharing pronouns on social media has increased (Tucker & Jones 2023), which demonstrates support for and acceptance of gender diversity. Nevertheless, using a transgender person's birth name instead of their chosen name, known as *deadnaming* (Sinclair-Palm 2017; Sinclair-Palm & Chokly 2022), can deeply harm transgender youth.

Research indicates that schools often rely on short-term accommodations rather than addressing underlying inequalities affecting transgender pupils, though structural changes and specific supportive practices significantly improve school experiences. Horton and Carlile (2022) propose a staged model identifying four levels of how schools respond to transgender pupils: (1) *trans-oppressive*, actively rejecting or suppressing trans identities; (2) *trans-assimilationist*, allowing individual transgender pupils to fit into existing gender categories without broader institutional change; (3) *trans-accommodative*, making temporary or individualized adjustments for trans pupils without challenging underlying norms; and (4) *trans-emancipatory*, implementing lasting, structural changes to ensure equal conditions for all pupils regardless of gender identity. Feijo et al. (2022) identify three effective interventions to improve outcomes for transgender pupils: implementing inclusive policies related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; supporting the use of chosen

names and establishing Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs). Their review suggests these interventions improve school safety, reduce bullying, and enhance transgender pupils' overall wellbeing (Feijo et al. 2022).

This body of earlier research underscores the importance of inclusive language practices in supporting the mental health and educational experiences of all pupils who do not conform to traditional gender binaries and offers guidance on how to address these challenges in practice. They provide a foundation for the current study's exploration of pronoun usage in Swedish educational institutions.

3. Theory

Judith Butler's theory of performativity (1990; 1993) provides the foundational theoretical framework for understanding gender as an ongoing performance, constructed through repeated actions and language. This perspective aligns with the social constructionist view of gender (de Beauvoir 1949; Fausto-Sterling 2000), which posits that gender is not an inherent, biological trait but rather a socially constructed and culturally contingent concept. This framework allows for the recognition of gender fluidity and subjectivity, as reflected in the use of pronouns which aligns with trans youths' identity, thereby supporting a more inclusive approach in educational settings.

Language plays a pivotal role in shaping and reflecting social realities, a principle central to sociolinguistics. In the context of pronoun usage, this perspective underscores how language can affirm individual gender identities while simultaneously challenging traditional gender norms. Research has extensively examined the role of names in identity construction. Pilcher (2015) argues that names and pronouns are instrumental in constructing and signifying an individual's sexed, gendered, and social identities.

The concept of *trans technologies* (Haimson 2021) extends this discussion, describing the tools and strategies that trans individuals employ to navigate cisnormativity and oppressive societal structures. Julia Sinclair-Palm (2024) further expands on this idea, emphasizing that these technologies encompass creative methods for asserting

agency, challenging norms, expressing identity and experiencing joy in being trans. Sinclair-Palm specifically highlights naming practices as a form of trans technology used by trans youth to strategically navigate gender, illustrating how linguistic choices function as both an act of self-definition and a means of engaging with the social environment. In this study, I argue that pronouns should also be understood as a trans technology. Like naming practices, pronouns serve as a linguistic resource enabling trans individuals to articulate and negotiate their gender identities within social contexts.

The relational nature of identity is also crucial in this theoretical framework. Sociologists such as Althusser (1971) and Goffman (1959) highlight that identity formation is a reciprocal process. Identity develops in relation to others, and language is a key medium in this process. Through communication, individuals are interpellated into specific social roles and identities, emphasizing the role of language in identity formation and the importance of pronoun choice in acknowledging and respecting these identities. *Ally work*, as conceptualized by Broido (2000), involves members of dominant groups advocating for marginalized communities. In this study, it refers to the role of cisnormative teachers in supporting transgender pupils. Furthermore, the concept of *school-based social capital* (Behtoui & Strömberg 2020) recognizes the importance of social relationships and networks within the school environment. These networks, encompassing pupils, teachers and the wider community, significantly influence educational outcomes and the acceptance of diverse identities.

This study thus views gender not as an inherent biological identity nor an irreversible identity assigned by others, but neither is it something entirely controlled by the individual, but rather it is relational in nature. The theoretical understanding of gender in this study thus views gender as a collaborative construction between an individual and their environment, where language and other cultural practices play crucial roles. And just like the social environment can be helpful and supporting, it may act as an obstacle. *Administrative violence*, a concept developed by Dean Spade (2015), regards bureaucratic and systemic barriers that impede the lives and rights of trans people,

beyond overt acts of transphobia. *Structural ambivalence* (Schmitt 2023) in educational settings reflects the conflicting nature of societal structures. While schools may strive to support inclusivity, particularly regarding LGBTQ+ issues, they often simultaneously present challenges in implementing these inclusive practices, such as adopting new pronouns for pupils. This ambivalence highlights the complexities schools face in balancing traditional norms with progressive inclusivity efforts.

In conclusion, this study's theoretical framework integrates these diverse concepts to explore the implications of teachers' pronoun use in affirming gender identities and fostering inclusivity in educational settings. It highlights the complex interplay between language, social constructs, and educational practices in shaping pupils' gender identities and promoting an environment of equality and diversity.

4. Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was employed in this study, encompassing both an electronic survey and semi-structured interviews. The survey targeted a diverse demographic of educators, pupils, and administrative staff across various educational institutions in Sweden. It was designed to assess the occurrence of pupils who request a change in their pronouns and pronoun usage policies, as well as to identify potential challenges to an inclusive school environment. The interviews provided qualitative depth to the data, allowing participants to share personal experiences.

The survey was conducted electronically and distributed using the snowball method. It consisted of twelve questions and was completed anonymously. The questions aimed to explore whether pupils requested a change in their pronouns, which pronouns pupils identify with, the occurrence of discussions among pupils and teachers and whether written guidelines exist on this issue. Responses were collected primarily from teachers in primary and secondary education, with the majority coming from Stockholm County and other large cities. A small number of responses also came from Finland.

Interviews were conducted with a selection of teachers recruited through the survey and personal contacts. These interviews took place either in person or online and lasted between 25 and 60 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured and focused on the following themes: experiences with pupils who requested a change in pronoun use, which pronouns pupils identify with, possible conflicts and challenges, language use related to pronouns, teachers' attitudes, and school policies. The interviews allowed participants to elaborate on their perspectives and provide context for the survey findings. They were recorded, transcribed, and anonymized. The interviewed teachers came from various regions. Several worked in the Stockholm area, while others were based in mid-sized Swedish cities, smaller towns, and large cities outside the capital region.

The results are presented under six headings: pupils changing their pronouns, mixed feelings, administrative obstacles, allies, icebergs, and school culture. These themes make it possible to analyse teachers' experiences and attitudes regarding pupils who adopt new pronouns and identify challenges faced by educators and schools in making education inclusive for all.

5. Ethical considerations

Survey participation was anonymous, although one question asked for email addresses for interview participation. These addresses were processed in accordance with data protection legislation and stored electronically in secure IT systems, accessible only to project members.

The interviews adhered to three ethical requirements: 1. Requirement for information, whereby participants were informed about the study's purpose and participation conditions both in writing and orally at the interview. 2. Consent, whereby interview participation was voluntary, with the right to withdraw anytime without repercussions. Consent for the interview and recording was obtained beforehand and documented. 3. Confidentiality, whereby interviews were recorded and stored securely, accessible only to project members. Participants

were assigned pseudonyms, and transcriptions anonymized details to prevent identification of individuals, schools, or locations.

A key ethical challenge was ensuring that teachers felt comfortable sharing their views, particularly given the sometimes polarized nature of discussions about gender identity in schools. While the study sought to understand how teachers navigate the complexities of pupils' pronoun use, it was crucial to avoid placing them in a position where they might feel judged or scrutinized. To mitigate this, interview questions were framed in a neutral and open-ended manner, encouraging teachers to describe their experiences and reasoning rather than prompting them to take a stance for or against certain practices. Also, the survey was designed to be fully anonymous, allowing respondents to share their perspectives without fear of identification.

Another important ethical dimension was the balance between capturing diverse perspectives and avoiding potential response biases. Given that teachers who are more engaged in LGBTQ+ issues may have been more likely to participate, there was a risk that the survey results could disproportionately reflect supportive viewpoints. While this self-selection bias is a common limitation in survey-based research, it was important to acknowledge and consider its implications when analysing the results. The study tries to avoid making generalized claims about all teachers, instead emphasizing the range of responses and the factors that shape different attitudes toward pronoun use.

6. Main findings

6.1 Pupils changing their pronouns

Figure 1 displays the frequency with which teachers, according to the survey, encounter pupils who voice a desire to change their pronouns. The horizontal axis categorizes the frequency of these occurrences into four distinct groups: Never, so far, Seldom, Sometimes and Often. The vertical axis represents the number of teachers.

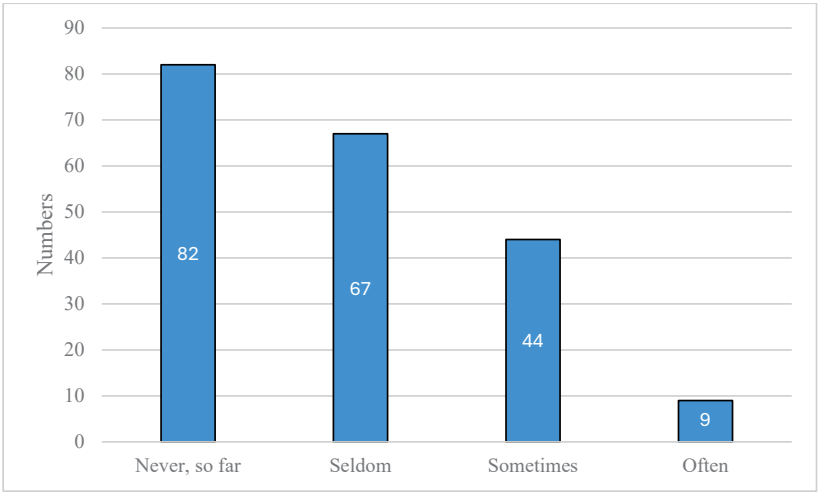

Figure 1: Reported frequency of meeting pupils who opt for a new pronoun among teachers.

The tallest bar corresponds to 'never, so far, followed by 'seldom', indicating a smaller, yet significant, portion of teachers that have infrequently encountered such situations. The 'sometimes' category is represented by a shorter bar, denoting a lower number of teachers who have occasionally encountered this. Finally, the shortest bar in the 'often' category suggests that it is relatively rare for teachers to frequently meet pupils changing their pronouns.

However, these results should be interpreted with caution. They reflect the experiences of those who chose to respond to the survey, and this group may not be fully representative of the wider population of teachers. Since the survey was distributed through my own social media networks using a snowball sampling method, it is likely that it primarily reached individuals who are already engaged or interested in issues related to gender and pronoun use. Thus, the data may overrepresent teachers who are more open to discussing or noticing these matters in their professional practice. Moreover, the results do not indicate how many pupils *would like to* communicate their pronoun preferences but for various reasons do not. In a school context, many may choose to remain silent, as pupils may be unsure whether teachers are *allies* (Broido 2000) and their identities will be respected.

Therefore, the frequency with which teachers report encounters with pupils choosing new pronouns cannot be taken as a direct measure of how common such needs are among pupils.

But even if the specific share of teachers meeting with pupils communicating their pronoun preferences remains unclear, the bars indicate that trans pupils in Swedish schools indeed at least *sometimes* find it possible to do so.

6.2 Mixed feelings

The current study unveils a dichotomy of resistance and support regarding the use of gender-neutral pronouns. Notably, very few participants in the study explicitly expressed negative feelings towards the issue. This may be attributed to an inherent bias in participant recruitment, as teachers who are supportive may be more inclined to participate in the survey and agree to a research interview.

Some teachers view the issue of pronoun usage as straightforward and uncontroversial. For instance, Aksel, a teacher at a progressive school, stated, 'It's only natural to use the pronoun that the pupil wants… I've never heard anyone question it at all'. One informant from the electronic survey describes the sentiments as such: 'We use the pronoun the pupil wants. The headteacher notifies the staff and that's it'. This perspective is echoed by Olivia, a teacher at a study-focused school – one where academic results and performance take priority over pupils social and emotional development – who commented, 'No one would oppose it… it's a non-issue'. Such sentiments suggest that for many educators, respecting pupils' pronoun choices is an integral part of their professional responsibilities, akin to any other aspect of classroom management and pupil interaction.

Some teachers are also deeply engaged in the issue, emphasizing its importance; 'It's heartening to observe pupils' relief when they can be themselves', one interviewee, Izzy, remarks, highlighting the importance of supporting transgender pupils and ensuring that procedures are in place for this support. Informants recount instances of

supportive pupils who correct teachers on pronoun usage and advocate for their peers.

The study thus supports existing research that has indicated a growing interest in LGBTQ+-friendly pedagogy within Sweden (Björkman et al. 2021) by revealing that there are teachers in support of respecting the pronouns transgender pupils identify with. Furthermore, none of the participants reported major discussions or conflicts.

However, the study also highlights that there are teachers in schools who, for various reasons, are not fully on board with these practices. Some informants report that certain colleagues perceive the issue as trivial, silly, or misguided on the pupil's part. According to these accounts, some colleagues view pupils communicating pronoun preferences as attention-seeking behaviour and believe that young people demand too much when expecting adults to learn new pronouns. Informants also suggest that some colleagues regard the process of gender affirmation as a private matter that schools should not be involved in. Additionally, older teachers are described as sometimes being entrenched in traditional practices, finding it difficult to adapt or resistant to changes, particularly regarding the use of the gender-neutral pronoun *hen*. Religious beliefs are also mentioned as a source of resistance among certain educators. A couple of responses further point out that male colleagues may display greater resistance and question the issue more frequently.

It is also possible that some participants may have overstated their willingness to respect pupils' pronoun choices to align with what is perceived as the expected stance. In anonymous surveys, participants often seek to present themselves in a positive light, particularly when addressing sensitive or potentially controversial topics. This is especially relevant in the case of teachers, who may perceive their professional identity as tied to values such as inclusion and respect. As a result, the reported levels of compliance and support may not fully reflect the complexity of teachers' actual attitudes or practices in everyday classroom interactions. Consequently, while the surveys and interviews suggest that acceptance exists, it is important to recognize

that this acceptance may be more superficial or situational than the responses signalled.

6.3 Administrative obstacles

The study sheds light on various administrative challenges that impede the recognition and implementation of pupils' pronoun choices, highlighting the necessity for more inclusive and adaptable systems in educational institutions.

One of the primary issues identified is the absence of a formal policy at school level. This lack of policy leads to inconsistent practices among educators and staff. The survey revealed that a mere three per cent of teachers were aware of any local policies pertaining to pupils' pronoun choices and their administration. This lack of awareness and standardization creates an environment where pupils' pronoun preferences are not uniformly respected or acknowledged.

Furthermore, the rigidity of existing record-keeping systems presents a significant obstacle. These systems often do not allow for the recording or updating of pupils' chosen pronouns, leading to persistent discrepancies between pupils' identities and the information held by the school. Such misalignments can result in miscommunication and can contribute to a sense of alienation among pupils.

A salient example of this issue is evident in the generation of class registers. These registers, created automatically by electronic systems using names from the population registry, often do not reflect the current identities of transgender pupils who have not changed their names officially. This situation becomes particularly problematic in classes led by substitute teachers or educators who have infrequent interactions with the pupils, as they rely on these outdated registers. The conflict between a pupil's current identity and the outdated information in these registers is further intensified in digital platforms like Teams and Zoom, where pre-set names are often unchangeable.

