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ARTICLES

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A systemized explanation for vowel phoneme change in the inadmissible phonological structure /VV/ in Zulu

Abstract

This article offers a systematic and comprehensive account of vowel changes that take place in the inadmissible phonological sequence /VV/ within a word in Zulu. Instead of discussing vowel changes in terms of vowel coalescence, vowel elision and glide insertion (as is conventionally done) this approach discusses the vowel changes with regard to the position of the two juxtaposed vowel phonemes on the vowel chart. The resultant form is predictable in terms of five basic combinatory possibilities, namely that the first vowel is a higher vowel than the second; the first vowel is a lower vowel than the second; the first vowel is a front vowel while the second is a back vowel; the first vowel is a back vowel while the second is a front vowel or the two vowels in the inadmissible sequence /VV/ are identical vowels. This article furthermore demonstrates that palatalisation is triggered by a semi-vowel generated by the inadmissible phonological structure /VV/ in the case of diminutives and locatives derived from nouns containing a bilabial or alveolar consonant in the final syllable.

Keywords: vowel changes in the inadmissible phonological structure /VV/ in Zulu, vowel coalescence, vowel deletion, semi-vowel insertion, vowel juxtaposing, vowel hiatus in Zulu

1. Introduction

1.1. Aim

The aim of this article is to offer a holistic and systematic account of vowel changes as a result of the inadmissible phonological structure /VV/ in Zulu (or vowel hiatus resolution as it is commonly referred to).

1.2. Vowel juxtaposing and its analysis

Vowel change owing to the inadmissibility of the structure /VV/ is very common in the Bantu languages. Vowel juxtaposing and the vowel changes that take place owing to this inadmissibility are, however, not discussed systematically and holistically in Zulu grammars and other sources focusing on this grammatical phenomenon. The changes to vowels triggered by the inadmissible phonological sequence /VV/ are generally discussed on an *ad hoc* basis as they appear in particular grammatical structures.

Linguist often discuss vowel change focusing on only one outcome at a time. Harford (1997: 70) discusses vowel changes that take place in Shona under the heading "vowel coalescence". However, she includes at least one instance of vowel elision in her discussion.

Sibanda (2009), on the other hand, discusses vowel changes in the four Nguni languages under the subheadings "coalescence", "gliding", and "vowel deletion". Kadenge (2010) discusses the vowel changes of Nambya under the headings "vowel harmony", "glide formation", "vowel elision", and "vowel coalescence". Mudzingwa and Kadenge (2011: 204) point out that vowel hiatus resolution in Karanga and Nambya occurs in the form of glide formation, elision, vowel coalescence, secondary articulation, and consonant epenthesis. Moreover, they point out that these strategies do not apply to all grammatical structures in the same way. Simango and Kadenge (2014: 81, 85) discuss vowel hiatus resolution in ciNsenga under three subcategories, namely glide formation, secondary articulation, and vowel elision. They too draw attention to the fact that these strategies are dependent on morphosyntactic and phonological considerations.

The discussion of vowel changes has also led to the recognition that in instances where the inadmissible phonological structure /VV/ leads to the generation of a semi-vowel /w/ or /j/, where the juxtaposing of this resultant semi-vowel to a bilabial consonant in turn leads to palatalisation. Herbert (1977: 143 *et seq*.)

asserts that the sound alterations in the case of palatalisation and velarization should not be treated synchronically in the domain of phonological fusion but rather in the domain of morphophonology. Van der Spuy (2014: 73), on the other hand, regards bilabial palatalisation as morphologically conditioned.

The realisation of the patterns of vowel changes taking place in the context of vowel hiatus has led to the identification of underlying vowels in certain instances that trigger sound changes even though such vowels are not present in the surface structure. This is, for instance, true of the underlying vowel phoneme /i/ in the verb stem -*(i)zwa* with an underlying vowel phoneme /i/ as is evident in an example such as, *Abafana bayezwa* (< *ba-ya-izwa*) 'The boys are hearing'. The underlying vowel [i] in such contexts exerts its influence only on a preceding vowel phoneme /a/.

Some scholars refer to the underlying sounds as "ghost sounds" or "ghost segments", as do, for instance, Sibanda (2009) and Mudzinga and Kadenge (2013).

Sibanda's (2011: 132) postulation of a ghost segment /j/ in examples such as *si + a + eza > sa + eza > syeza > seza*, 'she (the old lady – *isalukazi*) came', or (2011: 136) *yakha* (< *i + akha*) 'it (the bird – *inyoni*) builds' or *yoma* (< *i-oma*) 'it (the cloth – *indwangu*) dries' seems to be unfounded. Firstly, /j/ gliding is blocked if the first vowel /i/ is a (subject) morpheme with the syllabic structure /CV/. The same rule as that specified for ciNsenga by Simango and Kadenge, applies to Zulu. They (2014: 90) formulate the rule for vowel elision in ciNsenga as follows:

When glide formation and secondary articulation are blocked, vowel elision is employed. There are two main phonological contexts in which vowels are elided in ciNsenga: (1) when V_1 is /i/ and is preceded by an onset…

The postulation of a form **syeza* is thus erroneous.

Secondly, the glide /j/ in the latter two examples above is the default resultant form due to the vowels *i + a > ya*. Neither the subject morpheme i- nor the verb stems -*akha* or -*oma* contain an underlying (or ghost element) /j/.

In this article the vowel changes that take place as a result of the inadmissibility of the phonological structure /VV/ are also done from a morphophonological perspective.

2. Broad principles of vowel change in the inadmissible sequence /VV/ in Zulu

Posthumus (1978) attempted to analyse vowel change in the inadmissible pho-
nological structure /VV/ within a word holistically instead of discussing the
changes under separate headings such as vowel coalescence, vowel deletion,
and gliding.

The vowel phoneme changes that take place in Zulu owing to the inadmissibility
of the phonological sequence /VV/ can be accounted for systematically con-
sidering four possible vowel combinations, namely (1) a lower vowel followed by
a higher vowel; (2) a front vowel followed by a back vowel; (3) a back vowel fol-
lowed by a front vowel, and (4) a higher vowel followed by a lower vowel. These
four combinatory possibilities are depicted in Fig. 2, 3, 4, and 5 and discussed
below.

Vowel changes that take place as a result of the inadmissible phonological
structure /VV/ can be explained systematically in terms of the vowel phoneme
chart and are governed by five overriding principles, namely the vowel phoneme
strength hierarchy, the tendency of the language to retain a vowel quality by
means of semi-vowel insertion, the order of the vowels in the inadmissible struc-
ture /VV/, the position of the two juxtaposed vowels on the vowel phoneme
chart, and sound changes that take place owing to the resultant semi-vowel
contributing to a second inadmissible phoneme sequence.

The vowel changes accounted for in this article include the following domains of
vowel juxtaposing:

1. Vowel verb stems: (*ba* + *ehla* >) *behla esitimeleni* 'they are disembarking
   from the train'.

2. Locativization of nouns: (*intaba* + *ini* >) *entabeni* 'on/at/from… the mountain'.

3. Diminutive formation: (*inyosi* + *ana* > *inyosana* 'a small bee'.

4. Emphatic pronoun formation: (*zi* + *o* + *na* >) *zona* 'they (the dogs)'.

5. Inclusive quantitative pronoun formation: *abantu* (*ba* + *o* + *nke* >) *bonke* 'all
   the people'.

6. Exclusive quantitative pronoun formation: *imithi* (*i* + *o* + *dwa* >) *yodwa* 'only
   the medicines'.

7. Demonstrative pronoun formation: *uluphondo* (*la* + *ulu* >) *lolu* 'this horn'.

8. Possessive particle/"concord" formation: *ukhezo* (*lu* + *a* >) *lwakhe* 'his/her spoon'.

9. Juxtaposing of the possessive particle/"concord" and the possessor noun: *izinkomo (za* + *isilo* >) *zesilo* 'the king's cattle'.

