

A MORPHO-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF MUMUYE PERSONAL NAMES

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Abstract

The study of names which is equally referred to as onomastics or onomatology is of great importance to human existence, especially in Africa where people value culture, language, and communication. Names are used as labels to identify persons, places, or things, and are equally historical witnesses. The name of a person may be used to trace his family genealogy, culture, language, occupation, or town as well as communicate information to others. The researchers employed mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The researcher recorded traditional festivals and ceremonies to enable them document some of the festivals' names and ceremonial names that are fast facing extinction. The theoretical background employed for this study is the theory speculated by the ancient Greek and stoics about the universality of language. The researcher discovered among others that names can make and mar a person.

Key Words: Onomatology, Morpho-Semantics, Mumuye Morphology

Introduction

Names are not just given. Givers of any name consider the surrounding circumstances before naming a referent. Names are words and words as lexical items have meanings. Only when words relate or associate with referents or objects, will they remain as lexical items, but

the act of relating or associating with the referents or objects will make words lose the lexical status to become names. Those words that become names will refer to specific referents (Nilsen & Nilsen, 15; Kempson, 17; Lyons, 19; Koopman, 18; Strazny, 205). Personal Names of the *Mumuye* people of Yorro and Zing local government areas of Taraba State is the subject of this study, as they are given to children according to the order of their birth, or according to the events and circumstances surrounding their birth. Like many other personal names, *Mumuye* personal names can be analysed at the phonological, morphological as well as semantic levels. This study will specifically be concerned with the morphological and semantic analysis.

The term morphology as a branch of linguistics is generally attributed to the German poet, novelist, playwright, and philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (149-182), who coined it early in the nineteenth century in a biological context. Its etymology is Greek: morph- means shape, form and morphology is the study of form(s). It was first used for linguistics purposes in 1859 by the German linguist, August Schleicher (Salmon, 20), to refer to the study of the form of words. Morphological analysis is an attempt made to capture the structure of language at the word level and is concerned with the 'forms of words' (Matthew, 20). Morphology has its origin in Goethe according to Lyons (195) as cited in Agbedo (20), and it was first used in the study of the 'forms' of living organisms in biology. It has the basic concept of word and morpheme. Mohammed and Badejo (20) states that names depict the beliefs and cultural values of a people. They also identify that it is possible to add prefixes to other lexical items to form names.

The term personal name refers to or is what philosophers call anthroponymy as a branch of onomastics. It is generally attributed to Portuguese poet, writer, philosopher, and translator (Femado Pessoa, 188) who coined Onomastics in the 20th century as well as Anthroponymy. Etymologically, name comes from old English name

'cognate' with old High German name 'latinnonen', Greece 'onoma' all which means identification of a person, place, resident, animal, thing etc. Name reveals the identity of an object; therefore, a child in an African society assumes some cultural significance. (Thipa, 12). (Nicolaisen 18) states that 'the very act of naming has both communal and personal importance'. African names have always been there, and their innovation and creativity have always been very prominent within an onomastic context. (Neethling, 10). Personal names reflect the sociology and psychology of the era in which they are or were used; such that (Kripke,89) sees proper names as 'rigid designators' in the sense that they designate the same individuals across possible worlds. (Liu, 16) & (Van Langendonck, 13). One can bear more than one personal names; it is because of such that it is possible for Nigerian children to have more than a single personal name (Onietan et al, 18) (Oseni, 11 & Waziri, 20). It also helps in identifying or differentiating an individual from another. (Waziri, 20).

