Electronic Name Address as Individual Identity
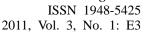
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Abstract

The essence of real name, the relationship between email name address and individual identity as well as the individual and social value of nomination phenomenon studied in this paper by using a questionnaire consisted of 10 questions with four options. Thirteen themes of virtual nomination were extracted from 222 respondents and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Presumably, a person by choosing unconsciously every theme of nomination refers to his/her standpoint of his/her Self and individual identity. Results showed that in the virtual world that an individual has the option of choosing a name; it is possible to delineate an individual's psychological profile. Thus, the individuals' personality, to some extent, can influence his/her choosing the virtual name.

Keywords: Electronic name address, Virtual name, Real name, Individual identity, Referential system, Signifying system

1. Introduction

Today, according to Anthony Giddens (1991: 53), "self-identity becomes a reflexive project". We create narratives of "who we are, and how we came to be where we are now. Self-identity is a person's own reflexive understanding of their biography". It is only "a product of the person's reflexive beliefs about their own biography. A stable self-identity is based on an account of a person's life, actions and influences which makes sense to them". It 'explains' the "past, and is oriented towards an anticipated future" (ibid: 53).

A large body of research exists on the topic of people's nominalization, the effects of name on character and the relationship between name and character. A definition of nominalization states it is a process, which attributes a certain word or phrase to a certain pattern. According to Strunk (1958: 64), "historically, one's name has always represented an important aspect of the self." Lawson (1971: 234) believes, a name may become a part of an "individual's self-concept". According to Harari and McDavid (1973: 223), people "tend to be judged by their labels".

As communication is necessary in virtual space, people need an internet identity to communicate. This internet identity is an email name, which labels people. Of course, there are some similarities and differences between "real" and "virtual" names. Before comparing them, we need to survey the characteristics of real names and virtual names.

Up until now, no research has looked at the relationship between an electronic name and the self-concept. This article is written with the purpose of exploring the relationship between a personality and the email name, chosen by that individual as a virtual name in virtual space.

To do so, I collected data by emailing a questionnaire I constructed to 4000 unknown virtual users of whom two hundred people completed and returned the questionaire. An additional twenty-two people returned the questionnaire with some less comprehensive information about how they chose their names. So, in total, I received information about 222 electronic names. From this data, I extracted 13 themes to account for virtual nomination. These themes represent the combined view points of my respondents toward the phenomena of names in virtual space. Undoubtedly, the virtual name has many similarities with the "real name", as their functions are in many aspects similar and certainly in many aspects are different.

2. Theoretical Concepts

2.1 What is a name and what are its implications?

The root of "name" in Avesta and Sanskrit is "nama", in Greek is "onoma" and in Latin is "nomen", all of which have the same root and means "one's reputation" (Etymonline dictionary). According to Webster online dictionary (2008), "a name is a label to things, people, places, brand names and even ideas or concepts, originally in order to distinguish one another. Names may identify a class or category of things, or a single thing, either uniquely, or within a given context. It is also called a proper noun". By considering this definition "what makes each word distinct is its difference from the other words" (Saussure 1983: 653), so the functions of names are determined by making distinctions between people. In fact, nominalization is one of
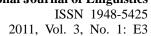
the functions of language, as Saussure (1983: 653) pointed out, "the system of linguistic units depends on the idea of Difference; one unit has Value within the system because it is not some other unit within the system".

