

# ETYMOLOGY OF THE NAME DAVID: A SEMITIC AND SLAVIC ONOMASTIC INTERFACE

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## Abstract

The personal name David (Hebrew: דָּוִד, Dāwīd) represents a paradigmatic case of lexical stability within the context of cross-linguistic transmission between Semitic and Indo-European languages. Traditionally derived from the Semitic trilateral root d-w-d, conveying meanings such as “beloved” or “object of affection,” the name exhibits an exceptional degree of phonological, morphological, and semantic continuity across diverse linguistic systems, including Greek, Latin, and Slavic languages.

This study provides a philologically grounded and theoretically expanded analysis of the name David, integrating data from Biblical Hebrew morphology, historical phonology, and Slavic onomastic patterns. Particular attention is devoted to the limits of phonological adaptation in cases where lexical items are embedded within canonical textual traditions. Through a detailed comparative framework, the paper demonstrates that traditional models of loanword adaptation, which prioritize phonological compatibility and articulatory constraints, fail to account for the observed stability of this anthroponym.

The study introduces a set of interrelated theoretical concepts—protected anthroponyms, sacred lexical stabilization, semantic anchoring, and canonical resistance to linguistic drift—as a comprehensive explanatory model. It is argued that the stability of the name David emerges not from internal linguistic structure alone, but from the interaction of linguistic, textual, and cultural factors operating within a canonically regulated environment.

By situating the analysis at the intersection of linguistics, philology, and cultural transmission, this paper contributes to a broader redefinition of onomastic theory and advances a generalizable framework for understanding lexical persistence in historically and culturally significant names.

## Keywords

David, Biblical Hebrew, Semitic linguistics, Slavic languages, onomastics, etymology, anthroponymy, lexical stability, sacred lexicon, canonical transmission, semantic anchoring, linguistic contact

## 1. Introduction

Within historical linguistics, personal names occupy a distinctive position as elements of the lexicon that frequently exhibit a high degree of resistance to change. Unlike common vocabulary, which is subject to regular processes of phonological erosion, semantic shift, and morphological restructuring, anthroponyms often preserve archaic features that reflect earlier stages of linguistic development. This conservatism is particularly evident in the case of Biblical names, whose transmission is mediated by canonical textual traditions and reinforced through liturgical usage.

**This phenomenon has been repeatedly observed in comparative onomastic studies, where anthroponyms associated with sacred or canonical corpora demonstrate significantly lower rates of phonological erosion than ordinary lexical items (Barr 1961; Saenz-Badillos 1993). In such contexts, linguistic change is not governed solely by internal phonological rules, but is constrained by external cultural and textual forces.**

The name David represents one of the most illustrative examples of this phenomenon. Attested in Biblical Hebrew as דָּוִד (Dāwīd), the name is associated with one of the central figures of the Hebrew Bible, King David, whose political, literary, and theological significance ensured the widespread dissemination of the name across Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions. As a result, the name has been transmitted across a wide range of linguistic systems, including Greek, Latin, and numerous Slavic languages.

**A key textual attestation appears in 1 Samuel 16:13, where the form דָּוִד is explicitly embedded within a narrative context that later becomes canonically authoritative. The repeated liturgical reading of such passages contributes directly to the stabilization of the lexical form.**

From a strictly linguistic perspective, this raises a fundamental problem. While the transmission of lexical items across languages typically results in phonological adaptation and structural modification, the name David demonstrates an unusual degree of stability. Its consonantal structure remains largely unchanged, and its semantic value is preserved with minimal variation.

The question therefore arises: what mechanisms account for this stability, and how can they be described within a rigorous linguistic framework?

This study seeks to address this question by situating the name David at the intersection of Semitic root morphology and Slavic phonological systems. The analysis proceeds in two stages. First, the name is examined within the context of the Semitic root system, with particular attention to its morphological formation and semantic field. Second, its transmission into Slavic languages is analyzed in order to identify the factors that limit phonological adaptation.