The term *Mumuye* refers to the people as well as the language. Many people believe that the term *Mumuye* was given by the Fulanis, but (Meek, 446) states that "It is improbable that the Fulani invented the term *Mumuye*, as the root is found in other parts of Africa in the sense of "man". Thus, the Tikari word for man is "mum" and the form "mume" meaning man is found in one of the Nyasaland languages. We may conclude therefore that *Mumuye* means 'the people' like so many African tribal titles". The *Mumuye* people cover the entire land South of the Benue River, starting from the cities in the Republic of Cameroun such as Tibati, Bertua, Ngaundare, Garua region, Koncha, pitowa, Beka and Wuroboki among others. (Marubitɔba etal, 16). In Nigeria *Mumuye* are in two states: Taraba and Adamawa. In Taraba state they are found in large number at Bali, Donga, Gashaka, Gassol, Ardo-kola, Jalingo, Lau, Yɔrrɔ and Zing local government areas. In Adamawa state, they are found in the following local government areas;

Tongo, Ganye, Jada, Mayo-Belwa, Fufore, Yola south, Yola North, Ngorore, Demsa and some parts of Numan local government area. Taraba State lies roughly between latitude $6^{\circ} .25N$ and $9^{\circ} 3$ and longitude $9.30^{\circ}E$ and $11.45^{\circ}E$, while Adamawa State lies between longitudes 11° in and $52/20E$ of the Greenwich meridian and latitude 10° and $143/4N$ of the equator. The Mumuye people use name as a means of identifications and some of the names are generated from many different sources.

It is obvious that people fail to understand that using the Mumuye names as a case study and the pattern of their morphological setting in other to convey a meaning have been a challenge over the years. It is against this background that this study seeks to know the differences way these words are form and how they exist among the Mumuye people.

Review of Empirical Studies

A considerable number of scholars have conducted studies to explore something tangible in personal names in the African context, such as Akinnaso (10), Dickens (15), kimenyi (178-89), Muzale (18), Rubnzo (20), Mphande (26) and Obeng (18). The question “What is in a name”? Which Mphande (26) terms as Shakespearean age-old question, affirms that the answer depends on the culture from which it is framed, and that among many African cultures, a name tells a lot about the individual that it signifies, the language from which it is drawn, and assigns it. As Mphande (26) puts it, a name may indicate the linguistics structures and phonological processes found in the experiences of the people surrounding the individual.

In Mumuye land, like many African societies, a name has the socio-cultural function of identifying the bearer. Obeng (18) confirms that African cultures have various ways of naming a child. For instance, the Akan naming system based on days of the week and death prevention names (Agyekum, 26). In addition, the Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba of Nigeria, as well as Swahili people of Tanzania name children

based on the circumstances surrounding a child's birth (Obeng, 18). In fact, as Chuks-Orji (12) points out, the time of the day (dawn, dusk, afternoon, evening, night), the specific circumstances related to the child and the child's family, as well as the gender of the child all play a significant role in the overall naming process and in the actual name given. Among the Luo of Kenya, a child born on the road may be called Ayo if it is a girl and Oyo if it is a boy (Obeng, 18). It is observed in these names that a- is a feminine prefix, o- is a masculine prefix, and yo, "on the way" is the root. In Akan, a boy or a girl who was born in the middle of the road may be called simply Akwantimfi "middle of the road". These factors appear to be relevant to the Mumuye community as well. They observed factors that play part in some names which include the circumstances surrounding birth such as place and sex among other things. Obeng's paper provides a structural linguistics analysis of Akan death prevention names and presents a social and ethno linguistics account of the death prevention names as they function within the Akan communication. He contends through his findings that death prevention names are shown to be meaningful and refer to the lives their bearers and the names givers. The structural linguistics analysis will be of great help in analysis Mumuye morphological patterns of personal names as well as exploring whether the idea of death prevention names exists in the language.

In some African societies a name is perceived as an important indicator of the bearer's behaviour and as a pointer to the name bearer's past, present and future accomplishments. In fact, that is why people tend to consider a person and his/her name as one entity that some point in time, are regarded as belonging to older people hence and suitable for the young generation. In addition, very few people would have the courage of naming their children a name that already belongs to a foolish person, a thief, or a mischievous person in the locality, that it is the name that determines the person's destiny. On the contrary,

people will tend to name their children after an important or famous person even though the name itself has a negative connotation.

Mphande (26) asserts that through the naming system, African Americans are re-claiming their complex African roots in the continuing process of redefining and dismantling the paradigm that kept them mentally chained for centuries. The purpose of his study is not only to help confirm the survival of African traditions in America, but also to reveal the presence of a distinct African American culture enclave in the United States. In his findings, Mphande came up with the results that Africans African Americans have retained in their speech African linguistics roots used in naming, as well as the ability to fundamentally manipulate the base name-stem of a language to construct new name and encode them with the relevant semantics imports through affixation process.