As John Stuart Mill stated, "a proper name [is] a word that answers the purpose of showing what thing it is that we are talking about, but not of telling anything about it". The name in some way reveals the identity of the object. An identity statement should contain no information at all. If we understand a name, we should understand the information it carries, namely the identity of its bearers (William Greenberg 1996: 2008). According to Frege (1892: 5), sense and reference are two different aspects of the signification of an expression. Sense, as he pointed out, means the bearer of the name and he applies it to proper name, which has intra-linguistic meaning. In other words, it is self-reference. However, reference is extralinguistic and refers to the object in the real world, as Frege believes every sense has a reference. According to Russell (1905: 1-2), reference is arguable and we cannot say every meaning has a denotation. This is illustrated by cases in which the denotation appears to be absent. For example, the solar system, the twentieth century, etc., are constituents of the *meaning*; but the *denotation* has no constituents at all. The distinction between *acquaintance* and *knowledge about* is the distinction between the things we have presentations of, and the things we only conceptualize by means of denoting phrases. There seems no reason to believe that we are ever acquainted with other people's minds, seeing that these are not perceived directly; hence, what we know about them is obtained through denotation. All thinking has to start from acquaintance; but it succeeds in thinking *about* many things with which we have no acquaintance. According to Kripke (1980: 12), the meaning of a name simply is the object it refers to. A proper name refers to the named object in every possible world in which the object exists, while most descriptions designate different objects in different possible worlds. For example, 'Nixon' refers to the same person in every possible world in which Nixon exists, while 'the person who won the United States presidential election of 1968' could refer to Nixon or others in different possible worlds. Therefore, names are expressions, which refer to objects and their descriptions.

According to Webster (2008), "it is universal for a person to have a name ... A personal name is usually given at birth or a young age, and usually kept throughout life; there may also be additional names indicating family relationships, location, etc. The details of naming are strongly governed by culture; some are more flexible about naming than others, but for all cultures where historical records are available, the rules are known to change over time."

The general constituents of a "real name" which is given at birth are given name, middle name, and patronymic family name (in Western societies at least). These constituents are used frequently in virtual names too. Nevertheless, there are other constituents of virtual name, which "real names" often lack. These include numbers and specifiers. Abbreviation, acronyms, blending, clipping and metaphorization are other techniques used for making virtual names.

While virtual names and given names are both 'chosen', they differ in who may select the actual name. Choosing a child's given name is free and arbitrary in terms of the parents, but it is imposed in a compulsory manner in terms of a child. A specific given name shows the

parents' way of thinking. According to some psychologist, the collocation of given name and the bearer leads to a psychological effect of the name shaping a person's identity. In other words, a person is shaped by a "real" name but shapes or reveals "self" by an email name.

Individual experiences, desires and wishes (cited in almost 23% of the cases in our study) are reflected in virtual names. The important thing about virtual names is that they are not referential like given names (Russell 1905: 1-2), but they are signifying. In other words, there is an abstract and virtual image of a person in the abstract relationship between signifier and signified. The names are virtual labels, which signify indefinite people. Not having common intrinsic characteristics between signifier and signified in real world is the difference between signifier and signified relationships in the real and virtual world. That proper names refer to people is a kind of conventional relation between signifier and signified. In the case of an email name, however, the name is iconic which reflects some aspect of bearer. In Saussure's notion, the name is the sign and the denotatum is the signified. Simply put, the name is a label that refers to a person (1983: 114-115). The name of an object could be conceptualized as the signifier and its referential meaning as the signified. In fact, name is a label, which refers to a person. However, according to Rymes (1996: 251), in this case we have ignored the role of culture.
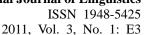
As Algeo (1992: 728) said, "people are almost invariably named, indeed, a human being without a name would be socially and psychologically less than a fully man." According to Zawawi (1993: 6), "a name constructs a person because the name one bears may create an attitude in those who hear it before they meet the name bearer." This style of thinking indicates the power of names to emphasis social communication. People's names are an iconic representation of some social variables, which gradually become indexical by association between name and person. A name could bear some features like gender, hierarchy of birth, individual structure, power, position, etc.

According to Lyons (1977: 222), proper names are both "synchronically and diachronically motivated". Rymes (1996: 231) adds "the name an individual is given has one synchronic meaning in the baptismal ceremony but as the individual uses that name, it acquires new and varied meanings diachronically… The circumstances and social contexts during the birth of a child may prompt the parents to give a name … the social and economic situation of the parents … and their social links with other people" are effective factors for choosing a name.