10. Remote past tense formation: *umfana* (*u* + *a* >) *wabaleka* 'the boy ran away'.

11. Noun class prefix prefixed to vowel verb roots, e.g. class 14. *ubu-* followed by *-ala*: (*ubu* + *ala*) > **ubwala* > *utshwala* 'beer'.

12. Future tense formation (positive): (*siza* + *ukubona* >) *sizo*(*ku*)*bona* 'we will see'.

13. Future tense formation (negative): (*asizi* + *ukubona* >) *asizu*(*ku*)*bona* 'we will not see'.

14. Relative tense formation: *wena* (*ube* + *usebenza* >) *ubusebenza*? 'were you working?'.

15. Consecutive mood agreement formation: *izinyamazane ziphume* (*zi* + *a* >) *zabaleka* 'the antelopes got out and ran away'.

16. Associative copulative formation: (*ngina* + *ibhayisikili* >) *nginebhayisikili* 'I have a bicycle'.

17. Juxtaposing of associative particle to noun: *sihamba* (*na* + *umama* >) *nomama* 'we are walking/going with mother'.

18. Juxtaposing of comparative particle *njenga* to noun: *ugijima* (*njenga* + *ihhashi* >) *njengehhashi* 'he/she runs like a horse'.

19. Juxtaposing of comparative particle *nganga* to noun: *impangele* (*inganga* + *inkukhu* >) *ingangenkukhu* 'a guineafowl is as big as a chicken'.

20. Adjective qualificative particle/"adjective concord" formation: *Izinkunzi* (*a* + *izi* >) *ezinkulu (< ezi-zinkulu)* 'the bulls that are big/the big bulls'.

21. Qualificative particle/"relative concord" formation: *Izinkunzi* (*a* + *izi* >) *ezimanzi* 'the bulls that are wet/the wet bulls'.

22. Qualificative/relative agreement morpheme: *umfana* (*a* + *u* >) *ohlekayo* 'the boy who is laughing'.

The two domains where the systematic vowel changes referred to above do not apply, are instances where the negative morpheme (*k*)*a-* of the indicative mood is juxtaposed to a subject agreement morpheme comprising a vowel only, and the use of an object morpheme in a verb where the object morpheme is preceded

by another morpheme ending on a vowel. (In the case of the imperative mood containing an object morpheme the object morpheme is not preceded by another morpheme, therefore there is no vowel juxtaposing). These two instances of vowel juxtaposing, which do not follow the default rules for vowel change, are illustrated below.

2.1. The indicative negative morpheme (*k*)*a-* followed by a subject morpheme that comprises a vowel only

The juxtaposing of the negative morpheme (*k*)*a-* to a subject morpheme which comprises a vowel only does not lead to the expected vowel changes as explained in the preceding discussion. The expected vowel change, in the case of for instance (*k*)***a*** + ***i*** > (*k*)***e*** does not occur. Instead semi-vowel insertion takes place between the vowel /a/ of the negative morpheme and the vowel of the particular subject morpheme (if the subject morpheme has the phonological structure /V/). Consider the examples:

le nja (***a*** + ***i*** >) ***ayi****lumi* 'this dog does not bite'

amantombazane (***a*** + ***a*** >) ***awa****fundi* 'the girls are not learning'

wena (***a*** + ***u*** >) ***awu****phuzi*? 'you do not drink?'

lo mfula (***a*** + ***u*** >) ***awu****gobozi* 'this river is not flowing'.

2.2. The object morpheme (comprising a vowel only) preceded by another morpheme

The use of an object morpheme which comprises a vowel only in a verb where it is preceded by another morpheme also does not lead to the expected vowel changes. The object morpheme is again preceded by the appropriate semi-vowel in these instances. Consider the examples below:

abafana (*ba* + *ya* + ***i*** + *geza* >) *bay****ayi****geza imoto* 'the boys are washing it, the car'

isiguli (*a* + *si* + ***u*** + *phuzi* >) *as****iwu****phuzi umuthi* 'the patient is not drinking it, the medicine'

(*si* + *zo* + ***a*** + *bala* >) *siz****owa****bala amaqanda* 'we will count them, the eggs'.

3. The vowel strength hierarchy of Zulu

The back vowel phonemes /u/ and /ɔ/ are the strongest vowels while the front vowel phonemes /i/ and /ɛ/ are the weakest vowels in Zulu. This vowel phoneme strength hierarchy is depicted in Fig. 1.
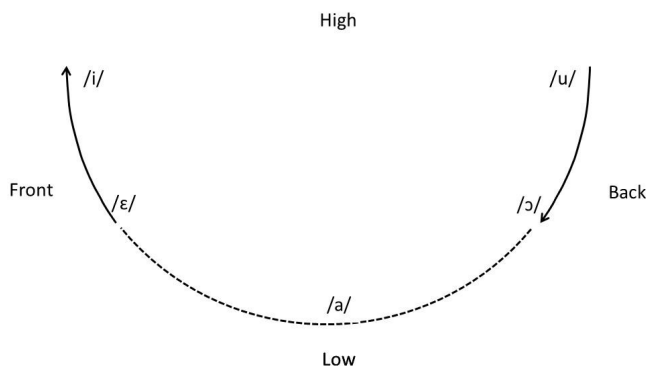
Fig. 1. The strength hierarchy of Zulu vowels

While the two back vowel phonemes /u/ and /ɔ/ in the phoneme sequence /VV/ are generally either retained or their quality retained by the introduction of the semi-vowel /w/, the two front vowel phonemes /i/ and /ɛ/ are generally omitted. In instances where the quality of the front vowel phonemes has to be retained, the semi-vowel /j/ is used for this purpose.

Not only is the position on the vowel phoneme chart of the two individual vowel phonemes involved in the inadmissible sequence /VV/ important, the order of these vowels when juxtaposed in obviously also important: /a/ + /i/ for instance, results in /ɛ/ while /i/ + /a/ will result in either /a/ or /ya/.

The vowel changes that take place owing to the inadmissible structure /VV/ will now be discussed systematically under four broad headings based on the position of the two vowels involved in the inadmissible vowel sequence on the vowel phoneme chart. The discussion is thus based on instances where the first vowel is lower than the second vowel, the first vowel is a front vowel while the second vowel is a back vowel, the first vowel is a back vowel while the second is a front vowel and the first vowel is a lower vowel than the second vowel on the vowel phoneme chart.

4. The combination of a lower vowel phoneme followed by a higher vowel phoneme

In Fig. 2. the origin of the arrow indicates the first vowel phoneme while the point of the arrow indicates the second vowel phoneme within an inadmissible vowel sequence /VV/. The resultant form is indicated on the arrow line in each instance.
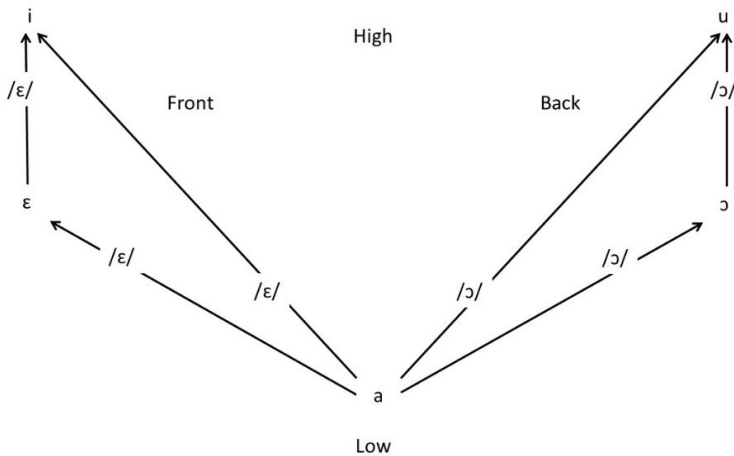
Fig. 2. /VV/ with a lower vowel followed by a higher vowel

If the first vowel phoneme in the sequence /VV/ is a lower vowel phoneme than the second, the phoneme /ɛ/ is the resultant phoneme in the case of the front vowels, while the phoneme /ɔ/ is the resultant vowel phoneme in the case of the back vowels.