According to Zawawi the study of names gains some clues on morphological analysis through affixation process which is posited in the Jukun Wapan might have the same pattern with other language. Furthermore, He adds that a name constructs a person because the name one bears may create an attitude in those who hear it even before they meet the name bearer. For instance, in Jukun Wapan a name like Avosoh may create the notion of a “favoured one” while Apazyi might imply that the bearer is “one born in time of crisis”, or a name such as Asuku may be constructed to mean that the name bearer is “tussling for kingship”. However, these notions are not always true because the signifier (name giver) and the signified (name bearer) may not share certain intrinsic qualities. African names not only point to the dreams and expectations of the name givers, but also point to those of the name bearers. (13) This is also true in Mumuye people personal names in which a child could be named based on parents’ dreams and expectations. The name could be given in the situation whereby the parent is in serious lack, it could be poverty’, childlessness or even absence of peace in the home, but the coming of the child brought

happiness, favour and blessing to the parent. Thus, the coming of the child is an answered prayer. On the other hand, some names can refer to 'silence is golden' could be given to imply the conflict resolver if there has been any misunderstanding in the family or among the relatives.

Lyons (17) points out two characteristic functions of names in English in everyday language behaviour, namely referential and vocative. A name is thus used referentially when it is used to attract the attention of the person being summoned. In this study it is the referential which is of great concern. The studies done in African naming system have discovered so much concerning how people use their language to perform and participate in cultural activities such as naming. Language is the resource for reproducing social reality. Naming can be considered as a universal cultural practice as it has been said before. All societies in the world give names as tags to their people; however, they differ on the ways names are given. The practice and rituals involved, and the interpretations attached to the names. On the other hand, many studies have catalogued the naming system in the African context based on socio-cultural situation, but no study has explored the naming practice in relation to the noun class system, except for Van de Velde (23) who studied the 'proper Names and so-called class Ia in Eton'. Van de Velde declared that 'the neglect of proper names is descriptive in nature' which is also applicable in to the Mumuye people.

Children under the Mumuye culture names are one of the determinant factors for a successful marriage. In most circumstances the presence of children in a marriage is regarded as a blessing which can save a collapsing marriage. It is in line with this, that the news of a new-born baby is received with great joy, excitement and pride by both husband and wife and their parents. The good tidings are always spread around by children, relation of husband and wife, neighbours, and well-wishers. The Mumuye shun bareness, so both husband and wife feel

happy whenever the wife gets pregnant which is a proof of productivity by the couple whenever the wife delivers a healthy baby safely.

Aboshi (21) in 'The heritage' reviews that among the Yoruba people, names are given to children in accordance with the circumstances of the birth, household gods, historical event, or place of birth of the child. He opines that generally, name is regarded as a code of identification but, it also in most cases, determines the fortunes, character, and future of a child. These names also have proverbial and figurative meanings.

Methodology

The researchers employed mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods. By consulting library materials, video and audio recordings and direct interview with custodians of culture in all the communities, the researcher recorded traditional festivals and ceremonies to enable him the opportunity to document some of the festivals names and ceremonial names that are fast facing extinction. Information is also sought from elders, stakeholders, community representatives, traditional title holders and other authentic historical sources within the communities. A random sampling technique was used by the researcher. To do so, the researcher used the lexico semantic analysis to reveal their similarities and differences. It also covered the Mumuye dialect spoken within Yorro and local government areas of Taraba State. The population of Mumuye People as estimated by the National Population Commission (2016) stands at 1000,000 persons spread across the areas. For this study, three villages from each of the local government areas are considered suitable as sample size necessary for the study.