In cases where teachers use email communication, they have the flexibility to use pupils' new names and pronouns. However, this is not a systemic solution, as the pupils' names and pronouns in official

records and digital systems often remain unaltered unless the pupil undergoes the formal process of changing their name in the population registry. This requires the teachers to spread the information informally, through word of mouth rather than formal channels, which is unreliable and does not guarantee universal recognition across different platforms and documents.

Some schools have attempted to address these challenges by developing specific procedures. For instance, pupils are encouraged to write both their *deadname* and their chosen name on tests, and information about new names and pronouns is recorded in a separate documentation system, accessible only to schoolteachers. However, these are isolated practices and do not represent a systemic solution. According to Horton and Carlile (2022), the described practices exemplify a *trans-accommodative* approach, as they involve isolated, temporary adaptations aimed at individual trans pupils. Such practices address immediate concerns but do not challenge underlying structural inequalities, leaving the broader cisnormative framework intact.

The survey also highlights issues with electronic systems where pupils are forced to choose between binary gender options without the possibility of selecting a non-binary option or opting not to specify their gender. This limitation reflects the broader issue of binary gender assumptions embedded in many administrative systems.

The findings from this study align with previous research and theoretical frameworks that underscore the critical role of inclusive language practices in educational settings. As noted by Sinclair-Palm and Gilbert (2018), the struggle for trans recognition in schools is deeply entwined with linguistic practices. The study highlights the absence of formal policies and the rigidity of record-keeping systems, reflecting the broader issues of *administrative violence* described by Spade (2015). These systemic barriers create environments where pupils' pronoun preferences are inconsistently respected. The research further supports the work of McGlashan and Fitzpatrick (2018) and Ashley et al. (2022), who emphasize the importance of correct pronoun use in reducing mental health issues among trans youth. This aligns with Butler's (1990; 1993) theory of performativity, which posits that

language acts, such as pronoun usage, continuously construct and validate gender identity.

6.4 Allies

Despite administrative hurdles, many teachers have emerged as *allies* (Broido 2000) in the pronoun awareness movement. The survey results indicated that a substantial number of educators actively seek to create an inclusive atmosphere. They use their role as facilitators to encourage respectful discussions and educate pupils about the importance of pronoun accuracy as a matter of personal identity and dignity.

The ally work requires some effort, especially among teachers who frequently interact with transgender pupils. These educators understand that while the concept may seem simple, the practical implementation involves continuous learning and adaptation. They must stay informed about what pronouns the pupils identify with, correct their own mistakes, and ensure that substitute teachers are aware of these changes. This process also involves intervening when colleagues do not respect pupils' pronoun choices. Aksel, for example, has taken it upon himself to handle such situations: 'The form teachers were a bit slow in ensuring that they got a new email address that matched the new name and so on, so I… I just fixed it'. This proactive approach reflects a deeper commitment to allyship, where teachers not only respect pronoun preferences but also take tangible steps to address systemic shortcomings. Nina, another teacher, described her dedication to this cause: 'This is kind of my passion, you know… I try to stay updated on these things… as someone interested in languages, you see… So, for me, it becomes quite natural, and I think that if we had a pupil, I would probably take up the reins, as it were'. Nina's enthusiasm highlights how individual teachers can drive change within their schools, fostering a more inclusive environment through their personal commitment and actions. One teacher reported using a coded system in written communications to protect pupils' identities, stating, 'When writing at work, we use a coded system to protect the

identities of pupils, and we use the "hen" pronoun for everyone'. This approach, though not perfect, shows an attempt to navigate and circumvent the limitations of current administrative systems.

In summary, the teachers quoted above illustrate how proactive efforts and personal dedication can significantly contribute to creating inclusive educational environments. By addressing systemic barriers and fostering respectful discussions, these educators play a crucial role in supporting transgender pupils and promoting gender inclusivity in schools. However, as Horton and Carlile (2022) point out, these actions primarily reflect a *trans-accommodative* approach – individual adaptations that, while valuable, leave broader cisnormative structures largely unchallenged.

6.5 Icebergs

The term 'icebergs' in the context of this study is a metaphor intended to conceptualize the underlying challenges and complexities that lie beneath the surface of pronoun usage in educational settings. These include deeply ingrained societal norms, resistance to change, and the emotional labour required by individuals who often must educate others about their identity. The results from both the surveys and interviews revealed that while visible efforts, such as educating and informing colleagues and staff, are essential, they represent just the tip of the iceberg. The larger task is to foster a broader cultural shift towards acceptance and understanding of gender diversity, which requires sustained educational efforts, policy changes, and community engagement. In the terms outlined by Horton and Carlile (2022), this broader shift aligns closely with a *trans-emancipatory* approach, as it emphasizes the need for lasting and structural changes to ensure equal conditions for all pupils, irrespective of gender identity.

Some of the problem lies in transgender pupil invisibility in the school setting. One survey participant noted, 'Pupils who are questioning their gender identity often feel so bad that we don't see them here at school. If they want to be called by a different pronoun, we have no problem with that'. This comment highlights how the visible

aspects of support are often overshadowed by the deeper, less visible struggles that transgender pupils face, including significant mental health challenges that keep them away from school.

Another teacher, Aksel, emphasized the importance of social media in these pupils' lives: 'A lot of it happens outside school, you know, those conversations, and many people find their community on Instagram and TikTok in a way that wouldn't have been possible without social media. And I think a lot of stuff gets processed there'. This insight further underlines how much of the emotional labour and identity exploration occurs outside formal educational settings, facilitated by online communities that provide support and validation.

Identity is fundamentally shaped through interaction with others and continuously constructed in everyday social practices, making linguistic recognition essential for wellbeing. The relational nature of identity, as highlighted by sociologists like Althusser (1971) and Goffman (1959), emphasizes that identity formation is a reciprocal process developed in relation to others. Judith Butler argues that gender, which is a vital part of a person's identity formation, is an ongoing performance constructed through repeated actions and language. Pairing this with Pilcher's insights (2015), names and pronouns are instrumental in constructing and signifying an individual's sexed, gendered, and social identities. Previous research by McGlashan and Fitzpatrick (2018) and Ashley et al. (2022) suggests that pronoun use is vital for expressing identity, and establishes lower rates of depression and suicide among trans youth whose names and pronouns are respected.

Still, if young transpeople feel so bad that they stop attending school, the school is unable to participate in their identity formation, take active part in supporting them, and promote their wellbeing. The iceberg analogy thus reflects not only the visible efforts but also the deeper, systemic issues and the ongoing performative acts necessary for genuine inclusivity and identity validation in educational settings.

6.6 School culture

One critical factor shaping this metaphorical iceberg is the underlying school culture, which significantly influences how transgender pupils experience their educational environment. School culture varies significantly across institutions, affecting the experiences of transgender pupils. Some schools are more LGBTQ+-friendly, providing an inclusive and supportive environment, while others are less accommodating. A teacher from a less inclusive school remarked, 'If you identify as non-binary, then you don't go to this school… they check social media… they know which schools are relevant'. This statement highlights how pupils avoid schools perceived as unwelcoming, based on the prevailing school culture.

One teacher noted, 'I work at a vocational upper-secondary school with a large majority of male pupils. There are transgender pupils, but it's not pronounced. Either 'han' [*he*] or 'hon' [*she*] gets used'. This comment illustrates how dominant gender norms in certain school environments can suppress the visibility and recognition of transgender identities. The lack of gender-neutral pronouns and the dominance of traditional gender norms limit the ability of transgender pupils to express their identities fully but only represent the tip of the iceberg, concealing a far more pervasive and deeply rooted non-inclusive school culture.

Furthermore, the presence of homophobic and transphobic attitudes in some schools intensifies these challenges. One survey respondent observed, 'At this school, I've noticed strong homophobic and transphobic attitudes, including ignorance that leads to a reluctance to even learn and change attitudes about things like the pronoun "hen" [singular *they*]. At another high school where I've worked, there were no issues with this at all'.

This comparison highlights the stark differences in school cultures. The concept of *school-based social capital*, as discussed by Behtoui and Strömberg (2020), is particularly relevant here. School-based social capital refers to the networks and relationships within the school environment that can support or hinder a pupil's development.

In more inclusive schools, this social capital fosters a sense of belonging and support, enabling transgender pupils to thrive. Conversely, in less inclusive schools, the lack of supportive networks can marginalize transgender pupils, making it difficult for them to explore and affirm their identities.

Moreover, this indicates that the school environment and culture significantly influence pupils' decisions, often at the expense of their educational and career goals. The study highlights that school culture can create obstacles for young transgender individuals to explore and develop their identity on an equal footing with their peers.

In conclusion, the variation in school cultures and the presence of supportive social capital are critical factors that influence transgender pupils' school choices and experiences. It is concerning that transgender pupils, or pupils questioning their gender identity, consider the LGBTQ+-friendliness of a school when choosing an upper-secondary school, rather than their interest in the school or career ambitions. Ensuring that all schools offer inclusive and supportive environments is a fundamental responsibility – not only to support the identity development of transgender pupils, but also to safeguard their right to intellectual growth, enabling them to pursue academic interests and career aspirations on equal footing with their peers. Unlike temporary or individualized accommodations, a *trans-emancipatory* approach (Horton & Carlile 2022) seeks to fundamentally transform educational environments by actively addressing and dismantling systemic inequalities. Such transformative efforts necessitate continuous education for teachers, inclusive policy development, and proactive involvement from families and local communities to create a genuinely inclusive school culture.

7. Discussion

This discussion aims to clarify the critical insights this study contributes to our understanding of the connection between language use and identity, the opportunities for trans youth to develop healthily

and thrive intellectually, society's capability to be inclusive, and the responsibilities of schools in this context.

Language is a powerful tool that shapes social realities, and this is particularly true in the context of pronoun usage in educational settings. A person's pronoun is not merely a linguistic preference but a significant aspect of individual identity, especially for transgender youth. Judith Butler's theory of performativity underlines how gender is continuously constructed through language and actions. Therefore, recognizing and using the pronoun a person identifies with is a performative act that validates their gender identity. The study thus contributes to the theorization of pronouns as a form of *trans technology* (Haimson 2021; Sinclair-Palm 2024). As shown in both the survey and interviews, pronouns are strategic and agentive resources that trans pupils and their allies use to navigate and resist cisnormative structures in schools.

This study also explores the complexities and resistance educators face when respecting and adopting the pronouns that pupils identify with. Although many educators support the use of gender-neutral pronouns and respect the pronouns trans youth identify with, significant challenges persist due to traditional gender norms, administrative practices, and school culture. For instance, the rigidity of record-keeping systems that do not accommodate non-binary pronouns or updated names creates a disconnect between pupils' identities and their official records. This misalignment or *administrative violence* (Spade 2015) can lead to experiences of alienation and invisibility.

Schools play a vital role in fostering inclusive environments where all pupils can thrive. However, schools differ significantly in their capacity to do so. Drawing on the concept of *school-based social capital* (Behtoui & Strömberg 2020), it becomes clear that the quality and nature of social relationships and networks within the school environment – among pupils, teachers, and the broader community – profoundly shape both educational outcomes and the acceptance of diverse identities.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of *ally work* (Broido 2000) among educators. Teachers who actively support trans-

gender pupils by respecting their pronouns and advocating for systemic changes contribute to a more inclusive school environment. This allyship is crucial for creating spaces where transgender pupils feel safe and valued, allowing them to engage fully in their educational experiences and develop their identities alongside their peers.

Drawing on the preceding analysis, the article concludes by outlining several key recommendations for how schools can strengthen their support structures and policies to better meet the needs of transgender pupils:

Firstly, there is a need for formal policies at the institutional level that standardize the recognition and use of pupils' chosen pronouns. This would ensure consistent practices among educators and staff and provide clear guidelines for supporting transgender pupils. The absence of such policies currently leads to inconsistent and often inadequate support.

Secondly, schools must address the rigidity of existing administrative systems. This includes updating record-keeping practices to allow for the recording of chosen pronouns and names, thereby ensuring that all official documents reflect pupils' identities accurately. The study provides examples of schools developing specific procedures, such as allowing pupils to write both their previous and new names on tests, as interim measures to address this issue.

Lastly, the study highlights the critical role of cultivating a supportive school culture. The influence of school climate on transgender pupils' decisions and experiences emphasises the need to foster inclusive environments across all educational institutions. It is essential that transgender pupils, like all others, can choose schools based on their academic interests and career aspirations, rather than based on their gender identity. Building such a culture involves educating all members of the school community on the importance of pronoun use and creating an environment in which diversity is actively embraced. Schools that proactively engage in these practices can become havens of inclusivity – spaces where all pupils are empowered to develop their identities as well as grow intellectually.

8. Conclusion

The role of language in affirming young people's identities cannot be overstated. As language evolves to become more inclusive, so too must our educational practices. This study contributes important knowledge about the intersection of language use and identity, the opportunities for healthy development of transgender youth, societal inclusivity, and the role of schools. It highlights the need for systemic changes in educational institutions to support both the identity development and educational ambitions of transgender pupils on equal footing with their cisgender peers. By adopting inclusive language practices and addressing administrative and cultural barriers, schools can play a pivotal role in creating equitable and supportive environments for all pupils. This, in turn, contributes to a more inclusive society where diversity is recognized and valued.

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Der Müller Peter and (*s*) *Fischers Emma*: Grammar and pragmatics of unofficial personal names in German dialects

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Abstract: In German dialects and in rural communities, special personal names are used, in which the surname precedes the given name: *der Müller Peter*, *Fischers Emma*. This article presents the results of a research project addressing the grammatical and pragmatic variation of these unofficial names. A mixed methods approach shows that the order of "surname + given name" is triggered by dialect area, the size of a village or town, the age of the speakers, as well as the integration of a referent into the local community. Some unofficial names show remnants of genitive inflection, which has otherwise disappeared in German dialects: *Fischer-s Emma*. In some cases, we also find cliticized genitive articles: *des > s Fischer-s Emma*. A diachronic analysis shows that these structures can be traced back to possessive constructions, in which children or wives were assigned to a head of household. Even today, it is still highly relevant in rural communities to identify a person as a member of a local family.

Keywords: unofficial names, personal names, German dialects, genitive, diatopic variation, personal reference, sociopragmatics, morphology

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1. Introduction and state of research

This paper presents results from a research project at the University of Münster, Germany[1], which investigated dialectal personal reference forms occurring in rural communication communities. In these forms, the surname (or an unofficial name) precedes the given name (*der Müller Peter*, *(s) Fischers Emma*). On the one hand, these names show diatopic variation between different German dialect areas. On the other hand, within a single village or dialect, reference forms can also vary, the competing variants encoding different degrees of (un-) officiality, which correlate with the referents' level of integration into the village.

Some of these reference forms show remains of genitive inflection and sometimes even phonologically reduced genitive articles: *Müller-s Peter; s* (< *des*) *Fischer-s Emma* (Article$_{\text{genitive}}$ Fischer$_{\text{genitive}}$; 'Emma of the family Fischer'). These markers represent one of the last domains of the synthetic prenominal genitive in German dialects and in Luxembourgish. Previously, they have been documented in some research on individual dialects (Berchtold & Dammel 2014; Cornelissen 2014, 2016; Flores Flores 2014; Heinrichs 2012; Krier 2014; Roolfs 2016; Weiß 2014). However, except for the considerations published in Berchtold & Dammel (2014), they have not yet been analysed in terms of diachrony or pragmatics.