**In addition, the present study proposes that the stability of the name David cannot be fully explained without introducing a multi-layered theoretical model that incorporates phonological, semantic, textual, and cultural dimensions.**

## 2. The Semitic Root System and the Origin of David

The Hebrew form דָּוִד (Dāwīd) is derived from the trilateral root דָּוָד (d-w-d), which constitutes a typical example of the root-based morphological system characteristic of Semitic languages. In this system, lexical meaning is encoded in a set of consonants, while vocalic patterns serve to generate specific lexical and grammatical forms (Gesenius 1910; Joüon and Muraoka 2006).

The root d-w-d is consistently associated in the lexicographical tradition with meanings such as “beloved,” “friend,” and “object of affection” (Brown, Driver and Briggs 1907; Klein 1987). In Biblical Hebrew, the noun dōd appears in contexts that denote both emotional attachment and kinship relations, suggesting a semantic field centered on relational proximity rather than abstract emotional states.

**For example, in Song of Songs 1:13 (דָּוִד לִי), the term dōd is used in an explicitly relational and affective sense, indicating a semantic field that includes intimacy, attachment, and interpersonal proximity. This usage confirms that the root d-w-d is semantically anchored in relational semantics rather than abstract emotional vocabulary (Clines 1993–2016).**

The anthroponym David may therefore be understood as a nominal formation derived from this root, conveying the meaning “the beloved one” or “one who is loved.” What is particularly noteworthy is the stability of this semantic interpretation across textual traditions. Unlike many lexical items that undergo semantic broadening or narrowing over time, the meaning associated with d-w-d remains remarkably consistent. This semantic stability plays a crucial role in the preservation of the name as a recognizable and culturally significant unit.

**From a comparative Semitic perspective, cognate structures may be observed in other Northwest Semitic languages, although the anthroponymic usage appears to be most prominently stabilized in Hebrew. This suggests that the process of lexical fixation is not purely inherited, but is reinforced within the Hebrew textual tradition.**

### 3. Morphological Structure

From a morphological perspective, the name David represents a nominal formation derived from a weak root containing the glide consonant *w*. Weak roots are generally associated with phonological instability due to the behavior of semi-vowels in different phonetic environments. However, the form *Dāwīd* exhibits a high degree of structural stability, suggesting that it underwent early lexicalization.

The vocalic pattern *ā-ī* reflects a stabilized nominal structure that no longer participates in productive morphological processes. This indicates that the name was fixed at an early stage and subsequently transmitted as a lexicalized unit rather than as a form subject to ongoing morphological variation.

**This stabilization may be understood in terms of morphological freezing, a process whereby a lexical form ceases to participate in productive derivational paradigms and becomes a fixed unit (Blau 2010). In the case of דָּוִד, the absence of derived verbal or nominal forms directly linked to the anthroponym confirms that the form is no longer morphologically productive.**

Such early stabilization is of considerable importance. Once a lexical item becomes fixed within a canonical textual tradition, its internal structure tends to resist modification. In this sense, the morphological stability of the name David can be understood as a precondition for its later phonological stability.

### 4. Phonological Structure

The phonological structure of the name may be reconstructed as *da:wi:ð*, reflecting key features of Biblical Hebrew phonology. The initial long vowel *ā*, the medial glide *w*, and the high vowel *ī* correspond to established phonological patterns (Waltke and O'Connor 1990).

The final consonant, represented by the Hebrew letter dalet, may have been realized as a fricative in certain phonetic environments, although in later traditions it is consistently rendered as a stop. Despite these minor variations, the overall phonological structure of the name remains remarkably stable.

**The alternation between plosive and fricative realizations of dalet corresponds to the well-documented begadkefat phenomenon, although its application in proper names is often neutralized due to lexical fixation (Jouön and Muraoka 2006).**

This stability is particularly striking when considered in the context of cross-linguistic transmission. In most cases, lexical items undergo adaptation to the phonological constraints of the receiving language. However, the name David retains its core structure across Greek, Latin, and Slavic forms. This suggests that phonological change is constrained by factors that extend beyond the internal logic of the phonological system.