Language describes complexity and diversity of people's way of living, it declares people nomination systems, their marriage, family, relation, politics, economy, job, religious beliefs, rules, funeral customs and so on. Anthropological linguistics applies general and theoretical models for certain social and cultural contexts to illustrate how language leads to distinguishing between groups, individuals and identities. Generally, nomination could be used as a cultural and universal method.

2.2 What are virtual names and their implications?

Given name, family name and middle name are common points of "real names" and email virtual names, but nicknames are a very important feature of email names that can be used in

both virtual and real worlds. Some people do not like to use their real name and prefer to have a nickname, at least in informal situations, because they can choose it themselves. This point could be a link between real and virtual names and their distinguishing characteristics. Choosing email names, which are different from real names, could mask identity, it could be used for informal usages like writing comments on blogs, chatting, communicating with others without revealing their generation gap and sexuality and even studying about people by communicating with them without uttering them their position, so as not to affect their responses.

In Inuit society, "the person's character and abilities were transferred with their name. Thus, personal names were repeated from one generation to another, providing a fundamental continuity over time in the identity of individuals" in that society (Hawkes 1916:112; Bennett 1981). Choosing a virtual email name shows that person's attitude, which is like virtual space and could hide many things. A real name in virtual space is used to make a distinction: a person, by telling his real identity in virtual space, wants to be distinct from others. The themes, which are formed by being united to the space they have used, are frequent. "United name with space" means when a person does not choose his real name for virtual space and prefer to use virtual space's possibilities and chooses a name that conceals his/her real identity and communicates with his/her virtual desired identity. This structure leads to a unity between function of name and virtual context. The constituents of virtual names are 1.Name, 2.Surname, 3.Number, 4.Nickname, 5.Specifier.

Among these constituents, item 1, 2 and 4 are independent and among them just nickname could give freedom to a person to choose his desirable name and change a name imposed on him/her from his parents. According to our study, simply about 22/6% Iranians use this possibility of nominalization. A virtual name is a temporary name, which could be changed from time to time. Using a nickname in virtual space means that a person feels a real name cannot utter his/her emotions, so he/she gives a name in privacy to him/herself, far from restricting cultural frames, which bears some part of his identity. Temporality of using virtual email name shows a person's viewpoint and belief's change about him/herself, which is a natural part of everyone's psyche (according to examinee's response to the questionnaire).

According to the survey on functions of email names, we can conclude that very few people use their virtual email names in official situations, as perhaps there is a close relationship between formal context and using real name (Tamanini 2005: 71). Nicknames may belong to the informal situations of society, because a job searcher never uses his virtual email names to fill an application form and to communicate with his colleagues. email names can influence people's judgment about him/her and have effect on finding a job (ibid: 58), so a person prefers to enter official situations with a neutral name, which is presumably his real name.

Two issues are significant in studying email names: How to choose a name, which depicts a person's view about self-concept as well as extracting nomination themes that signify to social value of email names in electronic context and their social cultural statues.

2.3 Individual and social values of nomination phenomenon

In linguistics, grammar refers to the logical and structural rules that govern the composition of sentences, phrases, and words in any given natural language. The term refers also to the study of such rules, includes morphology and syntax, often complemented by phonetics, phonology, semantics, and pragmatics. As a sentence has grammar, and the ordering of a sentence's elements can lead to some interpretation, we can claim that every name has its grammar too. The grammar of a name implies semantic, pragmatic and semiotic structure, which interact with each other. According to Lawson's methodology (1971), semantic differential analysis is utilized to understand the connotation and attitudes toward different names. In his research, names are rated according to three basic dimensions: evaluation as good-bad, activity as active-passive and potency as strong-weak. Evaluative dimension demonstrates people's judgment. As Lawson pointed, when an individual encounters a name that is common, he/she is more likely to associate it with more positive evaluation than uncommon name (Tamanini, 2005: 15).

