

1. Onomastic Issues in Bade Anthroponym

By

Ahmed Mohammed Bedu, Ph.D.

&

Mohammed Alhaji Modu, Ph.D.

Department of Languages and Linguistics,

University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.

ahmedbedu@unimaid.edu.ng

Abstract

Anthroponyms provide evidence for language history from lexical and semantic content even though certain names establish arbitrary relationship between a label and its referent. The study deploys onomastic theory to explore the source of Bade names from the data which were collected from both primary and secondary sources with a view to taxonomizing them based on their meanings and distinct structures. The research findings reveal that proper names in Bade language are not sociolinguistic phenomena but semantically transparent by encoding the historical evidence of the bearer which always serve as brand-like catalyst for social cohesion among the language speakers.

Keywords: Onomastics, anthroponyms, toponyms, Chadic, Bade language

Introduction

From the onomastic perspectives, names, including anthroponyms that have to do with proper name of a person or a group of persons, provide evidence for language history from lexical and semantic content including the phonological and morphological development of the language (Hough, 2017). It also established in the linguistic literature on many languages that certain names establish arbitrary relationship between a label and its referent (Akinnaso, 1980; Oseni, 1981). Typical example of such names are some English proper names that carry no semantic content to differentiate gender and it can be used to label both male and female as in 'Evelyn' or 'Leslie', which is used for either sex. On other hand, there are some personal names that clearly have not only the semantic content and socio-cultural functions but they reflect the real-world knowledge in form of positional names, manner names, circumstantial names, and names based on physical appearance (Chamo, 2016). These can be seen in the following Hausa names in table (1) below:

Category	Hausa Name	Gloss
Positional names	<i>Kande/Dela/Delu</i>	‘a female child born after two or more male children’
	<i>Tanko/Namata/Mati</i>	‘child (boy) born after two or more female’
	<i>Auta.</i>	last born child male or female
Manner names	<i>Mairiga</i>	a child is born with a placenta
	<i>Kanta & Auwa</i>	name given to twin who is born male and female
Circumstantial names	<i>Shekarau</i>	a child who stays in his mother womb for a year
	<i>Maikuxi</i>	‘a child who his parent gets money on the day of his birth’
Names based on physical appearance	<i>Fari</i>	Fair in complexion
	<i>Dogo</i>	Tall

Table (1): Hausa Name and their Semantic Contents

From the illustrations in the above table, names in themselves can be associated with a memorable experience and be labelled the person with such particular name. In these instances, some certain names as entities are ascribing names in form of temporal names or names that deviate from custom and to some extent such names may be unattractive nicknames or diminutives which may adversely affect such person’s personality.

Similarly, Akinnaso (1980) reveals that Yoruba personal name system serves to reinforce cooperative among its people since they have high value sharing and honouring one’s obligation. In this regard, he explains that personal names denote honour when they contain free morphemes such as *olá* ‘personal honour’, *akin* ‘valour’, *ifẹ* ‘love’ and *ayò* ‘happiness or welfare of others’.

In view of the foregoing, the study is aimed at exploring the source of Bade names with a view to taxonomizing them based on their semantic meanings and cultural/historical functions in addition to describing their distinct structures according to these meanings.

The Bade Language and its People

The Bade are found in the flood plains of the Yobe River in the presence Yobe and Jigawa State. Their language is called Bade which linguistically belongs to a Chadic West ‘B’ branch of Afroasiatic phylum (Newman, 1977). According to oral tradition, Bade people migrated from the city of Badr, in present day Saudi Arabia, (Schuh, 1977). Their movement Southward took them through Yemen, Sudan and finally settled around Lake Chad region. According to Palmer (1928), they first settled at Ngazargamu before

proceeding to Dadigar (cited in Shuaibu (1991)). Grema (1998) reveals that Dadigar is a village of about thirteen kilometres away from Gashua, the headquarters of Bade Local Government Council. It is presently in Bursari Local Government of Yobe State, Nigeria.

As various oral traditions have it, it was in Dadigar where the Bade people dispersed into different directions and formed different clans. The group that moved Northwards was led by Muzaza, and Westward by Amasaguya, while Dodo led those who moved Southward and became Ngizim people. Ago and very few people were left at Dadigar and nearby surrounding villages to continue with their farming activities.

However, with the increase of population of Bade people, many villages emerged. For instance, Gokaram town was the first administrative headquarter of the Gidgid clan before colonial administrators moved it to Gashua in 1946 and also upgraded to chiefdom status as Bade Emirate. Since then, Gashua remains as administrative headquarter of the Bade people and their Emirate.

Speakers of Bade language are found in Bade, Jakusko, Bursari, Karasuwa and Nguru local government areas of Yobe State. There are also Bade speaking people in Kirikasamma and Guri local government areas of Jigawa State, and other scattered villages such as Gadwa, Kadira, Abunabo and Musari. As indicated earlier, Bade is classified under West Chad B sub-branch of Afroasiatic. It is grouped together with Duwai and Ngizim and along with other extinct languages such Auyo, Shira and Teshena (Newman, 1990).