Consider the examples below.

4.1. Vowel changes owing to the inadmissible sequence /VV/ involving the front vowels where the first vowel is a lower vowel

a + i > /ɛ/

(1) *Amantombazana* (***a*** + ***i****zwa* >) ***e****zwa umsindo.*

   'The girls hear a noise.'

(2) *Iqanda* (*l****a*** + ***i****sikhukhukazi* >) *l****e****sikhukhukazi lesi likhulu.*

   'The egg of this hen is big.'

(3) *Abantu* (*b****a*- + -***i****za* >) *b****e****za manje.*

   'The people are coming now.'

(4) *UVusi ukhonkotha* (*njeng****a*** + ***i****nja* >) *njeng****e****nja*[1].

   'Vusi barks like a dog.'

---

[1] Note that in this example and in the case of examples such as (9), (11) and (12) the vowel juxtaposing does not take place within a single linguistic word.

(5) *Abantwana badlala ((i)mvula + -ini >) emvuleni.*

 'The children are playing in the rain.'

a + ɛ > /ɛ/

(6) *Abafana (ba- + elula >) belula ucingo.*

 'The boys straighten/stretch the wire.'

ɛ + i > /ɛ/

(7) *Imfene ihlezi ((i)tshe + -ini >) etsheni.*

 'The baboon is sitting at/on … the rock.'

4.2. Vowel changes owing to the inadmissible sequence /VV/ involving the back vowels where the first vowel is a lower vowel

a + u > /ɔ/

(8) *(Ngiza- + u(ku)bona >) Ngizo(ku)bona.*

 'I will see.'

(9)   *Sihamba (na + umama >) nomama.*

 'We are going with mother.'

a + ɔ > /ɔ/

(10) *Obabamkhulu (ba- + -osa >) bosa inyama.*

 'Grandfather and company are frying meat.'

(11) *(Na + obaba >) Nobaba basemsebenzini.*

 'Father and company are also at work.'

ɔ + u > /ɔ/

(12) *(Lo + umuntu >) Lo muntu uyagula*

 'This person is ill.'

5. The combination of a front vowel phoneme followed by a back vowel phoneme

If the first vowel phoneme is a front vowel and the second vowel phoneme a back vowel within the inadmissible sequence /VV/ the resultant phoneme will be the back vowel in question, thus either /u/ or /ɔ/. Consider Fig. 3.
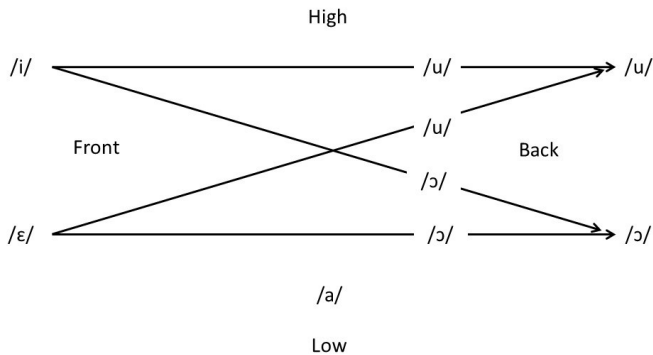
Fig. 3. /VV/ with a front vowel followed by a back vowel

Consider the following examples:

i + u > /u/

(13) (*Angizi* + *u*kuqeda >) *Angizukuqeda namhlanje.*
'I will not finish today.'

i + ɔ > /ɔ/

(14) *Thina* (*si-* + *-osa* >) *sosa inyama.*
'We are frying meat.'

(15) (*Li-* + *-onke* >) *Lonke itafula limanzi.*
'The whole table is wet.'

(16) *Ngibona izimbuzi* (*zi-* + *-odwa* >) *zodwa.*
'I see only the goats.'

ɛ + u > /u/

(17) *Wena* (*ube-* + *u*sebenza >) *ubusebenza kuthangi?*
'Were you working the day before yesterday?'

(18) (*Use-* + *u*yahamba >) *Usuyahamba manje?*
'Were you leaving now?'

(19) (*Uke-* + *u*dlale >) *Ukudlale nabantwana?*
'Do you sometimes play with the children?'

ɛ + ɔ > /ɔ/

(20) *Ngimbone* (*e-* + *-osa* >) *osa inyama.*
'I saw him frying meat.'

In instances where the first vowel phoneme /i/ is not preceded by a consonant but followed by a back vowel, the resultant form will contain the semi-vowel /j/. Consider the example below.

i + ɔ > /yɔ/

(21) *Indoda* (***i*** + ***o****sa* >) ***yo****sa inyama.*

'The man fries meat.'

(22) *Iphelile* (***i*** + ***o****nke* >) ***yo****nke imali.*

'All the money is finish.'

6. The combination of a back vowel phoneme followed by a front vowel phoneme

If the first vowel phoneme is a back vowel and the second vowel phoneme is a front vowel in the inadmissible phonological sequence /VV/ the resultant form will be the front vowel in question, but preceded by the semivowel /w/. (Note however, that the resultant form of the vowel sequence /ɔ/ + /i/ is /wɛ/ and not /wi/ as would be expected).

High

/i/ ← /wi/ — /u/

/wɛ/

Front   Back

/wɛ/

/ɛ/ ← /wɛ/ /owe/ — /ɔ/

/a/

Low
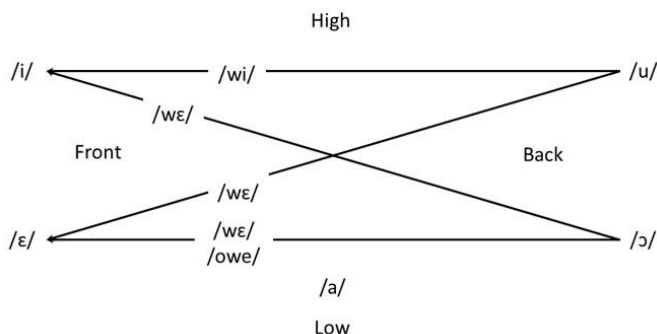
Fig. 4. /VV/ with a back vowel followed by a front vowel

Consider the following examples:

Cu + i > /Cu/

(23) *Ukhozi* (*l****u*** + ***-i****zwa* >) *l****u****zwa igundane.*

'The hawk hears the mouse.'

u + i > /wi/

(24) ((*i*)*zul****u*** + ***-i****ni* >) *ezul****wi****ni*

'in/at … heaven'

Cu + ε > /Cwε/

(25) *Ufudu (l**u-** + **-e**hla >) l**we**hla entabeni.*
    'The tortoise comes down the mountain.'

u + ε > /wε/

(26) *UThembi (**u-** + **-e**thuswa >) **we**thuswa isongololo.*
    'Thembi is scared by a multipede.'

Cɔ + i > /Cwε/

(27) *(isang**o** + **-i**ni >) esang**we**ni*
    'at/on … the gate'

In the case of the relative subject morpheme *o-* of class 1/1a the vowel juxtaposing leads to a semi-vowel being inserted between the /ɔ/ and the vowel of the vowel verb stem. (As with subject morphemes comprising a vowel only the integrity of the subject morpheme is thus not compromised). Consider example (28) below.

ɔ + ε > /ɔwε/

(28) *Umakhi (**o-** + **e**nza >) **owe**nza lo msebenzi ukhuthele.*
    'The builder who does this work is industrious.'

The inadmissible phonological structure */bw/ will always result in the elision of the semi-vowel /w/ regardless of the vowel that follows */bw/ or palatalization will be triggered. Consider examples (29) and (30) below.