The instrument used for data collection is the participant observation: Here the researcher was directly involved in data collection as most nouns are being drawn from speeches made by the people, and the use of Audio-Tape Recorder (ATR) to collect the informal and

speeches of persons. Library material such as Books, journals etc. were also consulted. The research is carried out by comparing several noun usages in Mumuye. Each noun in Mumuye translation and the noun usage is analysed. The researcher analysis the different names phonologically in line with the theoretical background of the research by identifying the affixations, coinages, compounding, and derivations that exist in the morphological settings of Mumuye names.

Theoretical Framework:

The theoretical background employed for this study is the theory speculated by the ancient Greek and stoics about the universality of language. The stoics said the outer forms of language reveal certain inner universal truths about human nature. This contention is still retained for example, the theory of Parts of Speech, the division of the sentence into subject predicate and such inflectional categories like gender, case, person tense and mood. Around (1630), the German philosopher first used the term “general grammar” as distinct from “special grammar”. He believed that the function of a general grammar is to reveal those salient features which relates to the method and aetiology of grammatical concept. These are common to all languages. This is the view of the traditional and transformational grammarians who believe that language universal exist and they support the claims with properties of language expression, negations, and interrogations. This is shown by the morphological and semantic analysis of names together with their interpretations pragmatically. This theory of related to the topic under study because it looks at the morpho-semantic of Mumuye names to ascertain why and how they are form.

Data Presentation and Analysis

As stated on the research design above, the research work makes use of the two basic methods of data collection which are the primary and secondary sources of data collection. The primary source made use

of such instrument as questionnaire, group discussion. A total of thirty (30) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the following group of people.

Table 1: Age distribution of the Respondents

S/NO. Age	Frequency	Percentage
1. 18-20	4	13.3
2. 21-30	12	40
3. 31-40	6	20
4. 41-50	4	13.3
5. 41-50	4	13.4
Total	26	100%

Source: Survey 'field, August 2023.

The age of the respondents as seen from table 1.1 above differ significantly. The highest age grade among the respondents however is those between the ages of 21-30 years of age which account for 40 of the total respondents, representing 40% of the respondents. This is not surprising because these age brackets are youth very vibrant, and they are much more available and ready to give their best. The rest of the age grade class responded poorly or low due to their age and most of them tend to busy and not available. Some of them have visited them often to collect the questionnaire but met their absent they are always not available.

Table. 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

S/N	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Male	15	50
2.	Female	11	36.6
3.	Total	26	86.6

Source: Field survey, August 2023

The table above presents the sex distribution of the respondents among which the male accounted for 15 of the total respondents, representing 50% of the respondents, while the female accounted for 11 of the total respondents which represent 36.6% of the respondents. The higher population of the male respondents can be explained on the basis of the fact that, men are the most frequently people seen around or the available respondents in the school, place of work, house etc. while the female counterpart even when reached the keep giving some excuses that they do not have many ideas about this topic and others said they cannot write well in Mumuye.

Table 3: Distributions of the respondents by Occupations.

S/N	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Business	6	20
2.	Civil servant	4	13.3
3.	Students	8	26.6
4.	Farmer	6	20
5.	Others	2	6.6
Total		26	86.5

Source: Field survey, August2023

The table above presents the respondents' statistics based on their occupational differences, it is obvious from the table above, the respondents' occupation spanned across business, civil servant, students, farmers, and others. As shown on the table the highest respondents come from the students with the total of 8 respondents representing 26.6%, the next is the farmers with the total of 6 and representing 20 % of the respondents and businessmen and women have the total of 6 representing 20%, the civil servant have the total of 4 representing 3.3% and lastly the others have the total of 2 representing 6.6% of the respondents.

Table. 5: the identification of Mumuye parts of speech which are responsible for naming person, animal, place, or thing

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	18	60
2.	No	8	26.6
	Total	26	86.6

Source: Field survey, August 2023.

The table above presents the respondents' views in regard to the notion that the Mumuye have the part of speech responsible for naming. The YES option which is 18 out of the 30 respondents is a good attempt which represents 60% of the respondents. This settle the argument, just like every tribe has this part of speech is equivalent to the Mumuye.

Table 6: name of Persons, Places, Things and Animals in Mumuye.