Mehrabian and Valdez (1990: 1310) have considered three factors, (favorability, desirability and preference), concluding that common names are more favorable and desirable than uncommon names. Mehrabian (Ibid: 1310) refers to effects of common names on personality and then studied the semantic differential analysis to characterize general name connotation. Mehrabian concludes that name affects individual's personality, so favorable names lead to favorable people and then unique name has unfavorable, undesirable effects on individual's behavior**.**

Could we use this model for email names too? In email names, we cannot expect the same results achieved for given names, because individuals could change their email address, and choose another name, which is more favorable for them. If somebody has to make an official email name, he/she could create one and keep the virtual one, which is more favorable for him/her too**.**

In creating an email name, there are other techniques, like abbreviation, clipping, blending and so on. To speak about email name, we have to study the relation between individual attitude's and his/her behavior. By exploring the condition, which would or would not predict the individual's behavior, we can conclude that normative constraints as well as situational variables dealing with an individual's vested interest can affect the attitude-behavior relationship. Attitudinal qualities include the relationship between affective and cognitive component, the temporal stability of attitudes and confidence in the attitudes (Tamanini, 2005: 25).

As Fazio prints (1984: 214), "an attitude is essentially an association between object and a given evaluation… (which) may range from very "hot" (the attitudinal object being associated with a strong emotional response) to a "cold" cognitively based judgment of the favorability of the attitude object." how people behave is the same as how they understand the objects, so individual's attitudes affect their behavior, and also behavior arise from perception. Names' connotation could lead to expectations that could be used during evaluative decision-making processes.

By considering Tamani's research about the effects of email names on finding jobs (2005: 99),

email names could lead to implications about an individual's identity. According to his model, email names demonstrate an individual's attributes, which could indirectly affect employers' evaluations about a job seeker's employment

Email name $\longrightarrow$ Attribute of a person $\longrightarrow$ Evaluation for a job $\longrightarrow$ Action (behavior)
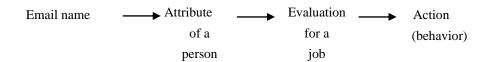
Figure 1. The effect of Ename on finding job(Tamanin, 2005:99)

The main difference between "real name" and virtual name, I think, the involuntary or voluntary nature of their selection. In the first case, others choose a name, which affect individual's identity during his/her life. I do not think it is acceptable, as Tamanini believes, that email name affect on identity, but we can say, email name prepares the possibility of identifying an identity. Then, identifying the personality could be attainable by virtue of email name, not the identity itself.

As a result, email names have some different roles towards "real name", which could not have influenced individual's attributes. In fact, the attributes could affect the name choosing process. Because "real name" is a conventional dimension of a person as well as Ename is an iconic dimension in person's view. Therefore, we can amend Figure 1, to:
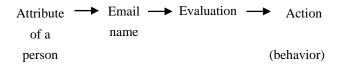
Attribute of a person $\longrightarrow$ Email name $\longrightarrow$ Evaluation $\longrightarrow$ Action (behavior)

Figure 2. The effect of attributes on Ename and behavior

2.4 Cognitive implications of Virtual names

It is right that having spirit moods like opinion, desire and point of view are necessary for individuality sense, but they are not enough; because one of the differences between human beings and others is that human beings are aware of their opinion, fears and desires. Although animals have the same attributes, they could not recognize them. As Lynn Rudder Baker (2005: 25-30) says, necessary conditions for a "Self" include having point of view. Point of view is the basis of all conscious forms, which make it possible for people to have an internal life and a world of thought. According to Baker (2005: 40-45), first point of view is relate to language learning too. Humans do not merely try to achieve desires, but they also evaluate them, making possible phenomena such as confession, picturing "Self", and memories. Therefore, he/she believes that individuality is not simply used for spirit status or having first point of view, but individuality is self-perception as someone who has a standpoint.