(29) *Lobu tshwala (b**u-** + -**e**hla > *****bwe**hla >) **be**hla ngesiphundu.*
    'This beer goes down at the back of the neck./This beer goes down well.'

(30) *Utshani (**bu-** + -**a**la > *****bwa**la >) **ba**la ukuvutha ngoba bumanzi.*
    'The grass refuses to burn because it is wet.'

The phonological structure */lwo/ is also inadmissible and in cases where the resultant form is */lwo/ the semi-vowel /w/ will also be elided as is evident in example (31) below.

(31) *Unyawo lomfana (l**u** + **o**pha > *****lwo**pha >) **lo**pha kabi.*
    'The boy's foot is bleeding badly.'

7. The combination of a higher vowel phoneme followed by a lower vowel phoneme

If the first vowel phoneme is higher than the second vowel phoneme in the phonological sequence /VV/, the resultant phoneme will be either the lowest

phoneme, or the lowest phoneme preceded by the semi-vowel /j/ or /w/. The semi-vowel /j/ realizes in cases where the front vowels are involved and the semi-vowel /w/ in cases where the back vowels are involved in the inadmissible sequence /VV/.
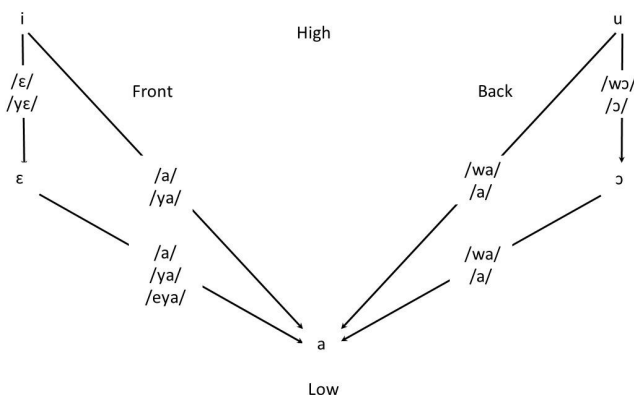
Fig. 5. /VV/ with a higher vowel followed by a lower vowel

The vowel changes that take place in instances where a higher vowel phoneme is followed by a lower vowel phoneme in the inadmissible vowel phoneme sequence /VV/ will now be discussed below with elucidating examples.

7.1. Vowel changes owing to the inadmissible sequence /VV/ involving the front vowels and the vowel phoneme /a/ where the first vowel is a higher vowel than the second vowel

In the case of the front vowels and the vowel phoneme /a/ the default resultant phoneme is the lowest vowel phoneme without the semi-vowel, thus /a/ or /ɛ/.

Ci + a > /Ca/

(32) (*Ngi- + -akha > ngi- + -akha >*) *Ngakha indlu.*

  'I am building a house.'

(33) *ihhashi* (*li- + -a- + mi(na) > li- + -a- + mi(na) >*) *lami*

  'my horse'

Ci + ɛ > /Cɛ/

(34) (*Ngi- + -esaba > ngi- + esaba >*) *Ngesaba isicabucabu.*

  'I fear a spider.'

Cε + a > /Ca/

(35) (*itshe* + *-ana* > *itshe* + *-ana* >) **itsha**na

   'a small stone'

The vowel phoneme /i/ becomes /j/ followed by the particular lower vowel in instances where the /i/ is not preceded by a consonant. Consider examples (36) and (37).

i + ε > /yε/

(36) *Intombi* (*i-* + *-enza* >) **ye**nza itiye.

   'The girl makes tea.'

i + a > /ya/

(37) *Inyoni* (*i-* + *-akha* >) **ya**kha isidleke.

   'The bird builds a nest.'

In example (38) below the first vowel /e/ behaves as if it is not preceded by a consonant owing to the occlusion caused by the preceding bilabial sound, thus generating a semi-vowel /j/ which leads to palatalisation.

ε + a > /ya/

(38) *isithebe* + *ana* > **isithebya*na > *isithetsha*na

   'a small eating mat'

The integrity of the subject morpheme is retrained in example (39) below by the insertion of the semi-vowel /j/ between the subject morpheme and the initial vowel of the vowel verb stem.

ε + a > /eya/

(39) *indoda* **e** + **a**kha > **eya**kha isibaya iyakwazi ukwakha ngamatshe.

   'The man who is building a kraal can build with stone.'

7.2. Vowel changes owing to the inadmissible sequence /VV/ involving the back vowels and the vowel phoneme /a/ where the first vowel is a higher vowel than the second vowel

In the event that the back vowels appear in the inadmissible structure /VV/ and the first vowel phoneme is the higher vowel phoneme, thus /u/ or /ɔ/ the default resultant form is with the semi-vowel, thus /wɔ/ or /wa/.

Cu + a > /Cwa/

(40) *Unwabu* (*lu* + *-akha* >) *lwakha indlu.*

   'The chameleon builds a house.'

(41) (*indlu* + *-ana* >) *indlwana*
  'a small house'

u + a > /wa/

(42) *umlomo* (*u* + *a* + *kho* >) *wakho*
  'your mouth'

In the case of a resultant inadmissible phoneme sequence such as a bilabial consonant followed by the semi-vowel /w/ the resultant form will be /a/ or /ɔ/ owing to the elision of the semi-vowel /w/. The phonological sequence */bw/ (as is evident from examples (43) to (46)) is inadmissible.

bu + a > */bwa/ > /ba/

(43) *Uboya* (*bu-* + *ala* > *bwala* >) *bala ukuphuma ehlweni.*
  'The (animal) hair refuses to come out of the eye.'

bɔ + a > */bwa/ > /ba/

(44) (*ingubo-* + *-ana* > *ingubwana* >) *ingutshana*
  'a small blanket'

bu + ε > /*bwε > /bε/

(45) *Ubulwembu* (*bu-* + *esatshwa* > *bwesatshwa* >) *besatshwa izingane.*
  'The spider web is feared by the children.'

bu + ɔ > /*bwɔ/ > /bɔ/

(46) *Utshani* (*bu-* + *okheka* > *bwokheka* >) *bokheka kalula.*
  'The grass is easy to set fire to.'
  'The grass is flammable.'

The phonological sequence */Cwo/ (as is evident from example (47)) is also in-admissible

Cu + ɔ > */Cwɔ/ > /Cɔ/

(47) *Unyawo* (*lu-* + *opha* > */lwopha* >) *lopha kakhulu.*
  'The foot is bleeding a lot.'

u + ɔ > /wɔ/

(48) *Wena* (*u-* + *-osa* >) *wosa inyama.*
  'You are frying meat.'

Cɔ + a > /Cwa/

(49) (*i*)*sango* + *-ana* >) *isangwana*
  'a small gate'

ɔ + a > /**wa**/

(50) (in**to** + -**a**na >) int**wa**na

  'a small thing'

(51) (ihl**o** + -**a**na >) ihl**wa**na

  'a small eye'

The inadmissible consonant sequence */mw/ in example (52) below triggers palatalisation.

ɔ + a > /a/

(52) (intam**o** + -**a**na > inta**m** + **wa**na > *inta**mwa**na >) inta**nya**na

  'a small neck'

8. The inadmissible vowel sequence /VV/ involving two identical vowel phonemes

One vowel is elided in the event that two of the same vowel phonemes appear in immediate succession, thus $/V_1/ + /V_1/ > /V/$

i + i > /i/

(53) ((**i**)nyon**i** + -**i**ni >) enyon**i**ni

  'at/on … the bird'

ε + ε > /ε/

(54) Ngimfice (**e** + **e**ba >) **e**ba imali.

  'I found him while stealing money.'

a + a > /a/

(55) Amadoda (**a** + -**a**kha >) **a**kha indlu.

  'The men build a house.'