Bade is dialectally very diverse as it has three major dialect divisions as proposed in Schuh (1981) which referred to as *Western Bade* (WB), *Southern Bade* (SB), and *Northern Bade* (NB) dialect varieties. Gashua Bade (GB) constitutes a sub-dialect of the Northern Bade as the central dialect of the language. Speakers of Gashua Bade refer to themselves as Badai [*Badài*] (sg.), and Badayat [*Badàyat*] (Pl.). According to Tarbutu (2004), Southern Bade speakers refer to them as *Mazgarwun* [*Màzgàrwun*], and Western Bade speakers as *Mazgwarwa* [*Màzgàrwà*].

Literature Review

Names occupy a special position within language (Brinton and Bergs 2017). This prompts the emergence of a dedicated field of study known as ‘onomastics’ to study names in two broad strands that include toponymy (the study of place-names) and anthroponymy (the study of people’s names). Many scholars across the world conducted researches on various aspects of names especially their phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic point of view (Rosenhouse, 2002).

Names are more than a ‘word’ as the word by which a person, animal, place or thing is known can be used with (out) understanding of its semantic content (Guma, 2001). For instance, in all African culture, parents gave names to their children to express all their expectations in life in the name they give to their children. From the names that children bear, one can guess the intentions/life-experiences and or expectations of the parents

(Onumajuru, 2016). This can be seen in Igbo's name for their morphological composition as indicated below in (1):

1. Name	morphological composition	gloss
Adaaku	ada (daughter) + aku (wealth)	'daughter of wealth'
Nmamdi	Nmam (My father) + di (live)	'my father exists'

The Igbo name examples in (1) above reveal that names are words that their morphology is deliberate to semantically signify a special information about the person, an animal, inanimate, object, place or a concept. This occurs with the assumptions of Crystal (2008) and Hareeri (2009) which explain that names by which a person or thing is known or called denote identification, designation, reputation, fame, celebrity, family or clan.

As briefly explained in the introduction, Chamo (2016) maintains that, in Hausa cultural contexts, people name in order to differentiate, to recognize and to know. Names are given to children depending on the manner, period, and circumstances before, during or even after birth. Same things exist among the Basotho people in South Africa as naming in Sesotho language is both a cultural and linguistic phenomenon (Mohome 1972: 171). The meaning attached to names by Basotho, plays a significant role in the definition of "personhood", because it is believed that a given name does not only serve as an identity but also determines the type of person the individual will be. Names are believed to have influence on the character of the bearer. This proposition alludes to Hausa and Sesotho proverbs that refer to the influence of names on character of a person or thing in (2) and (3) below:

2. **Hausa:** *Suna linzami* (literally, 'a name is a bridle').
3. **Sesotho:** *Bitso lebe keseromo* (literally, 'a bad name is ominous').

Theoretical Background

This study adopts Onomastic framework on Bade traditional names to explore the interface between people, language and their cultural practices. Onomastics is the area of linguistics that investigates proper names, which are usually subdivided into names of people (anthroponyms) and names of places (toponyms). The study of distinct characteristics of proper names in western culture goes back to Greek philosophical discussions about the relationship between language and the world. In this paper, the onomastic framework is utilized to study proper names in Bade from points of view of morphology, and semantics to mirror on how language utilized the cultural practice as tool for naming in Bade with society.

Although this research is about traditional names under onomastics, which the term “anthroponymy” refers to personal names, this study is mainly socio-linguistic in nature. Therefore, in many instances the term “anthroponyms” is interchange with “traditional names” throughout the paper.

Methodology

As the names and naming systems are part and parcel of cultural heritages of all societies including Bade community, the data on Bade names which were analyzed in this paper were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected and elicited from interview with Bade people between the age of 35-50 in Gashua and Amshi in Bade and Jakusko Local Government Areas respectively. While the secondary data was collected from book of Bade folktales compiled by R. G. Schuh under Yobe Language Project sponsored by US National Science Foundation between 2004-2009.

Data Analysis and discussion

From the data, bade personal names are coined based on the following parameters: family background/occupational, characteristic, circumstantial, positional and loan from other language’s culture, religion among others.

1. Family background

The meaning attached to names by Bade people plays significant role in the definition of the personhood and parent lineage that include family history and background. Names, under this category, always signal family history and background and morphologically derived through compounding i.e., son of.... Or daughter of... as you can see below:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| 4. <i>Wunəkdūwa</i> | (m) | ‘Son of the river’, |
| <i>Wunəṁzam</i> | (m) | ‘Son of the hunter’, |
| <i>Wunyak pata</i> | (f) | ‘Daughter of the forest’ |

Bade proper names in the above category were literally descriptive of their referents and such personal names clearly suggest naming elements were drawn from the lexicon of the language. For morphological explanation, such name is made of free morpheme *Wun* ‘child’, *-y* is making feminine gender word and linker *ə* with its variants as *ək* or *ak* and other free morpheme that semantically reflects the background or occupational attachment of the family.