## 5. Transmission Through Greek and Latin

The transmission of the name into Indo-European languages occurred primarily through the translation of Biblical texts. In the Greek Septuagint, the name appears as Δαβίδ, while the Latin Vulgate preserves the form David (Tov 2012).

These intermediary forms played a crucial role in establishing a standardized phonological representation. Because the translation process was governed by the principle of textual fidelity, phonological adaptation was minimized. As a result, the name entered European languages in a form that was already stabilized.

**The transliteration strategy employed in the Septuagint reflects a conservative approach, where phonological equivalence is prioritized over phonetic adaptation. This contributes directly to the preservation of the consonantal skeleton d-v-d across linguistic boundaries.**

The importance of this stage cannot be overstated. Once a standardized form is established within a widely disseminated textual tradition, it becomes resistant to further modification. This process may be described as canonical fixation, whereby the authority of the text constrains linguistic variation.

## 6. David in Slavic Languages

The behavior of the name David in Slavic languages represents one of the most compelling aspects of this study. In languages such as Serbian, Russian, and Bulgarian, the name appears in forms that are nearly identical to the original Hebrew and its Greek and Latin intermediaries.

This cross-linguistic stability is particularly significant when examined against the broader background of Slavic phonological adaptation mechanisms, which typically involve systematic restructuring of foreign lexical material (Shevelov 1964; Lunt 2001).

This is particularly noteworthy given the general tendency of Slavic languages to adapt foreign lexical material. Loanwords are typically subject to phonological restructuring, including vowel reduction, consonant substitution, and changes in stress patterns. However, in the case of David, such processes are largely absent.

The consonantal structure d-v-d is preserved without modification, and the vocalic pattern remains compatible with Slavic phonology. This suggests that the name is subject to constraints that limit phonological adaptation.

For instance, compare the adaptation of the Greek name Georgios into Slavic forms such as Đorđe, Yuri, or Georgi, where substantial phonological restructuring occurs. In contrast, David remains structurally stable across Serbian (David), Russian (Давид), and Bulgarian (Давид), with only minimal variation in stress and vowel realization.

This contrast indicates that phonological compatibility alone cannot account for stability; rather, it must be supplemented by a model that includes textual authority and semantic reinforcement.

## **7. Extended Slavic Analysis**

A more detailed examination of Slavic phonological systems confirms that the preservation of the name David cannot be adequately explained by phonotactic compatibility alone. While it is true that the consonantal structure d-v-d does not violate Slavic phonological constraints, this fact is insufficient as an explanatory principle. Numerous loanwords that are equally compatible with Slavic phonotactics nevertheless undergo systematic adaptation, including vowel modification, consonantal substitution, or prosodic restructuring.

This observation aligns with broader findings in contact linguistics, where loanword adaptation is governed not only by phonological constraints but also by sociolinguistic and cultural factors (Thomason and Kaufman 1988).

The stability of the name David must therefore be approached as a phenomenon situated at the intersection of linguistic structure and cultural authority. In Slavic linguistic environments, Biblical names are not transmitted as neutral lexical items but as elements embedded within a highly regulated textual and liturgical framework. The repeated exposure of speakers to a standardized form through scriptural reading and ecclesiastical practice creates a strong norm that limits variation.

In the Orthodox Slavic tradition, for example, the name Давид appears consistently in liturgical readings, hymnography, and ecclesiastical texts, reinforcing its phonological stability across centuries.

In this respect, the name David functions not merely as a linguistic unit but as a component of a broader semiotic system. Its phonological form is reinforced through ritual repetition, while its semantic content is anchored in a shared cultural narrative. The interaction between these factors results in a level of stability that cannot be accounted for by purely linguistic mechanisms.

Furthermore, it is necessary to consider the role of orthography. In Slavic traditions, particularly those influenced by ecclesiastical literacy, written forms carry a prescriptive authority that extends beyond phonetic representation. Once a form is established within a canonical text, it acquires normative status. Deviations from this form are not simply perceived as phonological variation but as departures from an authoritative model.

This orthographic conservatism is especially visible in Church Slavonic manuscripts, where Biblical names are preserved with remarkable fidelity, often resisting phonological innovations present in the spoken language (Lunt 2001).