(56) (inj**a** + -**a**na >) inj**a**na

  'a small dog'

9. Palatalisation: The result of a triggered semi-vowel in the inadmissible vowel sequence /VV/

From the foregoing discussion it transpires that the semi-vowel phonemes /w/ and /j/ (which themselves are triggered by the inadmissible phonological structure /VV/), in turn trigger palatalisation because the resultant semi-vowels then

form part of an inadmissible consonant sequence[2]. Palatalisation is primarily caused by the inadmissibility of a bilabial or alveolar consonant followed by a semi-vowel /w/ or /j/ (however it is not restricted to these cases only). Palatalisation takes place in passivization, locativization and diminutive formation and in the case of the class 14 noun class prefix *ubu-* being prefixed to the noun roots *-ala* and *-ani* to form the words *utshwala* (< *ubu-* + *-ala*) and *utshani* (< *ubu-* + *-ani*).

In the event that the first vowel phoneme is /a/ and it is preceded by a bilabial consonant, the resultant form will be /wa/. The resultant inadmissible sequence bilabial + /w/ is then palatalised. Consider the examples below.

mba + a > *mbwa > nja

(57) *ithemba* + *-ana* > *ithemb* + *wana* > **ithembwana* > *ithenjana*

　　'a minor belief'

(58) *isikhumba* + *-ana* > *isikhumb* + *wana* > **isikhumbwana* > *isikhunjana*

　　'a small skin'

When palatalisation is triggered by the passive morpheme *-w-* the passive morpheme is retained after palatalisation has taken place. (See examples (59) and (60) below).

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[2] Palatalisation is not the major focus of this article and therefore instances of "analogous palatalisation" will not be discussed here, suffice it to say that one of the reasons Herbert (1977: 158) suggests is that palatalisation in the case of Zulu passives is probably fully morphologically conditioned in the numerous instances where palatalisation takes place without the semi-vowel /w/ being juxtaposed to a bilabial consonant (consider for instance example 1 below where palatalisation takes place in spite of the passive morpheme -w- no longer appearing immediately after the bilabial consonant /p^h/).

1. *umama ubophel* + *-w-* + *-a* > *ubosh-* + *-el-* + *-w-* + *-a* > *uboshelwa umthwalo*

　　'mother has her load been tied down for her'

In examples 2 to 4 below there is no resultant semi-vowel generated by the inadmissible phonological structure /VV/. The vowel /a/ followed by /a/ generally results in one vowel /a/ being omitted without triggering a resultant semi-vowel, yet in these instances palatalisation still takes place as if a semi-vowel has been generated.

2. *iqatha* + *-ana* > *iqath* + [*y*]*ana* > **iqat[y]ana* > *iqashana*

　　'a small chunk (of meat)'

3. *intaba* + *-ana* > *intab* + [*y]ana* > **intab[y]ana* > *intatshana*

　　'a small mountain/hillock'

4. *isikhumba* + *-ana* > *isikhumb* + [*y]ana* > **isikhumb[y]ana* > *isikhunjana*

　　'a small hide/skin'.

m + w > *mw > nyw

(59) *Ingane* (*ilum + w + e > *ilumwe >*) *ilunywe yinja.*

'*The* child was bitten by a dog.'

mb + w > *mbw > njw

(60) *Impala* (*ibamb + w + e > *ibambwe >*) *ibanjwe yingwenya.*

'The impala was caught by a crocodile.'

In morphological environments not involving the passive morpheme, the gener-
ated semi-vowel phonemes /j/ and /w/ are generally omitted after palatalisation.
Consider for instance examples (61) to (68) below.

mo + i > *mwe > *nywe > nye

(61) *(u)mlomo + -ini > emlom + weni > *emlomweni > *emlonyweni > emlonyeni*

'in/on the mouth'

bo + a > *bwa > tsha

(62) *ingubo + -ana > ingub + wana > * ingubwana > *ingutshwana > ingutshana*

'a small blanket'

mbu + a > *mbwa > nja

(63) *ithumbu + -ana > ithumb + wana > *ithumbwana > *ithunjwana > ithunjana*

'a small bowel/gut'

bi + a > *bya > tsha

(64) *inkabi + -ana > inkab + yana > *inkabyana > *inkatshyana > inkatshana*

'a small ox'

be + a > *bya > tsha

(65) *isithebe + -ana > isitheb + yana > *isithebyana > *isithetshyana > isithetshana*

'a small eating mat'

pi + a > *pya > tsha

(66) *ikopi + -ana > ikop + yana > *ikopyana > *ikotshyana > ikotshana*

'a small mug'

mpe + a > *mpya > ntsha

(67) *impempe + -ana > impemp + yana > *impempyana > impentshyana > impentshana*
/ impempana

'a small whistle'

phu + a > *phwa > sha

(68) *impuphu* + *-ana* > *impuph* + *wana* > **impuphwana* > *impushana*

 'a small quantity of maize meal'

If the consonant before the resultant semi-vowel is an alveolar preceded by a nasal, palatalisation may or may not occur. Consider examples 69 and 70 below.

ndu + a > ndwa > ndwa / njwa

(69) *umsundu* + *-ana* > *umsund* + *wana* > **umsundwana* > *umsunjwana / umsundwana*[3]

 'a small earthworm'

ndo + a > ndwa > ndwa / njwa / nja

(70) *isondo* + *-ana* > *isond* + *wana* > **isondwana* > *isonjwana / isonjana / isondwana*

 'a small wheel'

In instances where an alveolar sound occurs before the resultant semi-vowel, palatalisation takes place regularly. Consider examples (71) and (73) below.

nto + a > *ntwa > ntshwa / ntsha

(71) *umkhonto* + *-ana* > *umkhont* + *wana* > **umkhontwana* > *umkhontshwana / umkhontshana*

 'a small *assegaai*'

ti + a > *tya > tsha

(72) *ikati* + *-ana* > *ikat* + *yana* > **ikatyana* > *ikatshana*

 'a small cat'

the + a > *thya > sha

(73) *intethe* + *-ana* > *inteth* + *yana* > **intethyana* > *inteshana*

 'a small locust'

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[3] While this article does not focus on palatalisation per se, it became apparent that even Zulu mother tongue speakers differ in terms of the acceptability of some variant forms of the diminutives that may occur with or without palatalisation. I am indebted to my Zulu speaking colleagues, Mr. Themba Madingiza, Dr. Ike Mndawe, Ms. Nomusa Sibiya and Mr. Dumisani Sibiya for their feedback on the acceptability of alternative forms of the variant forms of diminutives. From this quick survey it transpired that they all accepted the pala-talised versions of the diminutives indicated in examples (69) and (70) while some of them accepted the unpalatalised forms as well. In the case of example (71), one colleague accepted the unpalatalised variant *umkhontwana* as being grammatical while three accepted *umkhontshwana* as being grammatical and one also accepted *umkhontshana* as being grammatical.

The alveolar nasal /n/ followed by the resultant semi-vowel /j/ will inevitably result in the palatalised /ny/. Consider examples (74) and (75) below.

ni + a > nya

(74) *inyoni* + *-ana* > *inyon* + *yana* > *inyonyana*

'a small bird'

ne + a > nya

(75) *impukane* + *-ana* > *impukan* + *yana* > *impukanyana*

'a small fly'

10. Instances of the inadmissible sequence /VV/ not resulting in the default vowel changes

Instances where the inadmissible phonological structure /VV/ does not change as explicated above, are those instances where such change would obviate the meaning or drastically alter it. Such a change would render the end result unrecognizable. Consider in this regard the negative forms below.

a + u > awu

(76) *Wena (a- + -u- + -hambi >)* **awu**hambi ≠ **ohambi.*

'You are not walking/going.'

a + i > ayi

(77) *Indoda (a- + -i- + -boni >)* **ayi**boni ≠ **eboni.*

'The man does not see.'

a + a > awa / aka

(78) *Amadoda (a- + -a + -gijimi >)* **aw**agijimi /**aka**gijimi ≠ **agijimi.*

'The men do not run.'