S/NO	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Person	26	86.6
2.	Place	26	86.6
3.	Thing	26	86.6
4.	Animal	26	86.6
5.	Total	104	86.6

Source: Field survey, August 2023

Table. 7: The Mumuye morphemes

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	20	46.6
2.	No	6	20
3.	Total	26	86.6

Source: Field survey, August 2023

Table 8: Reasons for Mumuye tribal names to children

S/NO	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1.	For identification	14	46.6
2.	Cultural propagation	6	20
3.	Event surrounding the birth	6	20
4.	Total	26	86.6

Source: field survey, august 2023.

The table above reveals that the reasons for naming based on this question are three (3) that is names base on identity, cultural propagation and events surrounding the child' birth. Identification option has the total of 14 responses of the respondents representing the total of 46.6% of the respondents. While the Cultural propagation option has 6 responses of the respondents representing 20% of the total respondents and lastly the Events surrounding the birth have 6 also with 20 % respondents. From the above analysis is it oblivious that the Mumuye gives tribal names to their children for identification reason, to be able to identify' who the child is, where the child is coming from etc.

Table 9: The Mumuye noun class

S/NO	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	12	43.3
2	No	9	30
3	Total	22	73.3

Source: Field survey, August 2023.

The above table reveals that even among the 26 respondents out of the 30 only 22 respondents' attempts this question, they are not clear with the question. The YES option has 13 responses representing 43.3 % of the total respondents, while the NO response has 9 representing 30% of the respondents indicating that the Mumuye like the other standard languages it has the noun classes depending on how one interpreted it.

In these studies, we discovered that there are about 13 noun classes of the Mumuye language it can exceed this number but for this study that is the limit.

Table 10: The existence of Mumuye tribal names

S/NO	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	20	66.6
2	No	6	20
3	Total	26	86.6

Source; Field survey, August 2023

The table above reveals that the YES option has 20 responses representing 66.6% of the total respondents, while the NO option has 6 responses representing 20% of the total respondents which indicate that majority of the respondents has a tribal name even thou some are not using but substituting it with another name maybe biblical, English or Hausa names. It also indicates that we have people who still value their tribal names based on this assessment.

Table 11: Tribal names and their meaning.

S/NO	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
1	Name + Meaning	20	66.6
2	No Name	6	20
3	Total	26	86.6

Source: Field survey, August 2023

The NAME + MEANNG indicates the respondents with Mumuye names, and they were able to write down the meaning of their names, of which they have 20 responses representing 66.6 % of the total respondents and the NO NAME option implies that they do not have a tribal name and they are 6 representing 20 % of the total respondents.

This implies that the respondents indeed responded well by attempting the questions.

Table 12: The effects of Mumuye tribal names

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Positively	13	43.3
2	Negatively	6	20
3	Total	19	63.3

Source: field survey, August 2023.

The above table represents the positive and negative effect of the tribal names of the 20 respondents who indicate that they have a tribal name. The POSIVE option has 13 responses representing 43.3% of the total respondents, while the NEGATIVE option has 6 responses representing 20 % of the total respondents. This indicates that the respondents with the positive meaning are greater than the negative respondents and it implies that now people do not just give names for naming seek but in respect to the semantics behind the names, because a good name is better than riches and a name can make and mar a person.

Table 13: contemporary Mumuye people that still wish to use their tribal names.

S/NO	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	20	66.6
2	No	6	20
3	Total	26	86.6

Source: Field survey, August 2023.

The assessment indicates that the YES option has 20 responses representing 66.6% of the total respondents, while the NO option has

6 responses representing 20% of the respondents. This implies that the contemporary Mumuye are still interesting in using their native names.

Table 13: Three things that will happen to Mumuye if we neglect the use of our Native names.

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	The language will go into extinction	13	43.3
2	It will lose its value	6	20
3	Tribal names will be over-taken by alien names	4	13.3
4	Total	23	76.6

Source: Field survey, August 2023

The above table represents three responses to what will happen to Mumuye language if we neglect its use. First, the language will go into EXTINCTION, secondly it will LOSE ITS VALUE and lastly THE NATIVE NAMES WILL BE OVER-TAKEN BY ALIEN NAMES. The Extinction option has 13 responses representing 43.3% of the total respondents, the Loss of value has 6 responses representing 20% of the total respondents and the last one, which is Native names being over-taken by alien names, has 4 responses representing 13.3% of the total respondents. This indicates that the first, which is going into extinction, is the highest and the worst thing that can harm our language when we neglect its usage through just naming.