## **8. Hypothesis 1: Protected Anthroponyms**

The empirical data analyzed in this study support the hypothesis that certain personal names constitute a distinct category that may be described as protected anthroponyms. These are lexical units that exhibit a significantly reduced degree of phonological and semantic variability due to their integration into canonical textual traditions.

The defining characteristics of protected anthroponyms include their presence in foundational texts, their repeated use in liturgical and ritual contexts, and their widespread recognition across linguistic and cultural boundaries. The name David satisfies all of these criteria.

A crucial addition to this hypothesis is the observation that protection is not binary but scalar. That is, different anthroponyms exhibit varying degrees of resistance depending on their frequency, theological significance, and integration into ritual practice.

The concept of protection should not be understood in a metaphorical sense alone. Rather, it reflects a set of constraints that operate at multiple levels of the linguistic system. At the phonological level, variation is limited by the expectation of conformity to a recognized form. At the semantic level, the meaning of the name is stabilized by its association with a specific historical and theological figure. At the pragmatic level, the use of the name is governed by conventions that discourage deviation.

This multi-level constraint system suggests that protected anthroponyms operate as semi-fixed lexical units, analogous to formulaic expressions in oral traditions, where deviation is both structurally disfavored and culturally discouraged.

## **9. Hypothesis 2: Sacred Lexical Stabilization**

Closely related to the concept of protected anthroponyms is the hypothesis of sacred lexical stabilization. This hypothesis posits that certain lexical items, by virtue of their association with sacred texts, undergo a process of stabilization that extends beyond ordinary linguistic mechanisms.

In the case of the name David, stabilization is achieved through repeated reproduction in authoritative contexts. Each instance of use reinforces the established form, creating a feedback loop that progressively reduces the likelihood of variation. This process may be described as cumulative stabilization, whereby the authority of the text and the frequency of usage interact to produce a stable lexical form.

From a theoretical standpoint, this process can be modeled as a self-reinforcing system, where each repetition of the canonical form increases its entrenchment within the linguistic community (Bybee 2006).

It is important to emphasize that this process is not limited to phonological features. Morphological and semantic aspects of the name are also subject to stabilization. The result is a multidimensional form of lexical persistence that encompasses the entire structure of the name.

In this sense, sacred lexical stabilization may be understood as a special case of linguistic entrenchment, intensified by the presence of canonical authority and ritual repetition.

## **10. Hypothesis 3: Semantic Anchoring**

The semantic dimension of the name David plays a crucial role in its stability. The root d-w-d, with its meaning “beloved,” is not an abstract lexical unit but is concretely associated with the figure of King David. This association creates what may be described as semantic anchoring.

Semantic anchoring functions as a stabilizing mechanism by linking the lexical form to a specific referential framework. In this case, the name does not merely denote an individual but evokes a complex network of narratives, values, and symbolic meanings. Any significant alteration of the form would risk disrupting this network, thereby reducing the likelihood of change.

This phenomenon may be compared to what cognitive linguistics describes as frame-based stabilization, where lexical units are embedded within culturally shared conceptual structures (Fillmore 1982).

This mechanism is particularly effective in the context of religious traditions, where the preservation of meaning is closely tied to the preservation of form.

For example, the association of David with kingship, covenant, and divine election creates a semantic network that reinforces the stability of the name across linguistic contexts.

## **11. Hypothesis 4: Structural Economy**

The phonological simplicity of the name David contributes to its stability, but this factor must be understood in a nuanced way. The consonantal sequence d-v-d is phonetically unmarked and does not present articulatory difficulties for speakers of Slavic languages.

However, structural simplicity alone does not guarantee stability. Many lexical items with simple phonological structures nevertheless undergo significant modification when borrowed into new linguistic environments. The relevance of structural economy lies in its interaction with other factors, particularly those related to textual authority and semantic anchoring.

In this context, structural economy functions as an enabling condition rather than a determining factor. It allows for stability but does not enforce it.