2. Characteristic

In Bade, names may denote personal appearance of that individual. It is well established in the data that personal names under this category are coined from argumentative or diminutive vocabulary words of the language that are adjectives as you can see below:

5. <i>Sapau</i> [<i>sampo</i>]	(m/f)	‘of big size’
<i>Məyəmganga</i> `	(m)	‘smallish boy’
<i>Kawai</i>	(m/f)	‘dullish looking first born’

3. Circumstantial

Some personal names in Bade Language express lived-in experience through which names are denoting the circumstances surrounding the birth of a child especially such as an unusual birth place; delayed birth; children born after male or female children as exemplified below:

6. <i>Kurəzgəm</i>	(m/f)	‘Child born in the first rains for planting period’
<i>əbzina</i>	(f)	‘Born at a marriage/ naming ceremony’
<i>Zaci</i> `	(m/f)	‘child born with some unusual thing’
<i>Andagai</i>	(f)	‘child born at the village square’

Apart from names of children in Bade language speaking community that depict occupation discussed in the family background, there are also some names that connote prominent or famous a person and fame in the Bade society. Some of these names labelled person on the basis of temporal or on religion ground in order to honour noble Prophet of Islam and his disciples because of their influence upon the living.

In this regard, a child can be named after one of famous or prominent people as an attribute. Though in some cases, these names are loaned names from other language’s cultures or religion as you can in the following table (2):

Table (2): Bade Names for Attribution

Category	Name	Sex	Meaning
Occupation signifies a person's professions, skill or business	<i>Mzam</i>	M	Attributive adj. 'of hunter' i.e. <i>mzambuba</i> example, Hunter Buba
	<i>Ganga</i>	M	Attributive adj. of 'drummer' i.e. <i>Ganga Musa</i> example, Drummer Musa
Chieftaincy Title depicts traditional offices which the bearer of the title holds in the palace of Mai Bade as a result of this it will be people name	<i>Bula</i>	M	Loaned title of Kanuri origin, meaning head of ward example Bula kabo.
	<i>Lawan</i>	M	Loaned from Kanuri, meaning head of village example <i>Lawan Murima</i> .
	<i>Are-\mathring{a}g\mathring{a}m [dugum]</i>	M	Originally the highest office in Bade
	<i>Tharaku</i>	F	Head of a whole community. Example, <i>\mathring{a}g\mathring{a}m Kawaci</i>
	<i>Magi</i>	F	An important title for women leader, title given to elderly women who are leader of the folk Title given to the first wife of the <i>Mai</i> (king)
Animate and inanimate object- it is common in African societies and Bade in particular for people to bearer the names or animal, streets, racks, rivers and others as their names	<i>Ala kaka</i>	M	A combination of two free morphemes with the same meaning 'Allah' [God] in Arabic and Bade [i.e. Ala> Allah, Kaka> Allah]
	<i>Sanabi</i>	F	With reference to prophetic times
Loan- some names may be loanwords or names from ethnic groups like Kanuri or Hausa by origin	<i>Kaku</i>	M	Loaned from Kanuri [<i>Kawu</i>] 'the twins'
	<i>Zari</i>	F	
	<i>Chakwa</i>	F	'The radiant', from Zahra refers to Fatimah First of female twins

From the above, one will appreciate that proper names are generally regarded as not only the sign of culture, but the national and ethno-lingual identity which can be used to describe and reconstruct the development of the society.

General Discussion and Conclusion

The research presents that name is an identification which reflects the community or ethnic group to which a person belongs. Beyond self-identification in terms of family lineage of an individual, the study further presents that Bade anthroponyms are not only linguistic richness but establishes the relationship between language and culture that justifies the phrases language in the mirror of culture and culture in the mirror of language.

The study equally highlighted that the Bade anthroponyms are indeed rich as sociolinguistic phenomenon in which sociolinguistic association of Bade people with other languages makes them to loan proper name from them. The paper then reveals the importance of social and cultural factors in name giving as it makes proper names semantically transparent and at same time encode the historical evidence of the bearer where not only the name givers and their relations can decode the message being expressed but the entire public. It equally amplified traditional anthroponyms are brand-like development that can be catalyst for social cohesion in pluralistic nation like Nigeria as many Nigerians can be identified by their traditional names. For example, names like Baba Gana, Modu, Kime are Kanuri while names such as Okechukwu, Ogbounaya, Okafor, Nzebe are clearly Igbo names. So also, names like Tsav, Terser, Amande, Akume are Tiv names.

In conclusion, it is important that ethnic or traditional names should not only be preserved but they should be used by a way of maintaining them at a time when studies of cultures and norms of some groups, especially minority people, are significantly declined. Even though this can only be reversed when linguists understand that person only learns new grounds for identity through names and names enrich the developed worldview. From the analysis of Bade traditional names, the paper brings further insight that Bade names are influenced by circumstances and events surrounding the child birth and also occupation is also one of the many sources of names in the language. In this regard, naming is a linguistic phenomenon that is not only morphologically, and semantically inclined but culture and traditions play role in naming people and places. As in the case, names is one of the resources that Bade people utilize to preserve their cultural and historical identities.

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