In addition, currently there is only one diatopic overview published by Bach (1952), who derived six different structural types from the (published or anecdotical) data he collected. He inferred them both from the type of article and the (missing) genitive inflection respectively from their combination (see more in Section 4). These results have been taken up by Kunze (2005:180–181). In addition, the *Atlas*

[1] The project 'Grammatik und Soziopragmatik inoffizieller Personennamen in Dialekten des Deutschen' (Grammar and Sociopragmatics of Unofficial Personal Names in German Dialects; project no. 405468658; 2018–2021) was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). To ensure accurate translation and enhance the style of this paper, I used DeepL Translate (https://www.deepl.com) and ChatGPT (https://openai.com/index/chatgpt/).

zur deutschen Alltagssprache ([Atlas for German Colloquial Language], Elspaß & Möller 2003ff.) has collected geographical data on the sequence of surname and given name in colloquial language (Figure 1). It shows that the "surname + given name" sequence can only be found in the southern parts of central Germany (marked with light and dark pink dots). However, the maps do not show regiolectal or even dialectal variants. So far, no large-scale geographical overview or exhaustive comparison between dialects or dialect regions exists.

The goals of the project were thus as follows:

- to identify influencing factors for the two sequence orders "given name + surname" vs. "surname + given name". To achieve this, I tested grammatical variation, pragmatic factors regarding their use and the influence of sociolinguistic variables, such as age, gender, or the number of inhabitants of a village,
- to document and map the distribution of different grammatical types of unofficial names in dialect-related registers,
- to trace the diachronic development of these types as far back as possible (for some initial considerations see Berchtold & Dammel 2014),
- to identify and analyse constructional variation within the reference systems of specific villages.

The different research questions could not easily be answered using only one method. To meet these objectives, a combination of direct and indirect, as well as qualitative and quantitative research methods was employed, from an indirect questionnaire over audio recordings of everyday language, focus group interviews to the analysis of historical sources and dialect grammar books.

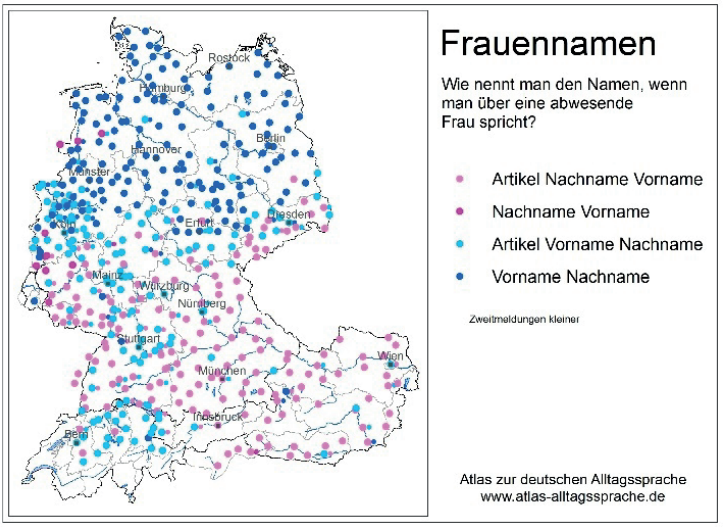

Figure 1: Map showing order of given name and surname for female names in German colloquial language (originally published in Elspaß & Möller 2003ff., copyright granted by authors). Pink dots indicate variants with surname positioned first, blue dots indicate variants with given name positioned first.

The project resulted in my dissertation, published under the title *Personenreferenz im Dialekt: Grammatik und Pragmatik inoffizieller Personennamen in Dialekten des Deutschen* (Schweden 2023). The following is a synopsis of the most relevant results published within the book. In Section 2, I will elaborate on the research design. Section 3 follows with a discussion of the sociolinguistic variation between "given name + surname" and "surname + given name". In Section 4, I will go into detail about different structural types of "surname + given name" and their genesis. In an outlook (Section 5), I will go into open or new questions and starting points for further research.

2. Research design

First, I designed an online questionnaire, which was spread both via private channels and via clubs devoted to regional traditions and dialects. I specifically wanted to yield answers by speakers of a dialect,

therefore, the participants were informed that I was researching names in German dialects. The questionnaire included discourse completion tasks (DCTs), meaning artificial communication situations that the participants should complete in the most natural way possible (Ackermann 2023; Agnieszka 2013; Ogiermann 2019; Schweden 2023: 20–23). In our case, these situations consisted of reporting various events involving familiar people to the participants' family members. For example, an assignment was: "Sie haben Ihrer Bekannten Emma Fischer Ihr altes Fahrrad verkauft. Heute werden Sie von Ihrer Mutter gefragt, wem Sie das Fahrrad verkauft haben. Was antworten Sie?

Das Fahrrad _____. [You sold your old bicycle to your friend Emma Fischer. Today, your mother asks you who you sold the bike to. What do you say? The bike _____.]." The survey also included tasks in which fictious names were to be translated into the dialect, or different dialectal variants (translation tasks). An open question asked the participants to reflect on the use of the two sequence orders of given name and surname to document diaphasic variation. The results of this question were later used to create a guideline for focus group interviews. The questionnaire yielded 810 responses, 424 by female, 386 by male participants.

Once the survey had provided an overview about diatopic variants, I began recruiting participants for field work via colleagues, dialect clubs or from the rows of survey participants who had left their email address for further contact. I was able to conduct field work in 13 villages, which was to cover as many of Germany's major dialect regions as possible. Except for East Low German and some gaps in East Central German, this goal was achieved. The greatest density of places is documented in West Central German, as the online survey revealed the greatest degree of constructional variation in this area (see Section 4). In 12 of the 13 locations, the "surname + given name" structure was used. The number of inhabitants of the locations varies between 622 and 23 925. A total of 90 local residents aged 45 years or above participated in the survey, 49 participants were male, 41 were female. To be eligible to participate, they had to have knowledge of the local families and be informed about local events. Additionally,

the members of the assembled group had to be familiar with each other. In every village, I conducted direct surveys with five to eleven local participants in each village (Schweden 2023:29–30). Each session lasted for two to three hours and always included (in the same order):

1. Table talks with groups of two to five participants, recorded in absence of the researcher.
2. Translation tasks, in which standard German sentences and names without syntactic context had to be translated into the local dialect.[2]
3. Focus group interviews with all participants from the respective village.

3. Sociolinguistic variation for the order of given name and surname

The questionnaire was able to show sociolinguistic variation. Most importantly, it helped identifying the areas of Germany and neighbouring countries where the "surname + given name" sequence is used, and which grammatical variants can be found.

In the collected data, for each individual answer set I noted whether the "surname + given name" sequence was at all used within the DCTs or the translation tasks. From this analysis, the map in Figure 2 was created. Split circles mark places where either the sequence in the overall name varies within different tasks of a single answer set or where interpersonal variations between different answer sets occurred.

[2] An example of such a task, is the following: "Tanja Neumann hat kürzlich das Haus von Familie Schmidt gekauft und zieht nächsten Monat schon mit ihrer Familie ein." [Tanja Neumann recently bought the house of the Schmidt family and will be moving in with her family next month.]".

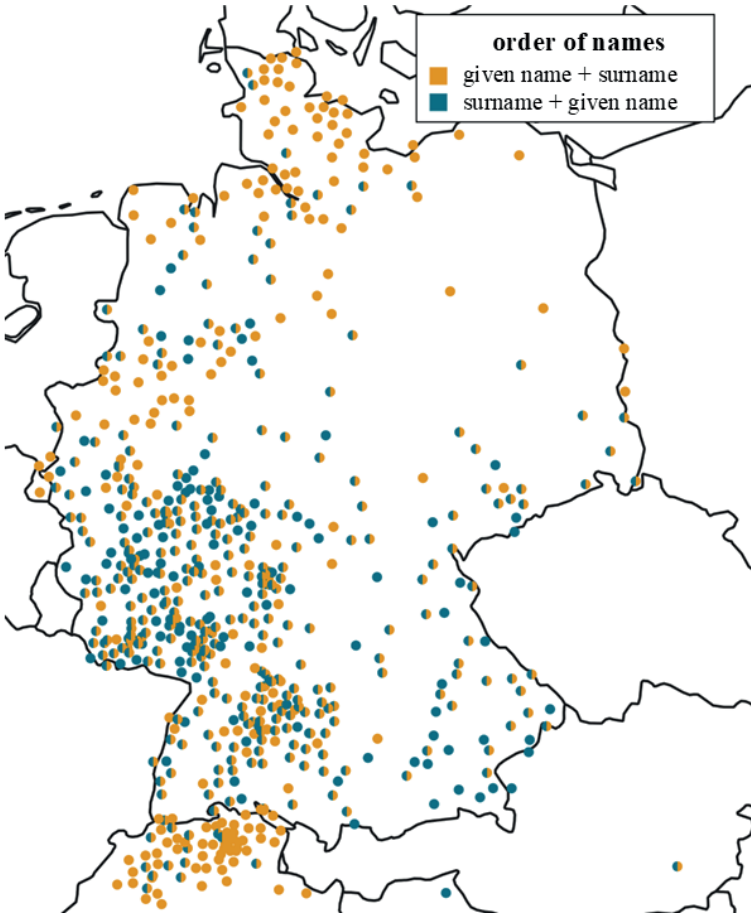

Figure 2: Map showing order of surname and given name (data: online questionnaire, DTCs and translations, originally published in Schweden 2023:50).

In order to correlate sociodemographic data with the two sequences in addition to the spatial dimension, a classification tree (chi-squared automatic interaction detection = CHAID) was created with the software SPSS (n = 793 survey answers[3]; Schweden 2023:51–56). This testing method identifies stronger and less strong correlations between a dependent variable and other metric, ordinal and nominal predictors

[3] Differences in the number of participants in the individual analyses were due to very few participants having not provided certain socio-demographic data.

using Pearson's chi-squared tests. The predictors are grouped into homogonous categories in several stages, with the categories differing significantly from each other with regard to the dependent variable. The tree was created testing correlations with the binary-coded dependent variable "surname precedes given name yes/no". This variable coded whether the "surname + given name" sequence occurred in one individual data set at all. As predictors, the following social data was tested: year of birth of the participants, gender of the participants, number of inhabitants of the survey location, dialect frequency in everyday life according to the participants' own assessment, and amount of contact of the participants to other people in their place of residence.

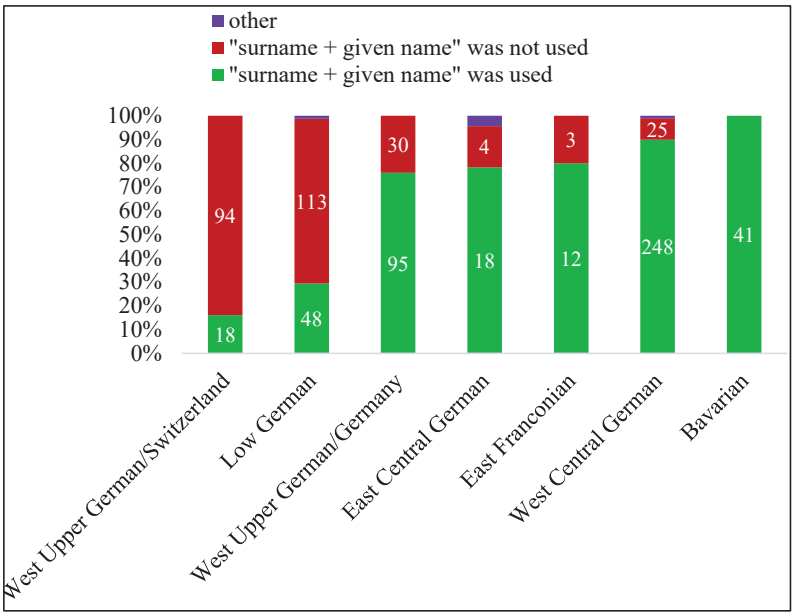

Figure 3: Order of surname and given name grouped by dialect region (data: online survey; n = 755, originally published in Schweden 2023:51).

The model was able to show that the sequence order of surname and given name is primarily dependent on the dialect area ($p < 0.001$). Particularly high percentages are found in West Central German and

Bavarian, while in Low German and Switzerland the "surname + given name" sequence is rarely used, or at least possible uses could not be documented (see Figure 3). In Northern Germany, this result reflects the significant decline in dialect use. A correlation between name order and dialect frequency, as assessed by the participants, can also be observed: in the entire Low German dialect region, active dialect usage is the lowest, with only 59 out of 163 participants (36 per cent) reporting that they always or frequently use dialect (see Table 1).

Table 1. Frequency of dialect usage according to the participants' assessment, grouped by dialect region.

Dialect region	Frequence of dialect usage					Total
	Always	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	
Low German	6	53	38	35	31	**163**
East Central German	2	8	5	7	1	**23**
East Franconian	0	10	3	2	0	**15**
West Central German	47	153	50	23	3	**276**
West Upper German/ Germany	40	62	16	6	1	**125**
Bavarian	23	14	2	1	1	**41**
West Upper German/ Switzerland	74	34	3	1	0	**112**

In addition, it is not the surname which precedes the given name in Low German regions, but house names [Hausnamen] or farm names [Hofnamen] – unofficial family names referring to both the estate of a family and the owners or residents. It was therefore not possible to form the "surname + given name" sequence for the fictious personal name stimuli in the questionnaire, as was discussed in the open question on use of "surname + given name". In Switzerland, the lack of this sequence can be traced back to the high proportion of participants aged between 20 and 30 as well as a stigmatization of the phenomenon under the influence of the national sport of "Schwingen", a type of folk freestyle wrestling with military connotations.

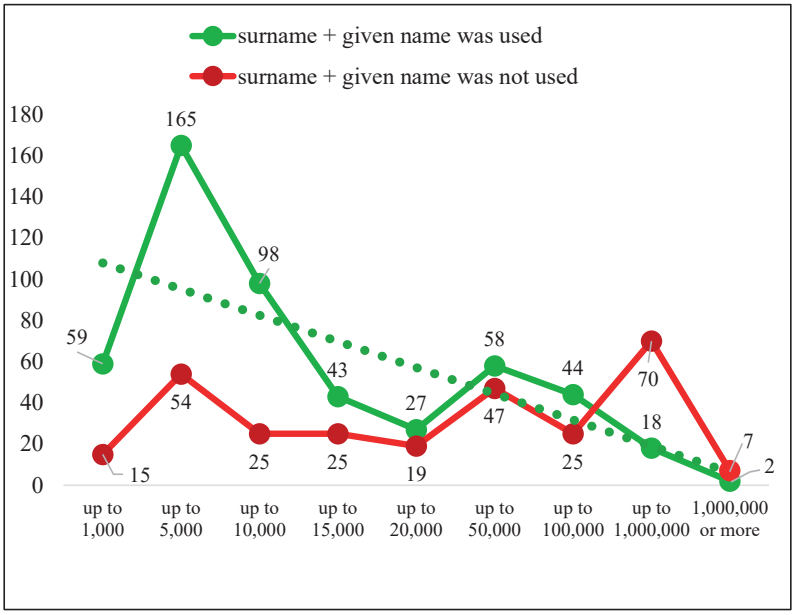

Figure 4: Order of surname and given name grouped by number of inhabitants of the survey location (data: online survey, *n* = 801, originally published in Schweden 2023:89).