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Nominal phrase structure in Ikyaushi (M.402)

Abstract

Linguistic treatments of Bantu languages have traditionally focused on broadly historical/comparative studies or on prototypical characteristics of the family, such as the nominal class system, the complexity of the verbal TAM system, or the tonal system. Consequently, far less attention has been placed upon the nominal phrase as a syntactic unit. To this end, Rugemalira (2007) proposes greater emphasis on Bantu morphosyntax generally. As such, the present study – situated within a broader discussion of the Bantu NP (cf. Chitebeta 2007, Godson & Godson 2015, Lusekelo 2009, Makanjila 2019, Möller 2011, Ondondo 2015, Rugemalira 2007) – builds upon Spier (2016, 2020, 2021) and introduces the first descriptive account of the nominal phrase in Ikyaushi, an underdocumented linguistic variety spoken in the Republic of Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The data for this study, which arrive from fourteen narratives shared orally by male and female native speakers of the grandparental generation, indicate that seven distinct elements may co-occur with the nominal, but utterances with between one and three co-occurring adnominals are far more frequently attested and more straightforwardly comprehensible to speakers.

Keywords: nominal phrase, noun classes, morphosyntax, adnominal modifiers, Bantu languages

1. Introduction

The Aushi[1] are a matrilocal, matrilineal ethnolinguistic group located in the Lwapula Province of the Republic of Zambia and in the (Haut-)Katanga Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo. They speak a linguistic variety (M.402), the endonym for which is *Ikyaushi*, related to varying degrees to others in close geographic proximity, though particularly to Bemba (M.42), Taabwa (M.41), and Bwile (M.401)[2]. The four are grouped together in Maho (2009) and, following the conventions of Bantu classification, indicates both that Bemba and Taabwa are more distinct from the others and also that the true status of Aushi and Bwile has yet to be determined with confidence.

Nonetheless, given the extremely limited scholarship on Ikyaushi, the present study focuses specifically upon the structure of the nominal phrase and is based on two continuous summers of fieldwork among seven different speakers[3] in Mansa Town and the surrounding villages of Matanda, Kabunda, and Mabumba, all of which are located in the Lwapula Province of the Republic of Zambia. These speakers ranged in age from 57 to 67 ($\bar{x}=60$, $M=60$), which corresponded roughly to the grandparental generation. Two of the speakers were men, and the remaining five were women. Although chain-sampling was ultimately used in recruiting participants, specific attention was paid to equitable distribution among demographic factors (age, gender, etc.), geographic location,

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[1] Other names attested include the following in alphabetical order: Avaushi, Aushi, Avaushi, Bahushi, Bahusi, Baousi, Baoussi, Batushi, Ba-Usi, Umwausi, Ushi, Usi, Uzhil, Vouaoussi, Wa-uzhi, Waushi, and Wa-Usi. Many of these show clear phonetic and/or orthographic influence from the L1 of the speaker(s) who transcribed the names. However, the term *Aushi* is used here to represent both the singular and plural endonyms (*Umwaushi* and *Abaushi*).

[2] Marten & Kula (2008) argue that all four of these members constitute a single dialect continuum, while Ohannessian & Kashoki (1978) state that the M.40 family is a grouping of language "clusters". On the other hand, speakers of Ikyaushi vehemently insist that their linguistic variety is distinct from i.a. Bemba and, despite linguistic similarities at every modular level, it is not the place of an outside scholar to deny the self-concept of others; consequently, here it is referred to simply as a "linguistic variety" as opposed to a "language" or "dialect".

[3] By request of the participants, the author would like to acknowledge the personal contribution of the following speakers for sharing their time and stories: Leonard J. Mumba, David Kalobwe Maluba, Agnes Kaunda Chiwamine, Rosemary Mushota, Scolastica Kalengule Chiwamine, Exildah Mwansa Musoka, and Sarah Mweba. Similarly, two local teachers (Barnabas Chabala and Rose Kibwe) and one radio producer (Martin Kunda) provided additional support.

and topics of discussion. While women are significantly overrepresented, for instance, the total recording time was equivalent, indicating that the female participants provided a greater number of recordings, but that each individual recording was far shorter than those of their male counterparts.

To this end, the participants shared a total of fourteen fictional stories and informational narratives on culturally salient topics, all of which serve as the corpus of data on which the present study is based. As such, although the exemplars provided are not from spontaneously occurring speech, they are still entirely organic, as prompts were not provided for the stories or narratives, and all were generated individually by speakers on their own terms and based on their own personal interests. For example, although the author was not interested *a priori* in issues of traditional (sexual) education or a young lady's first menstruation, these were topics selected and relayed by some of the female participants; on the other hand, the male participants provided more trickster tales and a historical account of the origins of the Aushi from their original homeland in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

As such, this article is divided into three additional parts. Section 2 provides both a general overview of research discussing the Aushi people and language, and also a more detailed literature review of the nominal phrase in Bantu linguistics. While the more ethnographically informed scholarship is not of immediate relevance for the present study, it is included here for the reader, as Ikyaushi remains a heavily underdocumented linguistic variety. Section 3 presents the findings of this study and offers a discussion of the results, particularly as it concerns the combinatory possibilities of and restrictions on co-occurring elements in the nominal phrase. Finally, Section 4 summarizes the contribution of the present study and introduces areas for further research in this field.

2. Literature review

The following two sections provide more detailed background on both the published literature on the Aushi people, culture, and language, and also on prior studies of the nominal phrase in other Bantu languages in East and East-Central Africa. Each language is referenced according to its classification in Maho (2009), and their glossonyms are provided without the nominal class prefix.

2.1. The Aushi people and language

The Aushi have been recognized historically for their reliance upon slash-and-burn

agriculture (*kitemene*) and for their affinity and aptitude for fishing. Today, however, the Aushi are more commonly found working in the (copper) mining industry or, in the case of Mansa Town, selling produce and household wares. Nonetheless, it is unclear precisely how large this ethnolinguistic group is, given the unreliability of the government census results and the wildly different estimates provided in the extant literature; as a result, their reported (ethnic) population size ranges from 20,000 to 200,000.

Prior scholarship on the Aushi people is generally limited to short ethnographic--style accounts from geographic explorers, businessmen, and anthropologists, the latter of whom almost always made quite cursory references to the Aushi. Perhaps the earliest reference is found in personal journals from exploration of the continent by Europeans during the mid-19th century, particularly from Victor Giraud (1890), whose characterization of the Aushi was far from complimentary. Other early references are found in the administrative records of the British South Africa Company (1899) and Chesnaye (1901), a manager of the Tanganyika Concessions Ltd. These were slightly more objective but still remarkably brief.

On the other hand, the strictly anthropological literature presents more accurate characterizations of Aushi life. Barnes (1926) provides a description of iron-smelting practices, explains the process of establishing and using the kilns, and introduces some of the terminology used to identify each part of the kiln and stage of the smelting process. Philpot (1936) takes as his primary goal a discussion of the deity Makumba[4] but also presents a timeline for tribal leadership succession and a list of taboos and rituals associated with religious practices. Whiteley (1951) offers the first truly ethnographic account of the Aushi, including them in a chapter entitled *The Bemba and related peoples*. Before discussing agriculture, hunting, and fishing, age-sets, and political organization, he proposes that the Aushi are a subgroup of the Bemba, a view that has impacted the perception not only of the distinctiveness of the ethnic group but also the uniqueness of their linguistic variety. Finally, Kay (1964) presents the economic structure of a single village, i.e. of Chief Kalaba, and provides quantitative and qualitative data concerning everyday tasks in agriculture, fishing, hunting, and domestic activities.

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[4] Unlike what is described in Philpot (1936), native speakers insist that Makumba was never a physical presence or deity. One stated, for example, that "[i]t's a spirit that perhaps [occurs] just once or twice in a year, but what I know about that is that, so, when there's an earth tremor, the belief is that it's Makumba – that the spirit is moving to Congo or something like that. They say it's more intense on the water".

