

Modernity vs. Tradition: The Sociolinguistic Significance of ‘C’ and ‘K’ in Female Names

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Abstract:

This study investigates the sociolinguistic phenomenon of name spelling preferences, focusing on the observed tendency for individuals to favor ‘K’ over ‘C’ in names where both spellings are viable. Utilizing data from *A Dictionary of First Names* and qualitative insights from discussions on the *r/namenerds* subreddit, this research explores the social, cultural, and gender dynamics that influence these orthographic choices. The findings indicate that names starting with ‘K’ are frequently associated with modernity, strength, and a desire for uniqueness, while those starting with ‘C’ are linked to tradition, elegance, and, in some cases, more masculine connotations. These preferences are not arbitrary but are deeply embedded in societal norms, cultural heritage, and identity construction processes. The analysis reveals that ‘K’ spellings are particularly favored when users seek to convey a sense of modernity and distinctiveness, reflecting broader trends in contemporary naming practices influenced by pop culture and digital identity formation. Conversely, ‘C’ spellings are often preferred for their classic and timeless qualities, highlighting a complex interplay between modernity and tradition in name choices. The study contributes to the understanding of how language, particularly orthography, reflects and shapes gendered identities within contemporary society.

Keywords:

Sociolinguistics, orthography, Female names, identity, culture.