The second most influential factor in the CHAID-model was the population size of the participants' places of residence ($p < 0.001$; see Figure 4). The smaller the population, the more frequently the "surname + given name" pattern was used in the questionnaire. In places with 100 000 inhabitants or more, the proportion exceeded 20 per cent only in Switzerland and the Low German region. In the remaining dialect areas, the proportion was less than 10 per cent. The third most influential factor was the participants' birth year ($p < 0.05$; Figure 5). Participants who were born between 1941 and 1970 tended to use "surname + given name" more often than younger ones. These results can be interpreted in terms of dialect decline and higher mobility among younger people. The latter also contributes to the fact that younger people prefer cities over villages. Therefore, they are less well connected and know fewer people.

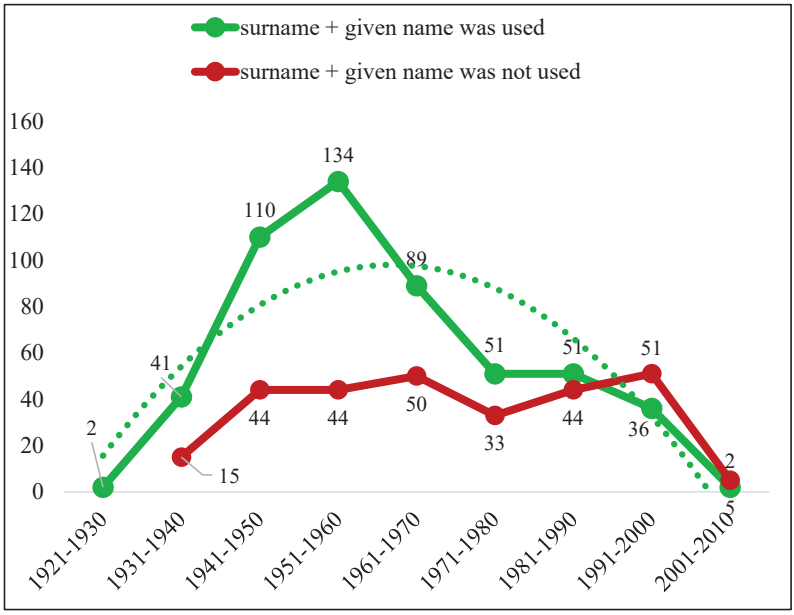

Figure 5: Order of surname and given name grouped by participants' year of birth (data: online survey, *n* = 802, originally published in Schweden 2023:95).

However, there were influencing factors that could not be identified through quantitative methods. Therefore, in addition to the questionnaire study, a comprehensive direct survey was conducted in 13 villages. This fieldwork included focus group discussions, where all participants from a village (on average seven) were asked to reflect on possible contexts of use for "surname + given name" (Schweden 2023:36–38, 40–43). Since we are working with language-reflective data rather than language production data, we opted for group interviews instead of individual interviews. The former are considered particularly valid because individual reflections on the (non-)use of "surname + given name" are subject to peer control. Flick (2009:195) refers to this as "quality controls on data collection" (for further information on the method see Benighaus & Benighaus 2012; Liamputtong 2011; Stewart & Shamdasani 2015). On another level, the data gained from the focus groups can be seen as speech production data on the cumulative interactional construction of group identity within the village. The group discussions of the twelve locations in which the pat-

tern occurred were transcribed as basic transcripts (Basistranskripte) according to GAT2 (Selting et al. 2009) using the software EXMARaLDA. They were later anonymized and published as 'Fokusgruppenkorpus "Personenreferenz im Dialekt"' (Dammel & Schweden 2022) on the University of Münster publication server (miami) and can be used for further linguistic research.

The open-ended free text question in the questionnaire and the focus group transcripts were analysed exploratively using the software MAXQDA. The analysis incorporated elements from qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz & Rädiker 2022; Marx & Wollny 2009) and the Grounded Theory methodology (see Corbin & Strauss 1990, 2008; Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 1992). Statements by the speakers about their language use were coded bottom-up, so that three further central influencing factors for the "surname + given name" sequence could be identified:

a. The referents' and/or interlocutors' connection with their village of residence.
b. The referents' and/or interlocutors' participation in local events.
c. A dialectal communication setting.

Social relationships with both the interlocutor and the referent play a central role in choosing a variant (a.): "surname + given name" is primarily used when referring to local referents and/or addressing local recipients. Interestingly (b.), outsiders can become part of the ingroup through marriage or personal initiative – such as joining local clubs – thereby becoming eligible for ingroup-specific reference forms. Conversely, this status is typically not withdrawn from long-time residents who have moved away or become socially isolated.

As part of the direct surveys, participants were asked to translate fictitious names into their local dialect (translation tasks; Schweden 2023:34–35). These translations also served to test additional influencing factors. One hypothesis was that the familiarity of the given or surnames influences the name order, such that less common names – like the given name *Cindy* or the surname *Nowak* – are used less

frequently in the order of "surname + given name" than more familiar ones. For this purpose, I tested names without any contextual information on the fictitious referents that might have triggered pragmatic variation. To avoid interference from phonological or prosodic factors, all given names used were disyllabic and stressed on the first syllable. The results show hardly any variation. Although *Cindy Wolf/ Wulf* was only used in 68.3 per cent of the answers by "surname + given name", the difference compared to *Thomas Schmidt* (83.6 per cent) should not be overstated.[4]

Lastly, the table talks yielded insights that went beyond the order of surname and given name. They were centred on photographs of persons from the village brought by the participants and recorded without the presence of the researcher (see Baumgartner et al. 2020; Busley 2021:132–134; Schweden 2023:34). Apart from the pragmatic factors influencing the sequence order of given name and surname, other forms of reference also contribute to this sociopragmatic construct – such as the use of the given name alone, without a surname. In the table talks, this reference type was mainly used for persons who were very close to the interlocutors, making further specification unnecessary.

4. Different structural types of *surname + given name* and their diachronic development

The data from the online questionnaire was also used to create a map showing (partly overlapping) diatopic areas in which different formal types by "surname + given name" occur (Figure 6). The map does not refer to a specific task in the questionnaire, instead, it encompasses all distinct types used in each data set. The data can be considered highly reliable, as identical formal types were realized at the same locations

[4] The tasks generally showed a high proportion of the order of "surname + given name". This can likely be attributed to the fact that participants were explicitly asked to translate into their dialect, prompting them to choose the most dialectal variant.

by different participants, even when a significant time gap between responses made mutual consultation unlikely.

On a large scale, four structural types can be distinguished, based on two formal variables:

1. different articles:
   - A phonologically reduced and cliticized genitive article *(d)s* < *des* [of] (*(d)s Müllers Peter*; red dots).
   - A *d*-article [the], which may be phonologically reduced depending on the dialect: *der/de*, *die/d* (*der Müllers(ch) Peter*; yellow and blue dots).
   - Article-less variants (*Müller-s(ch) Peter*; green dots).

Articles appear to have been produced correctly for the most part (see, for example, the noticeable nest without articles in the Swabian area). Due to the risk of article omission in the translations of names that were not syntactically embedded, forms without an article were only included if they appeared within the DCTs, thus ensuring they were embedded in a sentence.

2. (former) genitive inflection
   - Types without remnants of genitive inflection on the surname (yellow dots in Figure 6).
   - Types with remnants of genitive inflection on the surname (red, blue and green dots in Figure 6).

While the strong genitive inflection *-s(ch)*[5] has been preserved in appellatives of non-dialectal varieties (*das Fell des Hundes* [the dog's fur]), weak and combined genitive inflections have largely disappeared. However, these remnants have been retained in the respective name constructions. As a result, three types of former genitive allomorphs are still observable: *-s*, *-e(n)* and *-en-s*.

[5] In Moselle-Franconian and Ripuarian, the strong genitive inflection *-s* occurs in the phonetic variant *-sch* after the word final sound /ʊ/: *Müller-sch Peter*.

Some areas of the map note a lack of structural variation, with only one structural type appearing across wide areas. In the north of Germany, for instance, constructions with genitive inflection have reduced their allomorphy in favour of the strong genitive marker (*-s*).

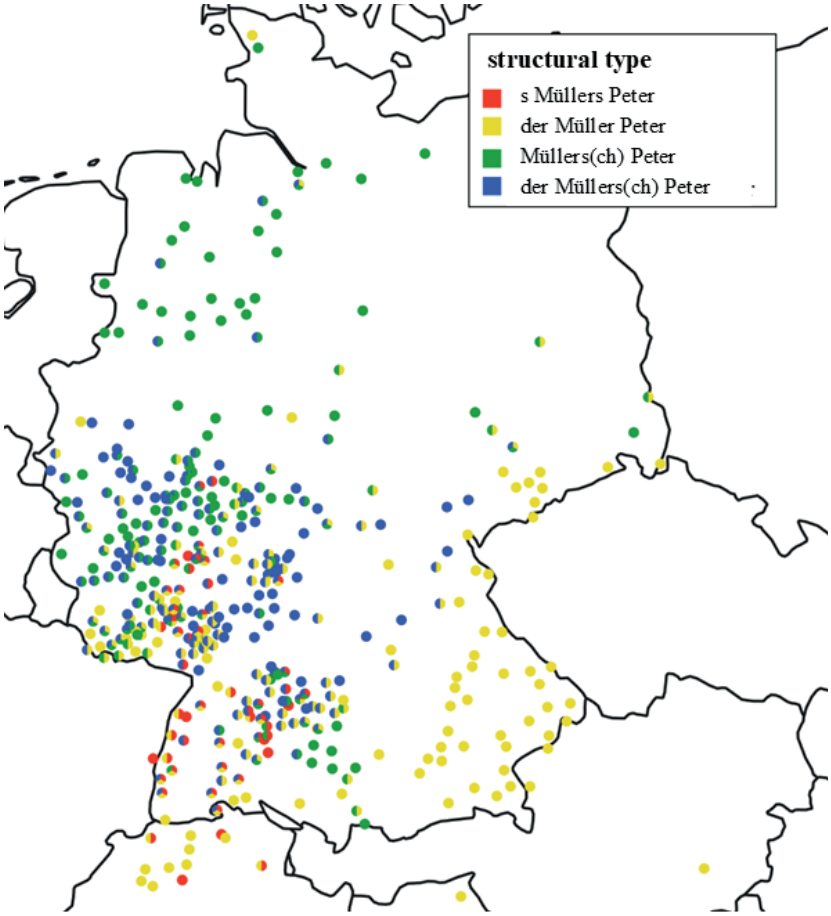

Figure 6: Map of structural types by "surname + given name" (data: online survey, DCTs and translations, originally published in Schweden 2023:99).

Other parts of Germany are characterized by a mixed spatial pattern. Of particular interest are the Middle German structures found in Rhine and Moselle Franconian. They feature a *d*-article combined with remnants of genitive inflection (blue dots), as in *der Müllers(ch) Peter*. In some cases, the article may serve a pragmatic function, such

as marking a newly introduced referent in conversation (Schmuck & Szczepaniak 2014; Werth 2014). In other cases, the article is not pragmatic but grammaticalized[6]. This occurs particularly in regions where non-inflected forms with a *d*-article (*der Müller Peter*) overlap and thus compete with inflected forms with *s*-articles (*s Müller-s Peter*) or with article-less structures (*Müller-s Peter*). Thus, it can be inferred that in this contact zone between the eastern non-inflected and the western genitive type, the combination of *d*-article and genitive inflection (*der Müller-s(ch) Peter*) has emerged as a case of constructional contamination (Schweden & Dammel 2023:213).

In most dialects that still show variation in genitive inflection, the former distribution based on inflectional classes has shifted to a conditioning by formal or phonological-prosodic factors. This shift could be investigated using a CHAID decision tree model, which was applied to all authentic name data ($n = 1\,241$ tokens) collected and transcribed from table talks and focus groups (Schweden 2023:182–190). To identify overarching conditioning factors, differences between the individual villages were excluded as predictor variables. The analysis showed that the number of syllables in the surname is the most influential predictor in determining the suffix variant ($p<0.001$). The data reveals that suffix choice is primarily governed by the number of syllables in the surname. Specifically, the formerly strong, asyllabic genitive suffix *-s(ch)* tends to occur with disyllabic surnames (e.g. *Müller-s Peter*), while a weak, syllabic suffix *-e(n)* is more likely used with monosyllabic surnames (e.g. *Schmidt-e(n) Emma*). These findings were confirmed by the written translation task involving fictitious name stimuli ($n = 952$ tokens). Here, *-e(n)* was used with monosyllabic surnames in 30.88 per cent of the cases but only in 8.19 per cent of the disyllabic ones. Conversely, *-s(ch)* was used in 51.89 per cent of disyllabic surnames, but only in 32.35 per cent of monosyllabic surnames.

This means that the current conditioning of former genitive inflections is governed by an output-oriented principle (see Dammel &

[6] In Upper German and some Central German varieties, given names are accompanied by a grammaticalized definite article (e.g. *die Emma*).

Kürschner 2008; Dammel, Kürschner & Nübling 2010:590–591; Neef 2000), which follows the trochee as the ideal word structure (Nowak & Nübling 2017:115). This output ideal has developed historically with a shift in focus from the syllable to the phonological word as the most important linguistic unit (Eisenberg 1991:47; Szczepaniak 2007). In this specific case, monosyllabic surnames are modified by a syllabic element to create a trochaic structure, resulting in a process of resyllabification (e.g. *Schmidt* > *Schmi.dte(n)*). For surnames that are already trochaic, the additional syllable is avoided by using the asyllabic suffix *-s(ch)*. A secondary factor influencing the choice of suffix variant is the final sound of the surname. Names ending in a sibilant (e.g. *Schulz*, *Fuchs*) tend to avoid the inflection with *-s(ch)* (5.59 per cent), in contrast to *-e(n)* (44.13 per cent; data from the written translation tasks). This formal restriction helps distinguish a name's base form from the suffix (e.g. *Schulz – Schulz-e(n)*; *Fuchs – Fuchs-e(n)*).

Variation in both the article and the (former) genitive inflection marker can also be observed within individual survey locations (split dots on the map in Figure 6). In some dialects, the genitive inflection depends on the article type and the accent structure of the name as a whole: an *-s* is only added to the surname if the main accent is placed on the given name, as *in (s) Müller-s ˊPeter*. This accent structure corresponds to the phrasal structure of the adnominal possessive genitive in appellatives, to which these names can be traced: *(des) Müllers ˊPeter* [Peter as a member of the Müller family]. However, if the accent is placed on the surname, the genitive inflection may be missing in Upper German and West Central German dialects, as in *der ˊMüller Peter*. This suggests an apposition or compositional structure. Structures with the former weak genitive allomorph *-e*[7] (*die/s Schmidt-e Emma*) occur with either the main accent on the surname or the given name. Therefore, *-e* not only continues to exist in its original function as a genitive inflection but has also become functionalized as a linking element, so that monosyllabic surnames are expanded into trochaic structures (Berchtold & Dammel 2014).

[7] The *-n* of the weak genitive inflection *-en* has been apocopated in the respective dialects.

In locations exhibiting constructional variation, the choice between the *d*-article and *s*-article (as in the Rhine-Franconian village of Höringen) or between the *d*-article and no article (as in the Moselle-Franconian Idar-Oberstein) is conditioned by pragmatic factors. The *s*-article or article-less variants, when combined with phrasal accent (the former genitive phrase structure), are used whenever the descent of a referent from a specific local family is emphasized. With this genitive phrase name type, referents are assigned to their family of origin or the head of the household. In the direct surveys, information about one's family of origin was found to be the most important reference point for identifying a person. While the prenominal genitive has disappeared in other contexts in German dialects, it has been preserved in dialectal onymic structures. Although we are dealing with names, this structure resembles definite appellative descriptions.