In other words, simplicity facilitates preservation, but does not independently determine it.

## **12. Comparative Onomastic Perspective**

A comparative analysis with other Biblical names further clarifies the unique position of the name David. Names such as Yohanan, Mikha’el, and Yeshayahu exhibit a much higher degree of

variation across languages. For example, Yohanan develops into Ioannes, Johannes, Ivan, and John, demonstrating extensive phonological and morphological transformation.

This divergence can be partially explained by the phonological complexity of the source forms, which contain segments that are less compatible with Indo-European phonological systems, thereby triggering adaptation processes.

The relative stability of David suggests that it occupies a distinct position within the system of Biblical anthroponyms. While all such names are subject to some degree of preservation due to their association with canonical texts, the degree of preservation varies.

This variation indicates that the mechanisms identified in this study operate with different levels of intensity depending on the specific characteristics of each name.

### **13. Selective Phonological Integration (THEORETICAL CONFLICT)**

An additional concept that emerges from the analysis is that of selective phonological integration. According to this model, certain aspects of a lexical item may adapt to the phonological system of the receiving language, while others remain unchanged.

In the case of the name David, adaptation is limited primarily to prosodic features such as stress placement. The segmental structure of the name remains stable, indicating that core phonological elements are protected, while peripheral features may vary.

This selective adaptation allows the name to function within different linguistic systems without losing its identity.

However, such a model stands in partial tension with dominant frameworks in contact linguistics, which tend to treat phonological adaptation as a largely systematic and predictable process governed by phonotactic constraints and articulatory ease (Thomason and Kaufman 1988). According to these models, lexical items entering a new linguistic system are expected to undergo restructuring in order to conform to the phonological inventory and phonotactic patterns of the recipient language.

Yet the empirical data examined in this study clearly indicate that this expectation does not hold in all cases. The name David demonstrates that phonological adaptation may be selectively suspended when the lexical item in question is embedded within a canonically regulated textual tradition.

In this respect, selective phonological integration must be understood not as a deviation from established models, but as an extension of them. It introduces an additional layer of constraint, whereby phonological processes are overridden or modulated by extra-linguistic factors.

This observation challenges the implicit assumption that phonological systems operate autonomously. Instead, it suggests that phonological behavior may be conditioned by higher-order structures, including textual authority and cultural continuity.

## **14. Canonical Resistance to Linguistic Drift (ARGUMENTATIVE EXPANSION)**

The hypothesis of canonical resistance to linguistic drift provides a broader theoretical framework for understanding the stability of the name David. According to this hypothesis, lexical items embedded in canonical texts are subject to constraints that reduce their susceptibility to change over time.

These constraints arise from the authority of the text, the frequency of repetition, and the cultural significance of the lexical item. In combination, these factors create an environment in which variation is both unnecessary and undesirable.

The name David exemplifies this phenomenon. Its presence in canonical texts ensures that it is continuously reproduced in a fixed form, thereby limiting the potential for phonological and semantic drift.

However, it is necessary to explicitly address alternative explanations that attribute such stability primarily to phonological simplicity or cross-linguistic compatibility. While these factors undoubtedly play a role, they fail to provide a sufficient explanation.

For example, numerous lexical items with equally simple phonological structures undergo substantial modification when transmitted across languages. This indicates that phonological simplicity cannot be treated as a deterministic factor.

Similarly, phonotactic compatibility does not guarantee stability. Many forms that are fully compatible with the phonological systems of Slavic languages nevertheless undergo adaptation. This demonstrates that compatibility alone is insufficient to prevent change.

The model proposed in this study therefore diverges from traditional explanations by introducing canonical authority as a primary explanatory variable. This variable operates independently of phonological constraints and, in certain cases, overrides them.

In this sense, canonical resistance should be understood as a supra-phonological mechanism. It does not eliminate phonological processes but restricts their application within a specific domain.

This perspective aligns with broader theoretical developments in linguistics, which increasingly recognize the role of usage frequency, cultural transmission, and textual authority in shaping linguistic behavior (Bybee 2006).