Individual and self are two descriptions for one phenomenon. The first concept is looking from

the outside and the second one is looking from inside. The individuality's issue means perception and acceptance of a person as a Self. Self-perception is special person's perception (Feser, 2005: 106). The names, which a person chooses for his/herself, could refer to his/her interest, desires, ideas and job's field semantically. For instance, some applied virtual names or affixes among our available data specified ancient Iranian myths and nationalistic identity. We have some names like "ahoora", "sepantarmaz", "aria", "rayavin", "sepantaminoo", "Persia" and some suffixes like "ir" and "tnt" (4.7%), which are related to cultural and social standpoints. The complex structure of, for example, rayavin is combined from two parts: "ray" means "contrivance" and in Indian language means "the king" and the second part, "avin" means "love". Some email names were the title of a movie, music, favorable fictional character, favorable profession or job and so on; for example: small black fish, sun of apple, pen, deconstruction, Lorca and so on. Some other email names were about some natural elements like sun, god, eclipse, cobbler, angel and so on. In past times, most of the Kashmiri Hindu names were after the names of gods and goddesses, places, animals and birds and objects of nature like sun, moon, stars, mountains, rivers and so on. "Whereas, in some Indian societies there has been a tradition of giving secret names to the child, besides its official name, this practice has never been adopted by Kashmiris" (Koul, 1995: 1). So the individual's image of "Self" in virtual worlds related with desirable image of "Self". A person's image of self in "real name", however, could be an image, which a person escapes from it. A person could achieve his desire by virtual name. He/she could appeases his "self" by choosing some virtual names like aria_aria@ (referring to originality), sepantarmaz@ (referring to the force of earth's godess), alaeadin@ (a boy who acquires magic lamb), shazdeh (son of king), sharabenoor@ (wine of light), etc. and maintain his favorable self. As a result, it seems that people's name signify to the cultural and social structure of a society, as seen, and having these elements in virtual names show a person's standpoint to "the self", which this "self" could be a macro or micro self.

In fact, self and others are two social products, which recreate "self" identity by chosen name. What people expect from a name is hereditary force of words, which constitute a name. It reflects people's life, not important in positive or negative dimension. Social world coordinates with words and words have coordination with worlds. Linguistic signs are representation of world (Duranti, 1997: 337). These virtual names are linguistic sign and social-cultural interpretations of name suppose as real world. The nomination system is also dynamic like the universe and cultural issues.

3. Data Explanation and Analysis

3.1 Themes of emails' name

The construction of virtual name includes more expanded realm in relation to "real name", it means that besides the given name, place, job, nickname, it could include numbers, letters, favorable objects, hyphens, dots, clipping and so on. For instance, job (mechanic), place (Iran), ancecstor's name (hahmadi) and nickname (mastili) are options common for both real name and virtual name. The important point is not just in denotative meaning, but also the dictation, function of numbers, syntactic and morphological constructions, punctuation, … play a main

role in analysis, which are: numbers (a_hadi2002), letters (amb_145), favorable object (tighmahi), hyphen (masuod_chera) and so on, which could have the function of some stimuli that evaluate connotative meaning. This connotative meaning could include positive or negative values of individual attributes. We can generalize Mehrabian and Valdez's (1990: 1310) idea about "real name" to email names, as people's judgment about common email names is more positive than uncommon email names. For example, "mechanic" as an email name refers to the relation of a person to this job or field of studying, which could be the sign of interest to this field or job. However, this email name signifies that part of identity, which a person likes to offer. "Mastili" as an email name, also refer to the intimacy and childhood, by which a person likes to be connected. This is the same aspect by which he/she is addressed in the home. It seems that this person's interested to that aspect of "self" which have accompanied him/her from childhood, so by growing up, he/she carries this title too, but email names which includes real names, signify an official context or a conservative person.

By studying virtual names, numbers and letters may divide some sub-classes; number for example could indicate date of birth, ID card number, the year of email opening, the date of birth of some favorable person, and so on. Sometimes we encounter some names in some different languages, which are important because of contrastive value between Farsi and other languages, for example, one of them is dreamer. Non-Persian names in nomination themes just occupy 5.1%, which is a way for creating distinction in lingual context. As an example we can speak about "desiderio", which is an Italian word meaning "desire". A person who chooses this name likes to be marked and distinct from others. Then, the smallest element, which is applied in nomination themes, is signifying and refers to a person's idea about self and surrounding environment.