This preservation of adnominal genitives can be explained by an interplay of cultural-history and language change. The cultural-historical importance of the family of origin, a concept that has persisted since pre-industrial times, is iconically reflected in the order of surname and given name, as well as in the formal proximity of the attribute and head in the possessive construction (Aikhenwald & Dixon 2012; Haiman 1983, 1985; Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2002). Simultaneously, this information is used to adapt reference forms for the communication practices within the village speech community, thus optimizing them through recipient design (Sacks & Schegloff 1979; Schweden 2023:193–219; Werth 2020).

An analysis of 27 witch trial court records from 1570 to 1953 (Baumgarten 1987; Macha et al. 2005; Topalovic et al. 2007) revealed that, although the North German type with genitive inflection, but without an article (e.g. *Müller-s Peter*), was frequently used with names (e.g. *Schmuckers Johan*, *Schmidts Hanßen*), this was not the case for the Southwest German type with the genitive article. However, in Alemannic dialects, genitive articles often occur when the prenominal genitive attribute is an office title, such as in the examples *Greta deß Meßmerß Tochter* (Greta [article$_{\text{genitive}}$ sexton$_{\text{genitive}}$ daughter] = 'Greta, the daughter of the sexton'), *Balthes Tierheimer des Küe-*

hürten mädle ([[Balthes Tierheimer article$_{genitive}$ cowherd$_{genitive}$] girl] = 'the girl (daughter) of Balthes Tierheimer, who is the cowherd').

Since office titles count among the precursors to family names, and in the head position of these phrases, relational nouns like *Frau*/*Hausfrau*/*Weib* [wife] or *Kind*/*Tochter*/*Sohn* [child/daughter/son] appear almost exclusively, these constructions in Southwestern Germany can be seen as precursors to today's purely onymic genitives (the red dots in Figure 6). The witch trial interrogation records show that in these appellative prenominal genitive phrases, it is primarily wives and (female) descendants who function as the possessum. Interestingly, in some recent dialects, the use of onymic genitive phrases appears to be restricted to female referents, while the non-genitive variant can be used for both men and women.

The South German type (represented by yellow dots in Figure 6) also appears in the historical data (e.g. *Müller Jergen)* but does not yet exhibit the grammaticalized article found in more recent forms. The choice of genitive inflection on specific surnames seems to have already become largely fixed, with minimal variation.

As prenominal genitive constructions, which used to describe the relationship between the head of the family and his wife or children, have been restricted to names (with adnominal genitives in appellatives disappearing in German dialects), the "surname + given name" structure has solidified into a fixed linguistic pattern. This is evidenced by participants spontaneously creating constructions with gap fillers when they cannot recall the specific name: *Kurz-e Sowieso* [Kurz$_{genitive}$ whatshisname] (Idar-Oberstein, Moselle-Franconian) or *de Auerbach-e wie horrer_n gehääß* [Auerbach$_{genitive}$ (surname) what was he called again] (Höringen, Rhine-Franconian).

4. Conclusion and outlook

This paper has demonstrated that unofficial names in German dialects are highly relevant to understanding German morphology, as they preserve former morphological structures such as the prenominal

genitive attribute and the weak genitive inflection. This does not happen by chance, but for a reason. Onymic genitives serve the important function of placing people in their family of origin, a concept that has always been and continues to be highly significant in village communities. Consequently, these genitives are a linguistically fixed element of social history. The variation between "surname + given name" and "given name + surname" also serves the function of distinguishing local residents from newcomers or outsiders.

As previously noted, German rural dialects are in sharp decline. Fortunately, the project managed to document the corresponding naming systems just in time before they have also disappeared. Generations under the age of 30 no longer use these forms and are unable to reproduce them.

Although the project has achieved various results, it has also raised further questions: Village varieties offer promising starting points for research, particularly concerning the sociolinguistic functions of names. For instance: In what ways are names or name variants used as ingroup and outgroup markers distinguishing locals from newcomers? What linguistic traces of patriarchal social structures can be identified?

In the table talks, a striking disparity was observed in the frequency of references to male versus female individuals: male referents accounted for 1 288 types (71.08 per cent), while female referents were mentioned in only 524 types (28.92 per cent). This imbalance is partly due to the gender distribution in the photographs used. In addition, a more detailed analysis revealed significant differences in the forms of reference: participants used given names far more frequently for women (51.15 per cent) than for men (34.24 per cent).

This pattern suggests that women were and still are less visible in the public and social life of village communities. Their movement radius appears to be restricted largely to the domestic sphere, a fact reflected linguistically by the preference for more familiar forms of address (given name) rather than official surnames or full names. Nevertheless, the social structures of villages have not been researched enough to draw more precise conclusions. This highlights the impor-

tance of examining complete reference systems – such as those found in village speech communities – in order to fully understand these dynamics.

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Expression of Lithuanness in the names of children of Lithuanian emigrants in Norway, 1991–2020

Daiva Sinkevičiūtė

Abstract: This article examines the Lithuanianness of the names of Lithuanian citizens born in Norway between 1991 and 2020. To do this, a scale was created to measure Lithuanianness that takes into account grammatical structure, origin, derivation, and orthography. From a grammatical point of view, the study shows that the names of most Lithuanian citizens born in Norway comply with the usual structure of Lithuanian names (86.3 per cent). More than two-thirds of the Lithuanian citizens born in Norway have borrowed names that coincide with those of other languages, including endings. As a result, it is clear that the endings of many names indicate Lithuanian ethnic identity, but the stems of the names conceal it. The naming trends for girls and boys differ. Lithuanian emigrants usually give girls and boys names that coincide with those of other languages. In addition, boys often receive names that only have the stems in common with other languages.

Keywords: personal names, Lithuanian names, names of emigrants, naming practices, emigration, Lithuania, Norway

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1. Introduction[1]

Over the last thirty years, there has been significant emigration from Lithuania. In the decade from 2010 to 2020, over 482 000 Lithuanian citizens emigrated, although some later returned. Most emigrants were working-age individuals, with 71 per cent of those leaving Lithuania in 2020 aged 15–44 (*Migration in numbers*). Many of them had children. More precisely, the percentage of children born abroad to Lithuanian citizens was 12 per cent in 2019 and 7 per cent in 2020 (*Official Statistics Portal*).

According to official data from 2010 to 2020, most Lithuanian emigrants moved to the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, and Norway (*Migration in numbers*). Norway ranks third as the destination for Lithuanian emigrants, following the United Kingdom and Germany. According to data from 2021, the population of Lithuanian citizens in Norway was 47 304, in the United Kingdom 152 000, in Germany 57 990 (Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania).

It is also the largest country to which Lithuanian emigrants did not move until the end of the 20th century. Lithuanian citizens constitute the third-largest immigrant community in Norway after Polish and Ukrainian citizens. According to data from 2024, Norway's largest immigrant communities comprised citizens from Poland (109 654), Ukraine (65 566), Lithuania (42 733), Syria (38 429), Sweden (36 612), and Somalia (27 665). Data from 2020 to 2022 indicated that Ukraine was not among the largest immigrant communities; however, the number of Ukrainian citizens increased in 2023 and 2024 due to Russia's attack on Ukraine (*Statistics Norway* 1).

As is well known, personal names can establish a person's identity (Alford 1988:51; Aldrin 2016). Names also serve as a symbolic boundary separating the majority from minority migrant groups (Gerhards & Tuppat 2018:4). Research on names in other languages suggests that boys' names carried by emigrants tend to be more tra-

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ditional and conservative, whereas girls' names are often more modern and adaptable to different cultures (Sue & Telles 2007:1388–1389; with literature).

Recent research has shown that some Lithuanian emigrants try to ensure that their children learn and use the Lithuanian language, whereas others do not make such efforts (Jakaitė-Bulbukienė 2015:91–126). Lithuanians who have moved to Northern Ireland give their children names of various origins. However, when choosing an English name, they tend to select one with an equivalent in Lithuania. When giving a Lithuanian name, they strive to make it easy to pronounce and avoid using letters with diacritics (Liubinienė 2011:150). In Norway, Lithuanian citizens are more inclined than those in other countries to give their children names with Lithuanian diacritics (Sinkevičiūtė 2024b).

The names derived from the Lithuanian lexicon indicate the ethnicity of Lithuanian children (e.g. (f.) *Meilė* from Lith. *meilė* 'love') more clearly than names with equivalents in other languages (e.g. (f.) *Lėja*), like other languages (Sue & Telles 2007: 1392). Children may also have names that do not signify their Lithuanian ethnicity, as they are common to both Lithuanian and other languages (e.g. (f.) *Daniela*; (m.) *Jonas*). Some names are typical of Lithuanian (e.g. (f.) *Lėja*, *Meilė*), while others are unusual for Lithuanian (e.g. (f.) *Aimi*, *Leah*). Thus, emigrants from Lithuania in Norway give their children different names in relation to the Lithuanian language.

Based on the variety of names, the aim is to study the Lithuanianness of the names of Lithuanian citizens born in Norway and to identify naming strategies used by expatriates. When studying the Lithuanianness of names, I consider the extent to which the names are characteristically Lithuanian, as well as their grammatical structure, origin, derivation, and orthography. Based on these criteria, I adapt a scale to assess the Lithuanianness of names based on the characteristics of the Lithuanian language.

The idea of exploring the Lithuanianness of the names of Lithuanian citizens born abroad has been inspired by the works of Sue & Telles (2007) and Parada (2013; 2016; 2019), who studied the influ-

ence of English on the names of children of Spanish-speaking emigrants. They created a scale to evaluate the Spanishness of the names and used it to explore how the form of a name relates to the parents' identity. I was unable to use this scale for analysing Lithuanian names due to differences in study intentions, data nature, the grammatical structure of Lithuanian names, and their origin.

2. Overview of behavioural studies of Lithuanian emigrants in Norway

Previously, the level of emigration from Lithuania to Norway was minimal. However, since the 1970s, emigration from other non-European countries to Norway has increased (Gullestad 2002:47). Recent studies view emigrants as individuals who exist across national boundaries and navigate multiple national realities (Coutin 2003:326). This self-perception of emigrants from Lithuania is also evident in Norway (Daukšas 2011:219–139; 2016:173–194; Kuznecovienė 2011:89–104, etc.). From 2004 to 2010, the Lithuanian diaspora began to emerge in Norway (Taljūnaitė 2011:56), and second-generation emigrants appeared, with their behaviours differing from first-generation emigrants (Daukšas 2019:230–240; 2021:230–243).

Lithuanian citizens mainly migrate to Norway for economic reasons. The Norwegian authorities also encourage their migration by inviting specialists, especially medical professionals, from Lithuania. Those who come to the country often stay not only because of work and career opportunities but also due to the formation of mixed families and the reluctance to change their children's schools (Daukšas 2011:123–124). Emigrants find Norway attractive due to the imagined cultural similarity between Lithuanians and Norwegians. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, the Norwegian press portrayed Lithuanian emigrants negatively, prompting Norwegian-Lithuanians to work on changing this image (Daukšas 2011:129–131).

In Norway, emigrants from Lithuania maintain ties with their homeland (Daukšas 2011:219–139; 2016:173–194; Kuznecovienė

2011:89–104, etc.). First-generation emigrants adapt to the local customs and traditions but lack a national identity in common with the local community. They use the Lithuanian language in a limited context, teach it to their children, celebrate traditional Lithuanian holidays, and maintain an emotional connection with Lithuania as their home (Daukšas 2021:230–243; Kuznecovienė 2011:89–104; Kusaitė & Anglickienė 2022:216–231). Emigrants stay connected with Lithuania through the internet, Lithuanian television, and affordable air travel. Citizenship is a link to Lithuania that they are not eager to give up (Daukšas 2011:127–133).

In the Lithuanian press, there were reports about Lithuanian children being taken from their families by Norwegian social services. This prompted the return of women with children, or children alone, to Lithuania (Daukšas 2020:127–147), demonstrating the true concept of home.

Second-generation emigrants see their future in Norway and consider it their home. Some may acquire Norwegian citizenship but maintain a dual identity (Daukšas 2019:230–240; 2021:230–243). A 2021 study revealed that Lithuanians in Norway increasingly adopt and positively accept Norwegian culture. They learn Norwegian, celebrate Norwegian holidays, and show interest in Norwegian culture and history. As the Lithuanian community in Norway expands, Lithuanians' self-esteem rises; they take pride in their Lithuanian identity (Kusaitė & Anglickienė 2022:216–231).

3. Research on the names of emigrants from Lithuania

The personal names of Lithuanians born abroad have not been extensively studied. A study of Baltic names given to Lithuanian citizens in the United Kingdom from 1991 to 2020 (Sinkevičiūtė 2024a) showed that these names are more commonly given to girls and have yet to become widespread. They account for 16.4 per cent of the single names of female and 7.8 per cent of male Lithuanian citizens. These

names are names of natural phenomena and objects, Lithuanian pagan goddesses and gods, and famous and legendary personalities of Lithuania's past (Sinkevičiūtė 2024a). Between 1991 and 2020, emigrants in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Norway, and Germany mostly gave their children names without letters with specific Lithuanian diacritics. In cases in which children were given names with exclusively Lithuanian letters that were more characteristic of girls, they registered them in the normative forms. These names are most common in Norway (Sinkevičiūtė 2024b). These studies have shown that Lithuanians born abroad are also given names that are unique to Lithuanians.

In her 2024 study, Schiller examined the reasons behind the naming choices of Lithuanians living in Germany and those in mixed families or with Lithuanian roots. She found that parents considered the sound of names and their compatibility with Lithuanian and German, the meaning of the names, and ease of pronunciation. They also aimed to avoid any negative associations. Sipavicius Seide (2020:100–121) found that the names of descendants of emigrants who emigrated from Lithuania to Brazil at the beginning of the 20th century are often not typical of the Lithuanian language since their parents identify with the host country. However, there have been cases when the descendants of emigrants have retained or restored their original identity. These studies have shown that Lithuanians and emigrants of Lithuanian descent typically seek to integrate into the host country's community by choosing names.

Some Lithuanians in Northern Ireland choose different names when communicating with English speakers, even though they use their regular names with other Lithuanians. This issue is less common with short, easy-to-pronounce names, although some people revert to their Lithuanian names in non-Lithuanian environments (Liubinienė 2011:149–151).

Social science researchers have identified the unique nature of Lithuanian names. Lithuanians who have emigrated to the United States may seem exotic (Čiubrinskas 2014:15) to others due to their unfamiliar names and surnames (the structure of Lithuanian names

is discussed below). Inhabitants of Northern Ireland find it challenging to pronounce and remember these names accurately (Liubinienė 2011:149–151). For Lithuanians residing in Kazakhstan, names and surnames indicate their Lithuanian identity (Vilkienė 2023:117). However, challenges arise from the distinct forms of male and female surnames typical of the Lithuanian language and the Lithuanian names and surnames they possess serve as motivation for third-generation emigrants to explore their roots, Lithuania, and the Lithuanian language (Vilkienė 2023:114). In Lithuanian, traditional forms of male and female surnames differ. Male surnames generally end in *-as*, *-is*, *-ys*, *-(i)us*, *-(i)a*, and *-ė* (e.g. *Petrauskas*, *Jankauskis*, *Dainys*, *Saulevičius*, *Butkus*, *Juodka*, *Grybė*). Female surnames are derived from masculine surnames. Traditional female surnames, based on the father's surname, have the suffixes *-aitė*, *-ytė*, *-iūtė*, or *-utė* (e.g. *Petrauskaitė*, *Dainytė*, *Saulevičiūtė*, *Butkutė*) added to the stems of male surnames. Traditional female surnames, based on the male surname, feature the suffixes *-ienė* or *-uvienė* (e.g. *Jankauskienė*, *Butkienė*, *Butkuvienė*) appended to the stems of male surnames (Vanagas 2008:400). Some surnames do not indicate a woman's marital status and instead end in *-ė* (e.g. *Petrauskė*, *Butkė*), which is added to the stem of a man's surname (State Commission of the Lithuanian Language).