Discussion of Findings

Mumuye has 13 noun classes which are distinguished from one another by the head marking, singular plural pairings and the Concordia agreement which is said to be the most essential defining features of a noun class, though the predominant prefix of the Mumuye is the 'Laa'. Like other languages, Mumuye has a system of noun classes as Table 1 demonstrates. Generally, every noun belongs to a certain

gender, that is, a pair of two noun classes, one for the singular and for the plural. This does not mean that there are only purely singular classes and purely plural classes. Class 2 for example, contains some nouns that take their plural form and class 1 show both singular and plural form. Moreover, a nominal morphology in Mumuye consists of three elements, namely, the pre-prefix (or augment), the class prefix and the root, as illustrated.

Having seen the behaviours of the nominal classes, Table 2 illustrates the noun classes that derive personal names Mumuye and the glossing. Names are assumed to be nouns and are therefore expected to inhibit the nominal features. This implies that a name is expected to bear three basic characteristics which are concord, noun prefix and singular/plural pairings. Of the three, the first is considered the most essential, thus the concord, since not all nouns have singular and plural pairings. However, this descriptive and comparative tradition fails to make two useful distinctions. The first is between noun classes as morphological classes (head noun) on the one hand and concord on the other, although there are both typological/comparative and language internal reason to make the difference. Aikhenvald (20) asserts that in many noun class languages in the world, head noun is not marked in themselves; language such as French only has concord classes.

In Mumuye, appropriate observation of personal names and proper nouns in general tend to occur in classes that are wrong if the distinction between concordial classes and morphological classes and between the agreement and indexation are not taken care of. Most personal names are morphologically classified in different classes other than one class, although on the other level of concord classes, class attracts personal names and proper nouns much more systematically, in that personal names derived from other classes are always indexed by class of verb prefixes.

Taking into considerations that any personal name/proper name is indexed by the same verb prefix *a-* regardless of the nominal prefixes the name carries, takes us to another level namely “animacy”, that is, whether the ‘object’ referred to by the noun is a human being and/or animal (in contrast to being a non-living thing, like a knife or a stone). An interesting fact about Mumuye noun class systems is that these three features (‘noun class belonging’, ‘grammatical number’, ‘animacy’) are employed differently with noun prefixes and concords respectively.

It has been observed earlier that in case of animate nouns, animacy considerations are paramount and hence an animate noun takes class agreements regardless of the class membership of the noun itself. Moreover, the morphological prefix attached to the nominal root has semantic significance of such a class marker. It is the interest of this to survey how the semantic point of view of the class prefixes counts on personal names that identified that of ‘*Laa*’ and the prefix has both singular and plural forms. The ‘*Laa*’ prefix has so many under it like about God prefix. The ‘*Laa*’ means God, while the ‘*Rokpan*’ means neither slumber nor sleep in names like “*Laarokpan*”. God exist (*Laakigin*), ‘*Laataamto*’; God hears my voice, ‘*Laakpanti*’; God is king, ‘*Laam*’; God’s gift etc.

Furthermore, the question why people give their children those types of names which have semantic component is partly answered by Muzale (98), who observes some names are given to the child to scare death away if at all the family suffers high child motility rate. Similarly, Obeng (98) adds that in Akan society, names of dangerous creatures are employed as the death prevention asset. Akan society believes that every child has biological and spiritual parents. The latter have the power to decide whether the child survives or goes back to the spirit world, hence, s/he dies. Therefore, the death prevention name helps to fool death and thereby make the infant survive. Moreover, in Mumuye, the

findings revealed that names such ‘*Tiginlaa*’ means “The Lord is my shepherd”, ‘*Laarokpan*’; God does not slumber, nor sleep are among the names that are meant to scare death. Death in Mumuye is an inevitable phenomenon in life so the Mumuye believe in death. Some names are given to scare away death in the family while others are given out of ignorant, and death will continue to hunt the family of the people bearing names attach to death.