A lexeme could be defined by description as a theme, which refers to a part of nomination process or its application, which is studied by lexicographers. Every name could be classified in a theme extracted from data. In sum, we have 13 themes in which all the Email names could be included. All the themes could be seen in the table 1 as well figure 3, which shows the percentage of every theme's usage.

The application of some different morphemic process is the second reason for variety in nomination forms, which specifies the most percentage of variation. Different types of morphemic process consists of clipping (manoush_ir: ma+noush) about 22/4%, combination (alicejune2001: Alice+june) about 75%, acronym (amb_145: a+m+b) about 22/4% and blending (arkap2000: ar+kap) about 1/3 %. Blending means "the production of new words which blend some parts of two different words. Usually, the first part of a word blends with the final part of another word and new word is created (Shaghaghi, 1386: 109).

The occurrence of ignoring these unmarked themes is not salient, that is scrambling occurs in a small percent of data. According to table 2, the ordering of unmarked themes is rare and the grammatical norm of nominal phrase in Email name does not break the rules of existing syntactic structure, so a virtual identity of a person will be known by morphemic process, not syntactic one.

Table 1. The percentage of nomination theme's usage in my data

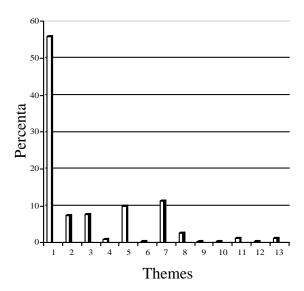|	frequency	percentage	theme	example
1	124	55.9%	Name+ Surname (+ Number)	afshinvahidishams
2	16	7.3%	Surname (+ Number)	shoa14
3	17	7.6%	Name (+ Number)	aliakbar
4	2	0.9%	Name+ Surname (+nickname)	mhaasia
5	22	9.9%	Name + Nickname (+ Number)	alislick00
6	1	0.4%	Surname + Nickname (+Number)	adam_r1980
7	25	11.4%	Nickname	devil.and.guitars
8	6	2.7%	Specifier + Name	alicejune
9	1	0.4%	Specifier + Surname	seyyed_mohammadi
10	1	0.4%	Sentence (Name + Verb)	amirhastammm
11	3	1.4%	Befriendizaion name (+ Number)	baki52
12	1	0.4%	Befriendizaion name+ Surname (+ Number)	Azifarahani
13	3	1.3%	Some person's names	Leiliramin
total	222	100%	---------------	----------------

Figure 3. The percentage of theme's usage

When the first letter of name (14.6%) or surname is used, it is a sign of the identity, unbeknown to all people, so the gender will be unknown for the others, like "HRG_IR" or "ah_abdolkarimi". Those who use such themes do not like to introduce their selves frankly; they prefer to interact with others just in the official contexts or simply with acquaintances. About 7.6% of people write just the first letter of their surname, which is referred to originality and family's identity, but writing just the first letter decreases the interest to maintain them, like "ali_z_2001ir". These people do not mind if they are known or not; while their connection to originality or domestic identity is symbolic and it is not ignored. 4.5% of people use blending

technique; it means some part of name and some part of surname. In this model, is not important to be known, because the user does not care if someone knows him/her or not. Friends will recognize him/her from the Ename, while it could be used in official contexts too, like "pegishab" (pegah+shabab) or "sanmils" (sanaz+milani).