Emigrants from Lithuania themselves acknowledge that the names given to them by their parents show that they are Lithuanians (Jakaitė-Bulbukienė 2015:84). As a result, the previous generation of emigrants, who came to Canada from Lithuania after the war changed and shortened their surnames (Vilkienė 2019:38).

According to studies by Daukšas (2018:80; 2019:234–235), personal names play a significant role in identifying Lithuanians in Norway. Names and surnames can indicate that Lithuanians belong to a different ethnic group, as they are neither common nor typical for Norwegians and may sound non-Norwegian. This can lead to Lithuanians in Norway being mistakenly identified as Finnish due to their surnames, as well as their language and accent (Daukšas 2013:58; 2016:183). Norwegians do not consider Lithuanians as 'one of their own'; they

are betrayed by their names and surnames (Daukšas 2019:230–240; 2021:230–243). Furthermore, for some Lithuanians, their surnames hold importance in shaping their self-esteem and identity (Daukšas 2019:36).

4. Survey data

The survey data for the current study was obtained through the mediation of the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language from the Centre of Registers because, as Lithuanian law requires that its citizens born abroad be recorded in the general data of the Republic of Lithuania (Office of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania 1).

The investigation period was 1991–2020, as migration from Lithuania to Norway was fairly rare before 1991. According to the Centre of Registers, between 1991 and 2020, 8138 Lithuanian citizens were born in Norway – 3963 girls and 4173 boys. In addition to the names, I take into account gender, birth year, and country references. In the absence of information, names are not differentiated according to the place of birth of children, age, order of birth, and parents' citizenship.

The majority of Lithuanian citizens in Norway have one given name, while some have two. Occasionally, children born abroad are given more than two names. To conduct this research, I focused on single names of Lithuanian citizens born in Norway. Having two or more names suggests different naming strategies. Lithuanian citizens born in Norway typically have one name, making up 94 per cent of girls' and 94.9 per cent of boys' names (see Table 1), whereas other cases are rare.

Table 1. Lithuanian citizens registered in Norway 1991–2020 by number of given names.

		Single names	Two names	Multiple names	Total
Girls	Count	3 727	225	11	3 963
	Percentage	94	5.7	0.3	100
Boys	Count	3 959	210	4	4 173
	Percentage	94.9	5	0.1	100

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Although it is not commendatory to record nationality in Lithuanian documents (Office of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania 2), most children registered with single names are recorded as Lithuanian (81.6 per cent of girls and 81.7 per cent of boys) or opt not to indicate nationality (17.4 per cent of girls and 17 per cent of boys), see Table 2. Nationality references were not included in the analysis, as some children of other or unspecified nationalities have Lithuanian names (see below). The tendency not to indicate nationality when registering children intensified in the second decade of the 21st century.

Table 2. Lithuanian citizens registered in Norway in 1991–2020 with a single name, categorized by their declared nationality.

		Lithuanian	Russian	Polish	Other nationality	Unspecified nationality	Total
Girls	Count	3 040	15	14	7	651	3 727
	Percentage	81.6	0.4	0.4	0.2	17.4	100
Boys	Count	3 233	18	22	11	675	3 959
	Percentage	81.7	0.45	0.55	0.3	17	100

The number of children born in Norway varied by year during the period covered in this study. Figure 1 illustrates the number of unique names given each year. The lowest number of Lithuanian citizens born in Norway was between 1991 and 2000. Since 2007, the number of Lithuanian citizens arriving in Norway, especially men, has increased. This trend is associated with a rising demand for workers in the construction sector and the need for service staff (Gudavičienė 2019:152). Since 2008, the number of births has increased, with the highest number of children being born during 2013–2018. Thus, the second decade of the 21st century stands out regarding the number of names. Due to this unevenness, the dynamics of names by year have not been studied.

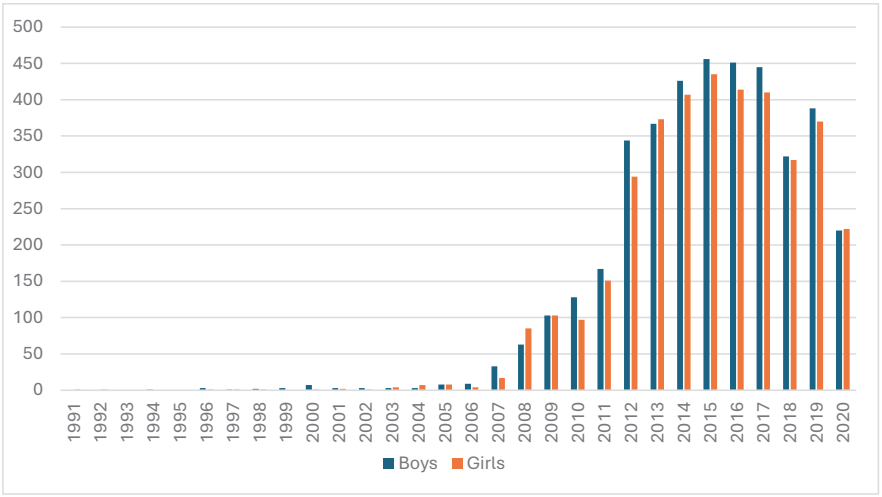

Figure 1: Lithuanian citizens registered under a single name born in Norway from 1991 to 2020, categorized by year of birth.

During the investigation, various graphically recorded personal names were considered separate, such as *Lėja* and *Leja*, *Estela* and *Estella*. From 1991 to 2020, 685 girls and 609 boys in Norway were registered with unique names. More than half of these names were given only once: 383 for girls and 309 for boys. This implies that there is a broader range of names available for girls. The origin of the names is available in dictionaries (see below) and will not be repeated here, except for Baltic names, which will be indicated in the article in order to demonstrate the diversity of Baltic names.

5. Research methodology

As previously mentioned, the scale to measure Lithuanianness is based on the framework for evaluating Spanishness of names in an American context outlined by Sue & Telles (2007) and Parada (2013; 2016; 2019), which includes five criteria. The first category includes names unique to English (*e.g. Ashley*), while the fifth category consists of names specific to Spanish (*e.g. Guadalupe*). The names in the third category are typical of both languages (*e.g. Andrea)*. The second

category includes names that are characteristic of English but have equivalents in Spanish (e.g. *Michael*), whereas the fourth category features names typical of Spanish that also have English equivalents (e.g. *Miguel*) (Sue & Telles 2007; Parada 2013; 2016; 2019).

This scale was adopted to evaluate the Lithuanianness of the names of Lithuanian citizens living in Norway. On the new scale, group (1) indicates names least characteristic of Lithuanian, which have no equivalents in Lithuanian and are not used in this language, whereas group (5) represents the names most characteristic of Lithuanian, which have no equivalents in other languages. The neutral category (3) was assigned to names commonly used in both Lithuanian and other languages. Group (2) signifies names that are characteristic of different languages but have equivalents in Lithuanian, whereas (4) denotes names characteristic of Lithuanian that also have equivalents in other languages.

The categorization of individual names on the scale was guided by specific linguistic criteria: grammar, orthography, origin and derivation. The grammar criterion was utilized to evaluate the regularity of names in Lithuanian. Common Lithuanian names, like other words, have endings that change as the words are declined[2]. In Lithuanian, typical female names end in *-a* and *-ė* attached to the consonant, such as *Olivija* and *Akvilė*. Male names end in *-as*, *-is*, *-*(*i*)*us*, *-ys*, or *-a* after the consonant, for example, *Lukas*, *Tonis*, *Marius*, *Ajus*, *Merkys*, and *Jogaila*. These names were included in group (3), (4) or (5). Some names commonly used in Lithuanian coincide with names in other languages, for example, (f.) *Amanda*, *Estela*, *Oksana*; (m.) *Aris*, *Jonas*, *Midas*, and were thus categorized as (3). Other personal names include forms from different languages, such as (f.) *Amberly*, *Ani*, *Maria*; (m.) *Erik*, *Kaspar*, *Robin*. They are unusual for Lithuanian because they lack Lithuanian endings and were therefore included in group (1) or (2).

[2] Lithuanian, along with Latvian, belongs to the branch of the Baltic languages, a family of the Indo-European languages. An important feature of Lithuanian for this study is that noun endings indicating gender, number, and case are commendatory (Ambrazas 1997:93–133).

Orthography was also important in the classification of names and is used to identify altered names. The Lithuanian alphabet consists of 32 letters, 12 of which are vowels (*a*, *ą*, *e*, *ę*, *ė*, *i*, *y*, *į*, *o*, *u*, *ū*, *ų*) and 20 are consonants (*b*, *c*, *č*, *f*, *g*, *h*, *j*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *r*, *s*, *š*, *t*, *v*, *z*, *ž*). Additionally, there are 8 diphthongs of various types (*ai*, *au*, *ei*, *ie*, *ui*, *uo*, *ie*, and in international words *eu*, *ou*), 3 digraphs (*ch*, *dz*, *dž*). The letter *i*, inserted between a consonant and a back vowel (*ia*, *ią*, *io*, *iu*, *iū*, *ių*, *iai*, *iau*, *iui*, *iuo*), signifies palatalization (see Ambrazas 1997:13–19; 24–52). Personal names written with Lithuanian letters and their characteristic combinations were considered to be common names in the Lithuanian language and therefore included in group (3), (4) or (5), e.g. (f.) *Aleksandra*, *Gundė*, *Gvena*, *Klara*, *Lėja*, *Mija*; (m.) *Ąžuolas*, *Benjaminas*, *Henris*, *Jokūbas*, *Maksas*, *Odinas*. Names written in non-traditional orthography, e.g. (f.) *Leah*, *Milea*, *Victoria*; (m.) *Kristoffer*, *Nico*, *Younas*, were categorized as (1) or (2) and considered to be unusual in the Lithuanian language. These names include letters not found in the Lithuanian alphabet (*x*, *w*, *q*, etc.) or letter combinations that are uncommon in Lithuanian, including double consonants (*ay*, *ey*, *ya*, *iy*, *sz*, *cz*, *th*, *ll*, *mm*, *nn*, etc.). Also included are names in which the letters represent incorrect sounds in Lithuanian (*c* represents [k], *ch* represents [ʃ], *j* represents [dʒ], etc.).

The third criterion, origin and formation, was used to distinguish between names that are equivalent in terms of grammar. Some common Lithuanian names originate from the Baltic lexicon, e.g. (f.) *Aušra* from Lith. *aušra* [dawn]; *Mantė* from *Mantautė*, cf. *man-* from Lith. *manyti* [think] + *taut-* from Lith. *tauta* [nation]; (m.) *Vėjas* from Lith. *vėjas* [wind]; *Vytautas*, cf. *vy-* from Lith. *išvysti* [see] + *taut-* from Lith. *tauta* [nation]. Note also suffixal names like (f.) *Rugilė*, with the suffix *-ilė* from Lith. *rugys* [rye], and (m.) *Tauridas*, with the suffix *-idas* from Lith. *tauras* [taurus], *taurus* [noble]. These names are all categorized as (5).

In other cases, the stems of names are borrowed from different languages, e.g. (f.) *Grantė*, *Rakelė*, *Solveiga*; (m.) *Aleksandras*, *Edgaras*, *Natanielis*. These names are therefore categorized as (3) or (4). Some derivatives were also formed from borrowed stems, e.g. (f.) *Simėja*,

with the suffix *-ėja* from *Sima*; (m.) *Airidas*, with the suffix *-idas* from *Airas*, *Airis*, *Airius*. These names are all categorized as (5).

In some cases, borrowed names have an alternative Baltic origin, e.g. (f.) *Armina*, *Gina*; (m.) *Darius*, *Marius*[3]. These names were included in group (5). In addition, names borrowed from other languages have been adapted to Lithuanian, e.g. (f.) *Barbora*, *Morta*; (m.) *Povilas*, *Rapolas*. These names are categorized as (5).

Names from other languages are also evaluated based on their origins and formation. Variants of traditional Lithuanian names were distinguished in group (2), e.g. (f.) *Emma*, *Sofia*; (m.) *Arnold*, *Bart*, from names with stems uncharacteristic of Lithuanian in group (1), e.g. (f.) *Amber*, *Skai*; (m.) *Aariz*, *Amirali*.

Various sources were used to trace the origin and formation of names. Lithuanian names have been described in the dictionary compiled by Kazimieras Kuzavinis & Bronys Savukynas (2009), as well as in online resources (*List of personal names of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania*). To identify names from various languages, dictionaries including Ronan Coghlan et all (1990), Patrick Hanks et all (2006), Roberto Faure (2008), Chantal Tanet & Tanet Hordé (2000), Rosa Kohlheim & Volker Kohlheim (2007), Nancy L. Coleman & Olav Veka (2010), Jan Grzenia (2006), Aleksandra Superanskaja (2003), and Ivan Ivanovič Trijnjak (2005), among others, were consulted. These dictionaries, along with websites such as *Monodomo* and *Behind the Name*, were also used to verify the orthography of names in different languages.

The grouping of personal names assessed the extent to which they are characteristic of Lithuanian and other languages that influenced emigrants in Norway. The names of Lithuanians living in Norway may be influenced by the names of Norway and the Nordic countries. As with Lithuania, names in English, Italian, Spanish, etc., could

[3] These names may also have a Baltic origin, e.g. (f.) *Armina*, cf. *ar-* from Lith. *ar* [also, too] + *min-* from Lith. *minti* [keep in mind], *minėti* [mention]; *Gina* from *Ginvyda*, cf. *gin-* from Lith. *ginti* [defend] + *vyd-* from Lith. *išvysti* [see]; (m.) *Darius* from *Dartautas*, cf. *dar-* from Lith. *daryti* [do] + *taut-* from Lith. *tauta* [nation]; *Marius* from Lith. *marios* [lagoon].

have influenced them (Sinkevičiūtė 2021). Polish, Russian, and other languages of Lithuanian national minorities were also significant.