## **15. Reassessment of Competing Models**

A critical reassessment of existing models of loanword adaptation further supports the need for a revised theoretical framework. Traditional approaches, particularly those rooted in structuralist and generative paradigms, tend to treat phonological adaptation as a uniform and rule-governed process.

Within these frameworks, variation is typically explained in terms of phonological constraints, markedness hierarchies, and articulatory factors. While such explanations are effective in many contexts, they encounter significant limitations when applied to the class of lexical items examined in this study.

The name David provides a clear example of these limitations. Despite its integration into multiple linguistic systems, the name retains a stable segmental structure that cannot be fully accounted for by phonological rules alone.

Moreover, the persistence of this structure across diverse linguistic environments suggests that a different set of constraints is at work. These constraints are not internal to the phonological system but arise from the interaction between language and cultural practice.

In contrast to traditional models, the approach adopted in this study emphasizes the role of textual transmission. The repeated reproduction of lexical forms within authoritative texts creates a stabilizing effect that counteracts phonological change.

This does not imply that phonological processes are irrelevant. Rather, it suggests that they operate within a constrained domain, where their application is limited by external factors.

Such a perspective necessitates a shift from a purely structural model of language to one that incorporates sociocultural dimensions. It recognizes that language is not an isolated system but is embedded within a network of practices, institutions, and traditions.

## **16. Integration of Linguistic and Extra-Linguistic Factors**

The analysis presented in this study demonstrates that a comprehensive account of lexical stability must integrate both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. The name David cannot be adequately explained by reference to phonology, morphology, or semantics alone.

Instead, its stability emerges from the interaction of multiple dimensions. At the linguistic level, its structure is compatible with a wide range of phonological systems. At the semantic level, it is anchored in a well-defined conceptual framework. At the cultural level, it is reinforced through canonical texts and ritual practices.

This multi-layered structure creates a highly stable lexical unit that resists change across both time and space.

Importantly, this integrated model allows for a more nuanced understanding of variation. It explains not only why certain names remain stable but also why others undergo significant transformation.

In this respect, the study contributes to a broader rethinking of onomastic theory. It suggests that names should be analyzed not merely as linguistic forms but as elements of complex semiotic systems.

## **17. Strengthening the Theoretical Model**

The hypotheses introduced in this study—protected anthroponyms, sacred lexical stabilization, semantic anchoring, and canonical resistance—form a coherent theoretical framework. However, their full explanatory potential becomes apparent only when they are considered in relation to competing models.

Rather than replacing existing theories, the present model extends them by introducing additional variables. It retains the insights of phonological and morphological analysis while incorporating factors that have traditionally been overlooked.

This integrative approach provides a more comprehensive account of lexical stability. It explains why certain names resist change even when they are subject to the same phonological pressures as other lexical items.

Furthermore, it offers a basis for future research. The concepts developed here may be applied to other classes of lexical items, including religious terminology, ritual formulas, and culturally significant expressions.

## **18. Toward a General Theory of Lexical Stability**

The implications of this study extend beyond the specific case of the name David. They point toward the possibility of a general theory of lexical stability, in which linguistic and extra-linguistic factors are treated as components of a unified system.

Such a theory would account for the differential behavior of lexical items by considering their position within cultural and textual frameworks. It would recognize that not all words are equally susceptible to change, and that stability is often the result of complex interactions between multiple factors.

In this context, the name David serves as a model case. Its stability is not an anomaly but an instance of a broader phenomenon that has yet to be fully theorized.

By identifying and analyzing the mechanisms that underlie this stability, the present study contributes to the development of such a theory.

## 17. Conclusion

The present study has examined the etymology, structure, and cross-linguistic transmission of the personal name David (דָּוִד, *Dāwīd*) within a framework that integrates Semitic linguistics, Slavic phonology, and onomastic theory. While the initial point of departure was the well-established derivation of the name from the Semitic root d-w-d, meaning “beloved,” the analysis has demonstrated that the explanatory scope of traditional etymological approaches remains insufficient when confronted with the exceptional degree of stability exhibited by this anthroponym.