Table 2. The percentage of linguistic process usage

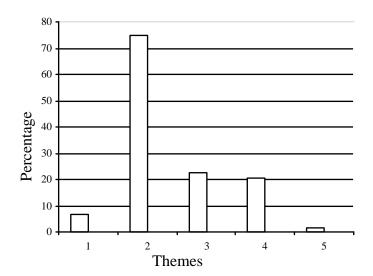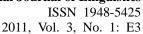|	percentage	process	Example
1	6.7%	syntactic	amirhastammm@
2	75%	Combination	alicejune2001@
3	22.4%	Clipping	mahkh845@
4	20.27%	Acronym	abg121@
5	1.3%	Blending	sanmils@

Figure 4. The percentage of process occurrence

3.2 Descriptive data explanations and analysis

In the past, people believed that every person's name has an impact on his character. They used to choose names for their children thinking that their lives would be somehow affected by it. Generally, a person's name affects the process of building a self-concept because it helps delineate the messages other people send to the child. People unconsciously and effectively send positive and negative messages for positive and negative images (See Chapter 10 of Anderson). According to Strunk, "there appears to be a persistent tendency for individuals who dislike their first name to have less affirmative attitudes toward themselves than do those who like their first name" (Strunk, 1958: 65). As Smith pointed out (1397: 327-329), the style of name we choose for ourselves can reveal a great deal about our personalities and about how we see ourselves, because the other's behavior and social acts have impact on a person's image of Self in his/her mind.

By studying how people choose their virtual name and by determining the percentage of different themes used for nomination phenomenon, we can obtain some interesting results about individual personalities as well as how people see themselves. This classification partly is inspired from Smith's six common and distinctive styles for writing "real" names (1997: 327-329). In this research, by considering how people choose and write their virtual names, we reach the relation between name and identity. We must not ignore that offering opinion about virtual name cannot be completely generalized to all people, and there are definitely some exceptions all the time.

1)   **Name+ Surname (+Number) = 55/9 %:** In questionnaire, the people of this class choose an answer which is said: I like to be known with my real name. Not for the people use this theme just in official situation, but for who use it always it is a flag to say I am serious and like to be known and does not like to hide my identity.

2)   **Surname (+Number) = 7/3 %:** According to Smith about real name (1997: Ibid), this theme could show maturity and a solid, conservative personality; create confusion and gender ambiguity. Using the numbers decreases the seriousness and makes it close to a virtual name. According to Webster (2008), it implies the importance of the originality of a person.

3)   **Name (+Number) = 7/6 %:** According to Smith about how to write your real name (1997: Ibid), it is the simplest and least formal theme and reflects tendency to be friendly.

4)   **Name+ Surname (+Nickname)= 9 %:** According to questionnaire, this theme is chosen obligatory, because of not having another choice when you register, but because of liking to choose your real name, you accept any affixes the system suggest to you. I this theme, a person like to keep his real identity.

5)   **Name+ Nickname (+Number)= 9/9 %** Youngsters like to choose their Ename from this theme, which is usually temporally and attribute to a certain period of life, like Ali jigar (lovely Ali), amir sag maram (Faithful Amir like a dog), babak espinas and etc.

6)   **Surname + Nickname (+Number)= 0/4 %:** A person creates a link between who is he/she and who he/she likes to be. This theme is a combination of desires and identity. Just a little people use this theme, like: adam_r1980

7)   **Nickname = 11/4 %:** By using this theme for Ename, a person could hide his gender. It is a discourse system, by which people could maintain their thoughts about self. Those people who like to use this theme, like to mark themselves for their friends. The people choose this theme, in the questionnaire answered these options:

- This name relates to my special interest and could give me favorable character.
- I could appease my not achieved desires.
- I would like to choose my given name myself.
- I feel I could maintain my thoughts to others by my virtual name.

As we mention before (in cognitive implications of virtual names), according to Baker (2005: 29-30), individuality is not simply used for spirit status or having first point of view, but
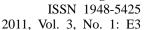
individuality is self-perception as someone who has a standpoint.

8) **Specifier** + **Name** = **2/7 %:** A person like the way people look at him/her by putting name on him/her, so keep that virtual name as his/her Ename. Like "Amir Khan" (Mr. Amir), "Amoo Behnam" (uncle Behnam) and so on.