The scale developed to measure Lithuanianness based on the grammar, orthography, origin, and formation of names consequently distinguishes five groups of names:

- **Group 1. Names of non-Lithuanian form:** Names characteristic of other languages that do not have Lithuanian endings. Their orthography is uncharacteristic of Lithuanian. They are not similar in stems to the usual Lithuanian names, and have no equivalents in Lithuanian: e.g. (f.) *Aimi*, *Amber, Blu*, *Domino*; (m.) *Abdullah*, *Areeb*, *Demir*, *Enes*.
- **Group 2. Names of a more non-Lithuanian than Lithuanian form**: Names characteristic of other languages that do not have Lithuanian endings, their orthography is uncharacteristic of Lithuanian. Still, their stems have corresponding variants in usual Lithuanian names: e.g. (f.) *Danielle*, *Gabriella*, *Lea*, *Maria*, *Nicole*; (m.) *Andreas*, *Elias*, *Lucas*, *Matheus*, *Marco*.
- **Group 3. Overlapping names of non-Lithuanian and Lithuanian forms**: Names characteristic of other languages, that are also common in Lithuanian: e.g. (f.) *Barbara*, *Kaja*, *Laura*; (m.) *Aris*, *Jonas*, *Marius*.
- **Group 4. Names of a more Lithuanian rather than non-Lithuanian form:** Names characteristic of the Lithuanian language with Lithuanian endings, but their stems are also used in other languages, e.g. (f.) *Benediktė*, *Inesa*, *Gretė*; (m.) *Armandas*, *Erikas*, *Gabrielius*. These names are often written according to Lithuanian orthography, e.g. (f.) *Vanesa*, *Otilija*, *Eiprilė*, *Dorotėja*; (m.) *Arijus*, *Ludvikas*, *Matėjas*, *Taironas*.
- **Group 5. Names with a Lithuanian form:** Names characterized by unique endings and stems exclusive of Lithuanian. Some names came from the lexicon of the Baltic languages, e.g. (f.) *Aistė*, *Aušra*; (m.) *Daumantas*, *Vainius*, or

are derivatives of such names, e.g. (f.) *Aist-ėja*, *Vėj-ūnė*; (m.) *Šar-ūnas*, *Vyt-enis*. Other names were originally borrowed from other languages, but their stems have taken on typical Lithuanian forms, e.g. (f.) *Gertrūda*, *Ignė*, *Kotryna*; (m.) *Agnius*, *Juozas*, *Kazimieras*. Yet other names are derivatives of borrowed personal names, e.g. (f.) *Air-ida*, *Sim-ėja*; (m.) *Air-idas*, *Dein-atas*.

Altered names registered with unusual orthography for Lithuanian or other languages, such as (f.) *Kamillė*, *Sarlote*; (m.) *Bėnas*, *Jokubas*, were excluded from consideration. Some names characteristic of Lithuanian are written without diacritics, like (f.) *Leja*, and Baltic names, like (f.) *Austeja* and *Saule*. Other names have a Lithuanian ending added to a stem characteristic of other languages, e.g. (f.) *Estellė*, *Nicolė*, or the ending of names of different languages attached to the usual Lithuanian stem, e.g. (f.) *Aristėja*, *Frėya*. They are very rare (see Table 3), and their analysis is the subject of another study. On the tendencies of giving the names of emigrant children with Lithuanian letters with diacritics in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Norway and Germany in 1991–2020, see Sinkevičiūtė 2024b.

It should also be added that after analysing the names' forms, spelling, origin, and derivation, names written in different ways are assigned to different groups. Some names vary in stem orthography, such as (f.) *Maria* (2)[4] and *Marija* (4), (m.) *Lucas* (2) and *Lukas* (3). In contrast, others differ in their endings or in how they are written, for example, (f.) *Milea* (2) and *Milėja* (4), (m.) *Deivid* (2) and *Deividas* (4). Names of the same origin but of a different type of formation have different stems, e.g. (f.) *Agata* (3) and *Agota* (5), (m.) *Adamas* (4) and *Adomas* (5), or extended by suffixes such as (f.) *Milė* (4) and *Milita* (5), (m.) *Vilius* (4) and *Vilandas* (5).

[4] The name group is indicated in parentheses.

6. Results of the study

The names of Lithuanian citizens born in Norway are categorized into the groups detailed above, including name tokens. The resulting numbers and percentages are presented in Table 3, which differentiates between names of females and males.

Table 3. Names of Lithuanian citizens born in Norway, categorized by Lithuanianness.

	Girls		Boys	
	Count (*n*=3 727)	**Percentage (*n*=100)**	**Count (*n*=3 959)**	**Percentage (*n*=100)**
Group 1. Names of non-Lithuanian form	23	0.6	35	0.9
Group 2. Names of more non-Lithuanian than Lithuanian form	457	12.3	505	12.8
Group 3. Names of overlapping Lithuanian and non-Lithuanian forms	1 183	31.7	523	13.2
Group 4. Names of more Lithuanian than non-Lithuanian form	1 170	31.4	1 917	48.4
Group 5. Names with a Lithuanian form	864	23.2	975	24.6
Names registered with unusual orthography for Lithuanian or other languages	30	0.8	4	0.1

Table 3 indicates that parents usually select names conforming to Lithuanian grammar conventions for Lithuanian citizens born in Norway. This is indicated by the Names of overlapping Lithuanian and non-Lithuanian forms (Group 3), the Names of more Lithuanian than non-Lithuanian forms (Group 4), and the Names with Lithuanian forms (Group 5). They cover 86.3 per cent of the names given to girls and boys in Norway. Names written in an orthography that is not typical of Lithuanian and other languages, usually for girls, are rare.

6.1 The most commonly used Lithuanian names are similar to names in other languages

Table 3 shows that girls most often have Lithuanian names coinciding with the names of other languages (Group 3, amounting to 31.7 per cent). Names of a more Lithuanian than non-Lithuanian form are also common (Group 4, amounting to 31.4 per cent). They have stems taken over from other names to which Lithuanian endings are attached. Thus, parents often choose universal names for girls, which are shared across different languages.

Girls born in Norway are often given names that are common to many different languages. The data in Table 4 show that the most common names are overlapping Lithuanian and non-Lithuanian forms, such as *Ema* (75)[5], *Eva* (60), *Goda* (46), or names that are more Lithuanian than non-Lithuanian such as *Emilija* (103), *Lėja* (90), *Kamilė* (82), *Gabrielė* (72), *Tėja* (71), *Amelija* (59), *Sofija* (56). They account for 17 of the 25 most common names given to girls by emigrants in Norway (see Table 4).

Girls' names associated with specific languages are less common. Scandinavian names include *Bentė* (1), *Elina* (5), *Frėja* (3), *Pernilė* (1), *Ronja* (1), *Steina* (1), *Stina* (1), and others. English names include *Briana* (1), *Charisė* (1), *Grantė* (1), *Tija* (1), etc. There are also Romance names such as *Dileta* (1), *Noela* (1), and *Solita* (1). Additionally, there are Slavic names like *Ksenija* (2), *Polina* (1), *Uliana* (1), and *Vasilisa* (1), and Arabic names such as *Amna* (1) and *Isra* (1). Many rare names, such as *Benedikta* (1), *Glorija* (2), *Paulė* (1), *Teresė* (1), are also characteristic of several languages.

For boys, parents usually give names of more Lithuanian than non-Lithuanian forms (Group 4, which amounts to 48,4 per cent) by attaching the usual Lithuanian endings to borrowed stems. Few personal names coincide with the name forms of other languages (i.e. Group 3, amounting to 13.2 per cent). Emigrants in Norway mostly give boys borrowed names that are common in different languages

[5] The number of Lithuanian citizens born in Norway with that name is indicated in parentheses.

(i.e. Group 4). Due to the specific endings of Lithuanian boys' names, they coincide much less often than girls' names with those of other languages. Boys are often given names with stems that are spread across many languages. Table 4 illustrates that the most common names are also names of the more Lithuanian than non-Lithuanian group, e.g. *Matas* (130), *Kajus* (104), *Emilis* (96), *Benas* (84), *Aronas* (82) etc. Names with overlapping Lithuanian and non-Lithuanian forms, like *Lukas* (177) or *Jonas* (122), are also very common, even though they are less prevalent. Together these two groups account for 18 of the 25 most popular boys' names given by emigrants in Norway.

Some less common boy names have stems found in many languages, such as *Edmundas* (2), *Fabijus* (1), *Maksas* (3), *Osvaldas* (1), *Ronaldas* (1), *Silvestras* (1), and *Viktoras* (1). Other uncommon names are specific to individual languages, such as *Erlandas* (2), *Odinas* (1), *Ragnaras* (1), and *Toras* (2) from the Scandinavian languages. English examples include *Aidanas* (1), *Bendžiaminas* (1), *Devinas* (1), *Konoras* (1), *Taironas* (1), and *Timotis* (1).

Thus, Lithuanian citizens born in Norway most often have borrowed names with Lithuanian endings – they account for 63.1 per cent of the girls' and 61.4 per cent of the boys' names. This implies that parents usually choose names similar to those of other languages for both girls and boys. Children often have names with stems that are repeated in many languages. Individual names typical of specific languages, mainly Scandinavian and English, are uncommon. The variety of names for girls is more significant.

6.2 The most common names of emigrants coincide with the most common Lithuanian names

The most common names of emigrants from Lithuania will now be compared with those from Norway and Lithuania during the same period. This comparison focuses on the years 2008–2020, as few children were born to Lithuanian emigrants in Norway between 1991 and 2007 (see Figure 1). Consequently, comparing names from 1991 to

2020 would not be representative. The most common names of Lithuanian emigrants are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 displays the 25 most common names given to Lithuanian citizens in Norway from 2008 to 2020, indicating Lithuanianness group, numbers, and percentages. These conform a larger percentage for boys (44.02 per cent) than for girls (35.92 per cent). Thus, Lithuanian emigrants are more inclined to choose repetitive names for boys than for girls.

Table 4. Most common given names for children of Lithuanian emigrants born in Norway between 2008 and 2020.

	Girl's				Boy's			
Place	**Name**	**Name group**	**Count**	**Percentage**	**Name**	**Name group**	**Count**	**Percentage**
1.	Emilija	4	98	2.66	Lukas	3	171	4.40
2.	Lėja	4	90	2.44	Matas	4	126	3.24
3.	Kamilė	4	81	2.20	Jonas	3	122	3.14
4.	Ema	3	75	2.03	Nojus	5	107	2.75
5.	Tėja	4	71	1.93	Kajus	4	102	2.62
6.	Gabrielė	4	70	1.90	Emilis	4	95	2.44
7.	Gabija	5	65	1.76	Benas	4	83	2.13
8.	Eva	3	60	1.63	Aronas	4	82	2.11
9.	Amelija	4	59	1.60	Markas	4	71	1.82
10.	Sofija	4	56	1.52	Dominykas	5	70	1.80
11.	Liepa	5	49	1.33	Herkus	5	62	1.59
12.	Sofia	2	47	1.27	Jokūbas	5	59	1.52
13.	Goda	3	46	1.25	Arnas	4	55	1.41
14.	Austėja	5	45	1.22	Domas	4	55	1.41
15.	Viltė	5	45	1.22	Gustas	4	51	1.31
16.	Elija	4	44	1.19	Joris	3	46	1.18
17.	Luka	3	41	1.11	Danielius	4	45	1.15
18.	Patricija	4	41	1.11	Kristupas	5	44	1.13
19.	Gustė	4	39	1.06	Tajus	5	42	1.08
20.	Smiltė	5	36	0.97	Arijus	4	39	1.00
21.	Ugnė	5	36	0.97	Augustas	4	39	1.00
22.	Urtė	5	34	0.92	Majus	4	39	1.00
23.	Augustė	4	33	0.89	Armandas	4	37	0.95

Place	Girl's Name	Name group	Count	Percentage	Boy's Name	Name group	Count	Percentage
24.	Kamila	3	32	0.87	Dovydas	5	36	0.92
25.	Maja	3	32	0.87	Oskaras	4	36	0.92
Total			1325	35.92			1714	44.02

The most common names for girls in Norway from 2008 to 2020 are: 1. *Emma*, 2. *Nora*, 3. *Emilie*, 4. *Sofie*, 5. *Ingrid*, 6. *Anna*, 7. *Ella*, 8. *Thea*, 9. *Ida*, 10. *Linnea*, 11. *Amalie*, 12. *Sara*, 13. *Olivia*, 14. *Mia*, 15. *Julie*, 16. *Frida*, 17. *Vilde*, 18. *Leah*, 19. *Maria*, 20. *Maja*, 21. *Sofia*, 22. *Aurora*, 23. *Tuva*, 24. *Hedda*, 25. *Jenny* (name statistics sourced from *Statistics Norway* 2). When the most common girls' names in Norway are compared with those of Lithuanian emigrants, it emerges that only two names overlap. One name is *Sofia*, which is uncommon in Lithuanian; the other is *Maja*, which is found in many languages (including Lithuanian). Among the most common names for Lithuanian emigrant girls, some coincide with Norwegian names by origin, though with different forms in each language: *Ema*, *Emilija*, *Sofija*, *Tėja*, and *Lėja* (cf. *Emma*, *Emilie*, *Sofie*, *Thea*, *Leah*).

The most common names for boys in Norway from 2008 to 2020 are: 1. *Emil*, 2. *William*, 3. *Oliver*, 4. *Magnus*, 5. *Mathias*, 6. *Noah*, 7. *Jonas*, 8. *Henrik*, 9. *Elias*, 10. *Tobias*, 11. *Sebastian*, 12. *Sander*, 13. *Daniel*, 14. *Liam*, 15. *Adrian*, 16. *Lucas*, 17. *Benjamin*, 18. *Isak*, 19. *Aksel*, 20. *Martin*, 21. *Jakob*, 22. *Leon*, 23. *Johannes*, 24. *Alexander*, 25. *Andres* (name statistics sourced from *Statistics Norway* 2). When the most common names for Norwegian boys are compared to those of Lithuanian emigrants, it emerges that one of the most frequent names is *Jonas*, which is typical of many languages. As in the case of girls, emigrants from Lithuania sometimes give boys names coinciding with Norwegian names by origin, though with different forms in each language: *Emilis*, *Nojus*, *Danielius*, *Lukas*, *Jokūbas* (cf. *Emil*, *Noah*, *Daniel*, *Lucas*, *Jakob*).

The most common names for girls in Lithuania from 2008 to 2020 are: 1. *Emilija*, 2. *Gabija*, 3. *Austėja*, 4. *Kamilė*, 5. *Gabrielė*, 6. *Ugnė*,

7. *Viltė*, 8. *Urtė*, 9. *Lėja*, 10. *Liepa*, 11. *Goda*, 12. *Ieva*, 13. *Ema*, 14. *Amelija*, 15. *Sofija*, 16. *Rugilė*, 17. *Augustė*, 18. *Smiltė*, 19. *Miglė*, 20. *Luknė*, 21. *Saulė*, 22. *Patricija*, 23. *Viktorija*, 24. *Gustė*, 25. *Kotryna* (name statistics sourced from *List of personal names of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania*). The girls' names from 2008 to 2020 show that 18 of the 25 most common names among emigrants are the same as those of Lithuania: *Amelija*, *Augustė*, *Austėja*, *Ema*, *Emilija*, *Gabija*, *Gabrielė*, *Goda*, *Gustė*, *Kamilė*, *Lėja*, *Liepa*, *Patricija*, *Smiltė*, *Sofija*, *Ugnė*, *Urtė*, *Viltė*. Emigrants are more inclined to choose the universal name *Eva* than its variant *Ieva*, which is more common in Lithuania. *Eva*, *Elija*, *Kamila*, *Luka*, *Maja*, and *Tėja* are also common in Lithuania, even though they did not make it into the top 25 names in Lithuania for the period studied. The name *Sofia* is uncommon in Lithuania and is most frequently given to girls born abroad or in families of foreign citizens (see *Sofia* in *List of personal names of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania*).