Of particular interest for the present study, however, is the extant scholarship concerning Ikyaushi. The earliest resource (Doke 1933) is a list of words collected during a two-day fieldwork trip, completed with the assistance of two young boys, to complete an encyclopedic entry in Johnson (1919-1922). It was a full 50 years later that Kankomba and Twilingiyimana (1986) collected another list of words with the objective of providing more phonologically accurate data, for instance by marking tone. More recently, Ilunga (1994) wrote and defended his graduate-level thesis on the verbal phrase at the Institute Supérieur Pédagogique de Lubumbashi. Intending to fill a larger gap in the phonological understanding of Ikyaushi, e.g. in contrast to neighboring CiBemba, Bickmore (2018) studied the tonological rule-ordering and constraints on the subjunctive verbal mood. Finally, Spier (2020) presented the first descriptive grammar, dictionary, and collection of texts in Ikyaushi. Nonetheless, there have not yet been any specific accounts of the nominal phrase in this particular linguistic variety, nor have the data previously analyzed, excluding in Spier (2016, 2020, 2021), been based on a corpus of culturally salient topics, i.e. as opposed to elicited sentences, verbal paradigms, or lists of words.

2.2. Research on the Bantu nominal phrase

Due in large part to the most recognizable features of Bantu languages, the vast majority of morphosyntactic scholarship on such languages tends to focus primarily either upon the nominal class and concord systems or on the complex morphology of verbal phrases, including numerous (often phonologically-marked) tense and aspectual distinctions, infixed object markers, derivational affixes, etc. Moreover, as Lusekelo (2009) notes, descriptive grammars of Bantu languages have historically either only described nominal modifiers in isolation from one another or have provided incredibly brief overviews of the nominal phrase in simply one or two pages. It is, thus, unsurprising that Africanists have "taken up" Rugemalira's (2007) call to action to consider more closely the syntactic structure of the nominal phrase and to discover if any generalizations or implications are possible for Bantu languages more broadly. To this end, a few of such studies are presented below for consideration.

For his presentation of the underlying phrase structure for the nominal phrase in Bantu languages, Rugemalira (2007) considered data from a range of languages, including Mashami (E.62a), Swahili (G.41-43), Nyambo (JE.21), Ha (JD.66), Nyakyusa (M.31), Safwa (M.25), and Sukuma (F.21), ultimately concluding that the nominal serves as the head of the phrase, which is followed by a possessive or pronominal determiner before any other modifiers and can optionally be

preceded by a demonstrative pronoun (if not already located post-nominally) and the adverbial 'each/every' which he glosses, following Polomé (1967), as a "distributive".

Godson and Godson (2015) analyzed the nominal phrase in Uru (E.622d), a dialect of Chagga in Tanzania, and confirmed the identical ordering provided by Rugemalira (2007). In his examination of the determiner phrase in Makonda (P.23) of Tanzania and Mozambique, Makanjila (2019) found that all nominal modifiers, excluding the demonstrative pronoun, occur post-nominally. The demonstrative, however, can appear both pre- and post-nominally without rendering the phrase agrammatical. Additionally, the possessive pronouns appear before other post-nominal modifiers, relative clauses are found after any nominal modifier, and only the quantifier -ohe 'all' is realized preferentially before the demonstrative *if* it arises post-nominally.

Chitebeta (2007) generally follows the same template but remarks that pre- and post-nominal demonstratives are possible in Tonga (M.64), while only the latter is grammatical in Lenje (M.61). Similarly, she suggests in the proposed phrase structure rule that possessives can also appear pre- or post-nominally, although this is not exemplified fully in the body of the thesis. All other adnominal modifiers appear after the head, and their placement is regulated according to the other elements present.

In Möller's (2011) analysis of Kwere (G.32), it is determined that all modifiers are post-nominal, and the demonstrative seems to be most closely bounded to the head, even in the presence of a possessive pronoun. Only the adverbial *chila* 'each/every' appears in pre-nominal position, and seven possible patterns characterize the data, though no phrase structure rule is offered nor a discussion of co-occurrence is undertaken. In contrast to the other studies, Möller (2011) presents the concord system as bifurcated into the "noun class prefix" and the "agreement class prefix". Such a distinction is interesting but unnecessary for the present study.

Ondondo (2015) argues for an entirely different underlying phrase structure altogether in Kisa (JE.32), a dialect of Luhya spoken in western Kenya, agreeing solely with the previous scholars that the adverbial *buli* 'each' always appears before the head of a phrase. On the other hand, post-nominal demonstratives indicate (non-)proximity, while pre-nominal demonstratives serve a discourse--pragmatic function in which the noun is emphasized, i.e. 'these friends' vs. '*such* friends'. Three entirely different syntactic slots are provided for quantifiers, two of which are reserved for the so-called *all*-quantifier and the *only*-quantifier, and

one particular slot is allocated for the associative phrase.

Finally, Lusekelo (2009) focuses on written and spoken sources exclusively in Nyakyusa (M.31) and is responding directly to Rugemalira (2007), particularly because the data used in the former's study contradict the latter's conclusions on more than one occasion, particularly as it concerns the placement of and the hierarchical relationship between the demonstrative and the possessive modifiers, ultimately remarking that both of these modifiers, in addition to the nominal augment, function as markers of definiteness.

Nonetheless, there are competing schemata offered to represent the preferential and/or underlying ordering of elements in the nominal phrase. Consequently, in Table 1 are listed some of the proposals discussed in the aforementioned studies. Although every language has idiosyncratic meanings attached, for instance, to the syntactic ordering of the elements in the nominal phrase, there are some clear commonalities. First, half of the proposals suggest that a prenominal demonstrative is always grammatical. Second, all of the proposals clarify that a possessive and/or a demonstrative are the most closely bounded to the head. Third, the proposals that present the relative clause or associative phrase seem to indicate that these occur most frequently at the rightmost edge of the phrase, excluding in Ondondo (2015). Finally, all of the proposals indicate that there is relative freedom for many of these elements, as they appear below as clusters surrounded by parentheses/round brackets.

TABLE 1. Some proposals for nominal phrase structure

Source	Pre-	Head	Post-
Ondondo (2015)	Distr	Noun	Poss+Quant+Num+Adj+Assoc+Dem+Quant['all']+Quant['only']
Möller (2011)	Distr	Noun	(Num/Dem)+Poss+Adj+(Loc/Num/Poss/Assoc)
Chitebeta (2007)	Distr Poss Conj	Noun	(Poss/Adj/Dem/Num/Quant)
Makanjila (2019)	Dem	Noun	(Poss/Quant)+(Dem/Adj)+(Num/Rel)
Godson & Godson (2015)	Dem Distr	Noun	(Poss/Dem)+Num+(Ord/Assoc)+(Quant, Adj, Rel)+Inter
Rugemalira (2007)	Dem Distr	Noun	(Poss/Dem)+Num+(Ord/Assoc)+(Quant, Adj, Rel)+Inter
Lusekelo (2009)	Distr	Noun	(Poss/Dem)+(Num/Quant/Adj)+(Inter/Rel)

3. Findings and discussion

Although the existence of every lexical category can be supported on the basis of four interrelated sets of criteria (the semantic, morphological, syntactic, and discourse-pragmatic), the nominal phrase in Ikyaushi is most straightforwardly analyzed according to its morphosyntactic behavior. As such, the nominal – as a lexical category – morphologically consists minimally of a root and a nominal class prefix, which may optionally be accompanied by the corresponding augment and/or utilize prefix-stacking, as in (1a-c), respectively. It has been suggested by scholars for quite some time (see e.g. Bokamba 1971, Hyman & Katamba 1993, Choti 2008, etc.) that the use of the augment may indicate definiteness, but this has neither been confirmed nor rejected in Ikyaushi as a possibility. As such, each nominal exemplar could reasonably be glossed with both the definite and indefinite determiners. One pattern that did emerge, however, was that post-nominal adjectivals infrequently retained the augment.