9) **Specifier** + **Surname** = **0/4 %:** A person's idea about originality is an element, which gives identity to human. In this case, usually specifier is a religious element, which could be written in ID card, too, like seyed Mohammad.

10) **Sentence (Name + Verb)** = **0/4 %:** A person chooses this theme could be a creative person who likes to play with his/her name; he/she uses this theme as a discourse system. The frequency of this theme's usage is very low and just appropriates for informal context in a short term.

11) **Befriendizaion name** (**+Number**) = **1/4 %:** A person uses this theme, resembles social context to family context and emphasizes on emotional presence of the family in society, like mastili, baki, … .

12) **Befriendizaion name** + **Surname** (**+Number**)= **0/4 %:** Originality and identity are two important elements in real world, but using abbreviated form of name is not voluntary and occurred just because of some choosing constrains in email name system, like Azifarahani (Azadeh+ Farahani).

13) **Some names (Name + Name)** =**1/3 %:** Some people, who choose this theme, like emotional dimension of tribal or traditional system. This model has an emotional signifying which link some people to each other, like: bahar_far (Bahar_Farhad), amb (Ali+Morteza+Bahman), leilaramin (Leila+Ramin), … .

Table 3. the percentage of hiding identity technique usage

	covering identity technique	Percentage	Explanation
1	A part of a name	4.6%	Exploring the gender, a part of identity, none official context
2	The first part of name	11.17%	A trace of originality's importance
3	Number	16.4%	Age is not mentioned in real name, but activated in virtual one.
4	Nickname	21.5%	Personal statement and a discourse system
5	Combination to other element	5.7%	The combination of name with affixes which deidentify the name.
6	Scrambling	6.3%	None importance of originality and identity's hierarchy
7	Befriendizaion name	1.7%	The identity which others give to a person
8	Combination of two or more names	0.4%	It refers to a friendly connection like tribes.

Taking into account these percentages, we can conclude that about 60% of people like to use their "real name" as their Enames but just about 24% use complete name and surname and the other use some morphemic process to change the real name, like blending, acronym or combination. In fact symbolically it refers to originality but could hide a part of identity too. Anyway, according to table 3, there are some unconscious possibilities, which could be covered up some part of identity and change the function of "real" name.

4. Discussion

A name is an important part of every culture and central to people's everyday life. Choosing a name is very significant for people receiving it and the society puts a name on its members. In entering a virtual world, a person can rename his/her name, in order to maintain him/her self by virtue of a name, which put on him/her. The function of a name is different in real and virtual world, as Lyons (1977: 222) claims that proper names are both motivated synchronically as well as diachronically, then proper names (real names) have impact on one's identity diachronically, but according to table 2, virtual names maintain a person's desire. In fact, in virtual name it is a person who has impact on his/her name and helps others to evaluate his/her personality. Therefore, the discourse system of "real name" is referential but virtual names have a signifying system (see cognitive implications of virtual names) and through chosen name a person's face in his/her view could be received. The issue of the "Self" as well as how to think about it considers important in nomination process. The nomination themes, as pointed out before, show people's different points of view of their selves. One of the virtual nicknames' properties is their temporality, because they interact with identity, which is an issue of change like universe and language. Therefore, the phenomenon of name is not exceptional and changes as the world avoids obsolescence. It seems that virtual names some of which are the same as real name have different discursive functions. The email names bear real identities of people belonging to official contexts, but the other forms which their goal is not to make any distinction in virtual world (by knowing who is him) (see virtual name and its implications), is effective to receive cognitive aspects of personality. Indeed, a virtual name bears users' personal and social identity, which relates to their conscious scope, also, there are some different social and cultural functions for these names. Some virtual names bear identity (given name), originality (surname), generation (number), etc. They also show people's tendency to cover their identity behind some chosen name by virtue of some linguistic techniques. The ultimate goal of this study is to elaborate on virtual names from a different perspective, which is a paradoxical and essential phenomenon in personality and knowing it.

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