The most common names for boys in Lithuania from 2008 to 2020 are: 1. *Matas*, 2. *Lukas*, 3. *Nojus*, 4. *Dominykas*, 5. *Kajus*, 6. *Jokūbas*, 7. *Jonas*, 8. *Dovydas*, 9. *Benas*, 10. *Emilis*, 11. *Domas*, 12. *Danielius*, 13. *Augustas*, 14. *Rokas*, 15. *Adomas*, 16. *Gabrielius*, 17. *Ignas*, 18. *Arnas*, 19. *Joris*, 20. *Kristupas*, 21. *Gustas*, 22. *Mantas*, 23. *Martynas*, 24. *Domantas*, 25. *Aronas* (name statistics sourced from *List of personal names of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania*). A comparison of the most common Lithuanian names with those of emigrants reveals that 18 out of the 25 boys' names coincide: *Aronas*, *Arnas*, *Augustas*, *Benas*, *Danielius*, *Domas*, *Dominykas*, *Dovydas*, *Emilis*, *Gustas*, *Jokūbas*, *Jonas*, *Joris*, *Kajus*, *Kristupas*, *Lukas*, *Matas*, and *Nojus*. Other common expatriate names such as *Arijus*, *Armandas*, *Herkus*, *Majus*, *Markas*, *Oskaras*, and *Tajus* are also popular in Lithuania but did not make it to the Top 25 for the period studied (see *Tajus* in *List of personal names of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania*).

Thus, all of the most common names given in Norway by Lithuanian emigrants are also common in Lithuania, with the only exception of *Sofia*. The most common names for emigrants in Norway differ from those most frequently found in Lithuania in frequency

alone. This suggests that the trends of Lithuanian names influence emigrants in Norway. Among the most common names of Lithuanian emigrants, several reflect Christian cultural heritage, just as in Norway. However, they appear in forms typical of the Lithuanian language. This suggests that when Lithuanian emigrants name their children, the trends of Norwegian names have relatively little influence.

6.3 Names of stems characteristic of Lithuanian cover almost a quarter of the names

Personal names specific to the Lithuanian language make up 23.2 per cent of girls' and 24.6 per cent of boys' names (Group 5). Table 5 provides the names with Lithuanian forms, divided into Baltic forms and borrowings from other languages that have taken on typical Lithuanian forms. Baltic names are more characteristic of girls (73.7 per cent of names), while borrowed names with Lithuanian stems are more typical of boys (66.9 per cent). This may be a regular tendency for Lithuanian expatriates because a study of the names of children of Lithuanian emigrants in the United Kingdom shows that Baltic names are more characteristic of girls (Sinkevičiūtė 2024a).

Table 5. Names of the Lithuanian forms by origin.

	Girls		**Boys**	
	Count (*n*=864)	**Percentage (*n*=100)**	**Count (*n*=975)**	**Percentage (*n*=100)**
Baltic names	637	73.7 per cent	323	33.1 per cent
Borrowed names	227	26.3 per cent	652	66.9 per cent

Emigrants from Lithuania in Norway often give girls Baltic names, which are among the most popular names for emigrants (see Table 4). Among the most popular names for boys there are no names of Baltic origin, with the possible exception of *Joris* (46) from Lith. *jorė* [foliage, spring greenery], which has two etymologies as is the case of the girl's name *Goda* (46) from Lith. *goda* [thought, dream].

The most common Baltic names for girls are appellative names. They originated in names of nature, cf. *Liepa* (49) from Lith. *liepa* [linden], *Smiltė* (36) from Lith. *smiltis* [sandstone], *Ugnė* (36) from Lith. *ugnis* [fire], *Miglė* (30) from Lith. *migla* [fog; haze], *Rugilė* (27) from Lith. *rugys* [rye], *Saulė* (27) from Lith. *saulė* [sun], etc., or in appellatives of a positive meaning, cf. *Viltė* (45) from Lith. *viltis* [hope]. Other names based on appellatives are *Gabija* (69) from Lith. *gobti* [cover], *Austėja* (46) from Lith. *austi* [weave], and *Milda* (11) from Lith. *mildingai* [friendly], which are names of Lithuanian deities. Less common compound personal names include *Jogailė* (5), cf. *jo-* from Lith. *joti* [travel on horseback] + *gail-* from Lith. *gailas* [strong, powerful], *Mingailė* (3), cf. *min-* from Lith. *minti* [keep in mind], *minėti* [mention] + *gail-* from Lith. *gailas* [strong; powerful], as well as hypocoristics and their derivatives such as *Kar-ilė* (6), cf. *Kara* from *Karigailė*, cf. *kar-* from Lith. *karas* [war] + *gail-* from Lith. *gailas* [strong; powerful], *Mantė* (6) from *Mantvydė*, cf. *mant-* from Lith. *manta* [wealth] + *vyd-* from Lith. *išvysti* [see], and names derived from place names like *Rusnė* (18) from *Rusnė* [river], *Iglė* (8) from *Iglė* [lake], and *Ūla* (3) from *Ūla* [river]. Names may have suffixes, e.g. *-ėja*, cf. *Saulėja* (2) from Lith. *saulė* [sun], *-ūnė*, cf. *Jorūnė* (2) from Lith. *jorė* [foliage; spring greenery].

Baltic names for boys are less varied. There are different types: appellative names like *Vakaris* (28) from Lith. *vakaras* [evening], *Tauras* (18) from Lith. *tauras* [taurus]; *taurus* [noble], *Ąžuolas* (17) from Lith. *ąžuolas* [oak], *Ugnius* (12) from Lith. *ugnis* [fire], *Vėjas* (12) from Lith. *vėjas* [wind]; compound personal names like *Domantas* (25), cf. *do-* from Lith. *duoti* [give] + *mant-* from Lith. *manta* [wealth], *Arminas* (18), cf. *ar-* from Lith. *ar* [also, too] + *min-* from Lith. *minti* [keep in mind], *minėti* [mention], *Eimantas* (6), cf. *ei-* from Lith. *eiti* [go] + *mant-* from Lith. *manta* [wealth]; hypocoristics and their derivatives like *Mantas* (25) from *Mantautas*, cf. *man*(*t*)- from Lith. *manta* [wealth] + *taut-* from Lith. *tauta* [nation], *Vytis* (6) from *Vytautas*, cf. *vy*(*d*)- from Lith. *išvysti* [see] + *taut-* from Lith. *tauta* [nation]; and names derived from place names like *Naglis* (5) from *Naglis* [dune], *Raigardas* (3) from *Raigardas* [valley]. Names may have suffixes, e.g.

-ijus, cf. *Dovijus* (1), cf. *Dovas* from *Dovilas*, cf. *do-* from Lith. *duoti* [give] + *vil-* from Lith. *viltis* [hope], *-utis*, cf. *Kęstutis* (1), cf. *Kęstas*, from *Kęstautas*, cf. *kęs*(*t*)- from Lith. *kęsti* [endure] + *taut-* from Lith. *tauta* [nation].

Borrowed names of boys with exclusive Lithuanian stems are among the most commonly given names of emigrants in Norway. Such names for girls are few (see Table 4). Some boys' names are exclusive Lithuanian variants of borrowed names used in other languages, such as *Nojus* (108), *Dominykas* (72), *Jokūbas* (59), *Kristupas* (44), *Dovydas* (37), *Adomas* (29), *Motiejus* (20), *Mykolas* (10). Other names are hypocoristics formed in the Lithuanian language: *Herkus* (62), *Adas* (34), *Ignas* (26), *Kipras* (8), etc. Borrowed names with exclusive Lithuanian stems are less common for girls, such as *Kotryna* (30), *Ieva* (26), *Barbora* (25), *Agota* (13), *Dominyka* (11). The same holds true for hypocoristics, cf. *Gustė* (39), *Urtė* (35), *Elzė* (14), *Ignė* (2), etc.

Thus, names with a Lithuanian form (Group 5) reflect different tendencies for girls and boys. Girls more often have Baltic names, which in addition are more diverse than in the case of names for boys. Boys are usually given borrowed names, though their stems are characteristic of Lithuanian alone. However, the names of this group are not widespread.

6.4 Names characteristic of other languages are not widespread

Emigrant children in Norway are also given names from other languages (see Table 3, Groups 1 and 2). Of these names, the children of emigrants are more likely to have names that are more non-Lithuanian than Lithuanian. They account for 11.6 per cent of girls' and 12.6 per cent of boys' names (Group 2). Names of non-Lithuanian forms are rare. They make up 1.3 per cent of girls' and 1 per cent of boys' names (Group 1). Thus, emigrants who have chosen name forms from other languages give their children variants of names that are common or known to Lithuanians.

Many girls' names in Norway are variants of names borrowed from other languages, written in forms characteristic of different languages, cf. *Sofia* (47)[6], *Emma* (31), *Amelia* (27), *Emilia* (20), *Andrea* (19), *Mia* (17), *Olivia* (16), *Maria* (13), *Thea* (12), *Patricia* (10). These names are rarer than the corresponding variants used in Lithuanian.

Some of the boys' names, typical of other languages, are also rarer variants of those used in Lithuanian. For example, *Daniel* (35), *Elias* (20), *Adam* (14), *Aron* (12), *Gabriel* (11), *Emil* (10), *Martin* (10), *Oskar* (10), etc. In other cases, variants such as *Matias* (19), *Denis* (14), *Kevin* (14), *Adrian* (11), *Aleksander* (11), and *David* (10), are more common than the corresponding names of the same stems used in Lithuanian.

The names in Group 1, which have non-Lithuanian forms, are neither widespread nor varied. Among these names are Scandinavian names, such as (f.) *Gitte* (1), *Svea* (1); (m.) *Eirik* (1), *Viggo* (1), as well as Arabic names, such as (f.) *Aisha* (1), *Layla* (1); (m.) *Aariz* (1), *Salim* (1). There are also English names like (f.) *Elinor* (1), *Molly* (1); (m.) *Devon* (1), and *Ross* (1), along with names from other languages.

Thus, Lithuanian citizens born in Norway usually receive names of other languages that, however, are variants of Lithuanian names. Girls' atypical Lithuanian names are less common than their typical variants. Boys' names not typical of Lithuanian are more common than traditional Lithuanian variants. Names with non-Lithuanian forms that are not similar to common Lithuanian names are rare.

7. Conclusions

Emigrants from Lithuania usually give their children in Norway names that are normal in terms of Lithuanian grammar. These names have endings and are written in the usual ways for Lithuanian. Parents use them to express their children's ethnic affiliation with Lithuania. These names dominate in relation to personal names that are atypical for Lithuanians. When parents give their children names of

[6] This form is among the most common names given in Norway to emigrants from Lithuania (see above).

other languages, they are usually variants of names used in Lithuanian. Emigrants from Lithuania in Norway name children according to the following strategies:

- partially combining Lithuanian and other languages in giving names of the same stems. Boys are most often named according to this strategy (61.2 per cent of boys and 43.7 per cent of girls). Emigrants usually give their children typical Lithuanian names, which are more characteristic of boys (Group 4). Names of other languages are less common, with similar proportions in the case of girls' and boys' names (Group 2).
- fully combining Lithuanian and other languages to give children names that coincide in both languages. Girls are most often named according to this strategy (31.7 per cent of girls and 13.2 per cent of boys; Group 3).
- not combining Lithuanian and other languages, naming children by the names of either Lithuanian or other languages (23.8 per cent of girls and 25.5 per cent of boys). Parents are more likely to choose names unique to Lithuanians (Group 5). Baltic names are more characteristic of girls, and borrowed names with stems formed in the Lithuanian language are more characteristic of boys. Names characteristic of other languages alone are rare (Group 1).

These strategies show that the parents' attitudes when choosing names for girls and boys differ. When naming girls, emigrants usually fully or partially reconcile Lithuanian names with those of other languages. When parents give their daughters names characteristic of Lithuanian, they choose Baltic names. When naming boys, emigrants usually either partially combine or do not at all combine Lithuanian names with those of other languages. When parents give their sons characteristic Lithuanian names, they choose borrowed names whose stems are characteristic only of Lithuanian. Thus, from the point of view of grammar, boys' names are more Lithuanian than those of girls, and their conservatism can be seen from their endings.

Regardless of the strategy by which parents give names to their children, almost two-thirds of the children of Lithuanian emigrants in Norway have names with stems taken over from other languages. The most common are borrowed names with stems characteristic of many European languages. Names specific to individual languages or their families are not common; in addition to names characteristic of Scandinavian languages, personal names characteristic of English and other languages are sometimes given.

8. Discussion

The study shows that the names of Lithuanian citizens born in Norway are usually typical Lithuanian names, which means that parents assume Lithuanian ethnic identity for their children born in emigration. This supports Jakaitė-Bulbukienė's (2015: 84) observation that children's names serve as markers of Lithuanian identity. The most common names among emigrants in Norway also align with those of Lithuanian children born in the same period. This indicates the Lithuanianness of the names of the emigrants.

The study broadens the understanding of the names given to children of Lithuanian emigrants in Norway. It found that the majority of the names (86.3 per cent) are typical Lithuanian names given to both girls and boys. These results build on Daukšas' (2011:127–133) findings that Lithuanians who emigrated to Norway stay connected with Lithuania through the internet, Lithuanian television, affordable air travel, and citizenship, as well as by name. This study helps explain why the names of Lithuanian emigrants do not seem Norwegian to Norwegians or do not sound Norwegian, as observed by Daukšas (2018:80; 2019:234–235). This is because many of the names have endings and stems unique to the Lithuanian language, distinguishing them from other names.

This study also confirmed the previous observation that Baltic names are more common among girls, as this trend was also noted in the study of Baltic names in the United Kingdom (Sinkevičiūtė 2024a). As in the United Kingdom, Baltic names are derived from

natural phenomena and objects, Lithuanian pagan goddesses and gods, and famous and legendary personalities from Lithuania's past (Sinkevičiūtė 2024a). As previously mentioned, names with exclusively Lithuanian letters are more frequent in Norway than in other major emigration countries (Sinkevičiūtė 2024b). As a result, it is possible that Norway has the largest number of names typical of Lithuanian, which should be verified through further studies of common names in other major emigration countries, such as the United Kingdom, Ireland and Germany.

These results were obtained by evaluating the names based on their registered forms. Still, the results could be altered after conducting direct surveys of parents or choosing other criteria for measuring the Lithuanianness of names. Parents usually choose names with stems shared with other languages. Such names, which sound similar in different languages, indicate that parents try to adapt the names to the non-native environment and hide their Lithuanian identity in this way. On the other hand, without a study of the tendencies of giving names in Lithuania, it is impossible to assess whether these results do not reflect the fashions for giving names to Lithuanian children. This interpretation is supported by findings in this study, which show that many of the most common names given to Lithuanian citizens and children of Lithuanian emigrants in Norway between 2008 and 2020 are the same.

It should be added that Baltic names and borrowed names whose stems are characteristic only of Lithuanian were both considered names with a Lithuanian form (Group 5). They are widespread in Lithuania and perceived as 'Lithuanian'. Still, if we only consider the names derived from the Baltic lexicon to be Lithuanian, these personal names would complement the widespread group of names of more Lithuanian than non-Lithuanian form (Group 4). Consequently, the proportion of names with a more Lithuanian than non-Lithuanian form (Group 4) would be higher, especially for boys (64.5 per cent of names instead of 48 per cent). However, the main result – normal Lithuanian names dominate – would not change.

The study results were primarily based on the names of children born in Norway during the second decade of the 21st century (see Figure 1). However, the results of this study do not include the names of children born in Norway to Lithuanian or mixed families without Lithuanian citizenship. Including such families' names could alter this study's results.

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