At the most fundamental level, the name David conforms to the structural principles of the Semitic root system. Its consonantal skeleton, vocalic pattern, and semantic field are consistent with the morphological and lexical behavior of Biblical Hebrew. However, what distinguishes this name from other lexical items derived from similar roots is not its internal structure, but the manner in which that structure is preserved across linguistic, cultural, and temporal boundaries.

The evidence presented in this study clearly indicates that the stability of the name David cannot be reduced to phonological compatibility or morphological simplicity. While these factors may facilitate transmission, they do not account for the observed resistance to phonological restructuring. Numerous lexical items with comparable phonological profiles undergo significant modification when borrowed into new linguistic systems. The persistence of the form David therefore requires an alternative explanatory model.

The central argument advanced here is that lexical stability, in this case, is the result of a convergence of multiple factors operating simultaneously at different levels of analysis. These include phonological compatibility, semantic anchoring, canonical transmission, and cultural reinforcement. Crucially, none of these factors alone is sufficient. It is their interaction that produces the observed stability.

The hypothesis of protected anthroponyms provides a conceptual framework for understanding this phenomenon. The name David is not simply a lexical item but a unit embedded within a canonical textual tradition. Its repeated occurrence in foundational texts, its central role in religious narratives, and its continued use in liturgical contexts create a set of constraints that limit variation. These constraints operate not only at the level of phonology but also at the levels of semantics and pragmatics.

Closely related to this is the hypothesis of sacred lexical stabilization. The repeated reproduction of the name within authoritative contexts generates a cumulative effect, reinforcing the established form and reducing the likelihood of deviation. This process is not merely passive but actively

maintained through ritual practice and textual transmission. Each instance of use contributes to the entrenchment of the form, creating a feedback loop that stabilizes the lexical unit over time.

The concept of semantic anchoring further strengthens this model. The name David is not semantically neutral; it is inseparably linked to a specific historical and theological figure. This association creates a dense network of meanings that extend beyond the lexical level. Any alteration of the form would risk disrupting this network, thereby introducing a semantic instability that is incompatible with the requirements of canonical transmission.

In contrast to traditional models of loanword adaptation, which prioritize phonological constraints and articulatory ease, the present study demonstrates that such models are insufficient when applied to lexemes embedded in canonical traditions. The expectation that phonological systems operate autonomously is challenged by the data. Instead, phonological behavior must be understood as being conditioned by higher-order structures, including textual authority and cultural continuity.

The hypothesis of canonical resistance to linguistic drift provides the final element of the theoretical framework. According to this hypothesis, lexical items that are continuously reproduced within canonical texts are subject to constraints that limit their susceptibility to change. These constraints do not eliminate phonological processes but restrict their application within a specific domain. As a result, the name David remains stable even in linguistic environments that would otherwise favor adaptation.

This study therefore proposes a shift in perspective. Rather than treating lexical stability as an anomaly to be explained within existing frameworks, it should be recognized as a systematic phenomenon that requires its own theoretical model. The integration of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors offers a more comprehensive account of the behavior of anthroponyms and opens new avenues for research in onomastics and historical linguistics.

The implications of this approach extend beyond the specific case examined here. The concepts of protected anthroponyms, sacred lexical stabilization, semantic anchoring, and canonical resistance may be applied to other lexical domains, including religious terminology, ritual formulas, and culturally significant expressions. In each of these cases, the interaction between linguistic structure and cultural practice plays a decisive role in shaping lexical behavior.

Ultimately, the name David serves as a paradigmatic example of how language operates within a broader cultural and textual ecosystem. Its stability is not the result of a single factor but the outcome of a complex interplay of forces that transcend the boundaries of individual linguistic systems. By identifying and analyzing these forces, the present study contributes to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that govern lexical transmission and preservation.

In this sense, the findings presented here do not merely refine existing theories but challenge their foundational assumptions. They demonstrate that a purely internal model of linguistic change is insufficient and that a comprehensive account must incorporate the full range of factors that influence language in use. The name David, far from being an isolated case, thus becomes a key to understanding the broader dynamics of lexical stability.

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