The morpho-semantic Role of Mumuye Naming Practice

Like many languages, Mumuye has perhaps more elaborate and overt morphological and derivational semantic process for naming, and consequently offers an interesting opportunity to adequately describe and account for morphological and semantic process involved in the naming procedures. The emphasis in this section is to uncover the role of morpho-semantic in name construction in Mumuye. This process involves derivational affixation. In Mumuye, affix morphemes appear as either prefixes, as in noun class marker, or as suffixes as in verbalise. Therefore, Mumuye being an agglutinating language, the process of naming is largely based on the employment of a system of affix that is harmonized by the relevant phonological rules. In the morphological processes, the noun or verbal conjugation is the main source for deriving meaning, and this renders an assumption on how meaning can best be implicated through the linguistic process. Context affects the interpretation of linguistic items such as names, and therefore there can be no semantic theorizing because context determines what can be intuitively said about lexicon in a natural language. Names are thus liked implicative, and the pragmatic is needed to provide the input to implicative. It is not just drawn from the lexical parts alone. Thus, in a name like ‘*Soran*’; Poverty, it is not clear who goes through the hardships or hunger among the child, mother, or somebody else. A name such as ‘*Jaagandi*’_‘a living seed’, though

pragmatically, it implies ‘the one who bring blessing or a blessed and a cheerful giver’ it is equally not clear who puts the situation in generosity; the baby, the parent or it is just the inspiration of a newly born to be the living seed. The morphology of names also has fundamental implications to syntax because names tend to be both words and sentences, for example *Shonvolonikaya*; ‘can gossip kills.’ Most of the names in Mumuye culture result from the process of verbal conjugation, where derivational affixes turn specific categories of morphemes into corresponding morphemes in another category. Derivational affixes thus change the syntactic category of the lexical morphemes to which they are attached, turning verbs into nouns, which then become another source for personal names.

Morpho-semantic factors and Sociolinguistic Reasons behind Name Giving in Mumuye

This section examines the construction of a name (morphemes) and the role they play behind the sociolinguistic reasons. It should be bear in mind that each morpheme carries a meaning. However, the interpretation of the meaning (pragmatic) might differ depending on the morphemes attached to the root/stem. To elaborate this, first, this section discusses various themes that govern name giving in the sociolinguistic situation together with the morphological pursuing of names and secondly, the argument is made afterward concerning how the morpho semantic factors play a role in the sociolinguistic reasons behind name giving.

Themes in the sociolinguistic situation and sub-themes are further discussed depending on the findings and the names selected under a particular theme are analysed morphologically. The morpho-semantic criteria that govern the construction of names in the sociolinguistics principles base on names depicting (i) events and circumstances at birth, (ii) belief (iii) conflict and stress in the family (iv) ethical and social values (v) honour (vi) flora and fauna as well as (vii)

death and survival. Various events and circumstances that occur just before the child's birth play a significant role in the naming of the child. The names discussed under this section are divided into four sections: (a) sequence/manner of birth, (b) time and place at birth, (c) death and survival names, and (d) temporonyms.

These are the names that are given to children taking into consideration the sequencing of children and the mode they were born. Names that are discussed here include ordinal names which include names of the firstborn, second born and last born; twin names, and names of children born after twins. However, the manner of birth in this study does not exactly imply on how a child was born, but rather looks at the order a child was born, and or/if a child was born a twin or breech. When responding to the names given to last born, some respondents showed that in Warm, it is almost a taboo to give a name to the child that implies the last to be born". This is because the community has a traditional belief that children are God given. They believe that only God has the power to decide whether one should have children, and only He has the power to determine how many children one should have. It is therefore improper for anybody to announce that the current child is the last one. This may be taken as a sign of disrespect to the Almighty.

A few names found in the Mumuye speech community denote the time the child was born. The selection of some names seemed somewhat culturally based on the time of delivery such as war season, hunger period, when the mother has reach menopause etc. It was found that some few names such as those in below found in the community were directly related to the time of birth.

Death and survival names are given when the child who loses a parent during birth, or the father dies when the mother is pregnant. VORO prefix in this case means death' which has a negative implication to people. Nevertheless, in other cases VORO- implies augmentative or pejorative senses which has positive or negative

connotation respectively. Example bellow is a name given to a child to honour either a very important person who died or to the child whose family suffers constant child mortality.

The Mumuye community, like any other African society, has its traditional beliefs. Before the coming of the white men from Europe and Middle East, people used to believe in different gods. The family or clan had a deity to take care of it. The findings showed that children are no more named after deities due to the modern belief of one God. The respondents were able to recall few names listed below by declaring that the names belong to old people and the deceased.

The Mumuye believe in the above names, that is the belief in witchcraft, death, God, war, leadership, problems and their local gods or deities. After the coming of the western culture, which initiated the belief in one God as the creator of earth and heaven, many people adopted the western faith. It can be argued that the above names serve the psychological and emotional needs of the family. The ideology pertaining to God as a creator inculcate fear among people that being a giver he should be appreciated and praised on whatever he gives. Moreover, the names that depict the belief of one God are becoming more frequent these days since the findings revealed that man's young generations possess such names. This is due to the ideology embedded in the belief that God can control everything on earth as it is in heaven. So, people believe that by giving such names, they get more blessings and, or they *worship, praise*, and spread God's name.

Conflicts and stress in the family motivate the selection of names that entail the situation. The conflicts or stress may be among the family members or neighbours due to some misunderstanding among the members. That situation can be caused by the accusations of infidelity, barrenness, false accusations and decline of for the findings reveal that names of the above nature have negative connotations. This is due to the situation the child is born in. If the parents had any misunderstandings or they did not like the child's sex

or the relatives or neighbours have some quarrels, some of the above names are *given*. Most of those names serve the interest of the name giver but cause the bearer to be sad. Unfortunately, there is no flexibility in culture that allows an individual to change names. So, once a name is given, it remains with him/her for good. Sometimes, some names with negative connotations are given out of conflicts and stress so that through those names one can serve his/her psychological and emotions. Such names are discussed in the following section.

Names with negative connotation are given out of antagonism, dishonest and mistrust among the family members or neighbours to serve as psychological therapy to the name giver. Unlike Edo and Yoruba names, Ogie (undated), which eliminate names with negative connotations by substituting them with positive ones, in Mumuye names with negative connotation exist.

Some personal *names are* derived from animals, insects, plants, as well as utensils. The study found that these names began as nicknames and were gradually upgraded to proper names. However, these names are said to be pragmatically opaque some of which are even dummy semantically or socially (Muzale, 198). He adds that names in this group have only one level of referential function and lack the semantic function. From the sociolinguistic standpoint among Mumuye culture, it can generally be argued that the morph semantic factors play a great role in the socio-cultural composition of the name to render the meaning intended. However, it is not just a name but the meaning it connotes which is derived from the combination of morphemes and the pragmatic interpretation behind it. The whole circumstances surrounding birth determine the type of names which may sound negative or positive. Although there are names with negative connotation, they cannot include taboos.

Conclusion

The discussion deciphered various themes upon which some names were selected in relation to how Mumuye community experiences their social life together with their morphological patterns. The major themes under which names are categorized are:

- (i) Event and circumstances at birth
- (ii) Beliefs
- (iii) Survival of conflicts and stress in the family
- (iv) Ethical and social values
- (v) Honorific
- (vi) Flora and fauna
- (vii) Death and survival and

The research has also successfully dealt with the morpho-semantics analysis of personal names in Mumuye language. As the study of words formation and meaning, the researcher was able to explore vividly on these components that are operational in word formation process, and it is *meaning*. The researcher discovered that names could make and mar a person, but not, really that a name could have negative and positive meaning. It depends on the bearer. One can bear a name and still not be favoured in life. So good or bad name do not really affect the bearer. But is how well one leaved his or her life that matters most not actually the name.

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