(1)   a. (*i*)*ki-buumba*   b. *ubw-aato*   c. *utu-ka-fund-ish-a*
         7CL-soil   14CL-canoe   13CL-12CL-teach-CAUS-FV
         'wall'   'canoe'   'unsatisfactory teacher'

Additionally, the choice of the nominal class prefix is, in most cases, not simply an arbitrary decision, as both the prefix and the augment carry semantic material necessary to understanding the utterance. For instance, the first and second classes are perhaps the most time-stable, as they refer cross-inguistically in Bantu languages to human or human-like roles; classes three and four, to flora and naturally occurring phenomena, though not exclusively; etc. This does not mean, however, that every root can be accompanied by every nominal class prefix, resulting in a different meaning. Nonetheless, (2) below presents six lexemes derived from the same underlying root, albeit with the augment and prefix of six different nominal classes, though (2a) and (2b) arguably represent a single exemplar, as they constitute one of the most straightforward singular-plural pairings[5].

(2)   a. *umu-ntu*   b. *aba-ntu*
         1CL-entity   2CL-entity
         'person' (human entity')   'people' (human entities')

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[5]   These pairings include the following: 1/2, 1a/2, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 8/6, 9/6, 9/10, 10/2, 12/13, 14/6, 15/4, and 15/6. Unsurprisingly, class 6. (*ama-*) is the most productive marker of plurality.

c. *utu-ba-ntu*
13CL-2CL-entity
'small humans' (pseudo-human entities)

d. *ubu-ntu*
14CL-entity
'humanity' (abstract human entity)

e. *iki-ntu*
7CL-entity
'thing' (non-human entity)

f. *aka-ntu*
13CL-entity
'thing' (small, [non-]human entity')

Furthermore, some perform a discourse-pragmatic function, in which certain inherent qualities are conveyed through a small set of prefixes, some of which belong to the nominal class system, that does not simply specify the grammatical number- and gender-marking typically indicated through the prefixes. For instance, *ka-* refers to shrewdness; *ba-*, to a superior level of respect; *shi-*, to maleness; *na-*, to femaleness; *utu-*, to a lack of development, immaturity, or another negative attribute to demonstrate shortcoming of some sort; and *we-*, to a phonetically reduced, cliticized vocative for the second-person singular (<*weebo*). These are each represented respectively below in (3a-h).

(3) a. *ka-ka-lulu*
12CL-12CL-rabbit
'clever rabbit'

b. *ba-n-sofu*
HON-9CL-elephant
'respectable elephant'

c. *shi-fwe*
MASC-1PL.POSS
'our father'

d. *na-kulu*
FEM-big
'grandmother'

e. *na-m-fumu*
FEM-9CL-chief
'chieftess'

f. *utu-boowa*
13CL-mushroom
'immature mushrooms'

g. *ba-na-ka-bu-umba*
HON-FEM-12CL-14CL-clay
'respectable female creator'

h. *we=mw-aume*
2SG=1SG.man
'(you) man!'

However, the syntactic criteria for the nominal phrase are slightly more complex: It must be able to take i.a. adjectival modifiers, numeral and non-numeral quantifiers, demonstrative and possessive pronouns, and the periphrastic genitive/associative phrase. Finally, it must be able to serve as the subject or object of reference as in (4) and (5), respectively; must be able to be coordinated through the use of the conjunction *na*, as in (6); and, although the nominal serves as the head of the phrase, must also be replaceable through ellipsis or pronoun substitution.

(4) a. *fweebo   uyu   mu-ntu   ta-tu-mw-ishib-e*
1PL.PRON 1CL.DEM   1CL-entity   NEG-1PL-3SG-know-FV
'[And] us, we don't know this person.'

b. *neebo*   *n-di*   *mw-ina*   *kwelu*
1SG.PRON 1SG-COP   1CL-clan anthill
'Me, I am [a member of the] anthill clan.'

(5) a. *n-∅-dee-ku-mon-a (weebo)*   b. *ba-∅-lee-i-mon-a*
1SG-PRES-PROG-2SG-see-FV (2SG)   3PL-PRES-PROG-REFL-see-FV
'I am seeing you [right now].   'They are seeing themselves (right now).'

(6) *im-busa*   *shi-bili*   *im-busa*   *y-a*   *kw-a*   *na-mayo*
9CL-*imbusa*   9CL-two   9CL-*imbusa* 9CL-ASSOC 17CL-ASSOC FEM-mother

na   *im-busa*   *y-a*   *kw-a*   *shi-taata*
and   9CL-*imbusa* 9CL-ASSOC 17CL-ASSOC MASC-father

'[There are] two [types of traditional] education: education for girls and education for boys.'

It should be noted, however, that the pronoun resulting from this substitution is unable to accept the modifiers as a typical nominal could. For classes one and two and any non-human, anthropomorphic referents, such substitution would require the corresponding independent pronoun for animates; for all other classes, this would be the corresponding demonstrative pronoun. The former is illustrated in (7a-b) below; the latter, in (7c-d).

(7) a. *nomba*   *n-∅-ko-mon-a*   *uyu*   *uyu* *mu-ntu*
now   1SG-PRES-15CL-see-FV   1CL.DEM 1CL.DEM 1CL-entity

imi-bebe   *y-akwe*
3CL-behavior   3CL-3SG.POSS
'Now I see this [person], this person's behavior.'

b. *na*   *uyu*   *a-a-fik-a*
and 1CL.DEM 3SG-PST-arrive-FV
'And [then] this [Rabbit] arrived.'

c. *iyo*   *∅-kilemba*   *a-∅-lee-fway-a*   *iyo*
4CL.DEM 1CL-bean   3SG-PRES-PROG-want-FV 4CL.DEM
'Those beans, s/he wants those [beans].'

d. *ki-suma*   *mu=kwai*   *kuti* *na-∅-bomb-a* *uyu*
7CL-good 1CL-respectful.TERM able 1SG-PRES-work-FV 3CL.DEM
'That's fine, sir. I can do this [work].'

Finally, the object of reference can be replaced by an interrogative, though such constructions occurred with (apparently) far greater infrequency in the narratives collected for the present study than in those previously cited. In fact, this particular construction only arose in exemplars like (8) and (9).

(8) *mu-ø-lee-fway-a*   *tu-kit-e*   *shaani*
2PL-PRES-PROG-WANT-FV   1PL-DO-SBJV.FV   how
'What do you want us to do?'

(9) *atini naani*
PRAGCOP who
'[They asked,] who is [it]?'

Nonetheless, the full nominal, verbal, syntactic, and pronominal concord system is reproduced in Table 2 for the readers' consideration.

Importantly, Rugemalira (2007: 135) notes that "[t]he syntactic criteria pertain to the positions that an element may occupy in the noun phrase as well as the possibilities of, and limits on, co-occurrence of an element with other elements". This qualifier is quite significant, as the total number of possible, distinct elements in the nominal phrase depends upon those which are already present and how their combinatory capabilities permit or prevent other elements from occurring in a certain syntactic slot. To this end, the data consulted for this article indicate that up to seven distinct elements, excluding the associative phrase, may co-occur within a singular nominal phrase, though with an important caveat: Even though there were also naturally occurring instances of four distinct elements, those with one, two, or three were the most frequently represented in the corpus. Nonetheless, this does not mean that only four lexical items may be found together, as, for instance, more than one adjectival or associative phrase could be present within the same nominal phrase, as in (10) and (11) below.

(10) *iki-tabu*   *ky-andi*   *ki-mo*   *ki-kulu*
7CL-book   7CL-1SG.POSS   7CL-one   7CL-big

     ki-suma   *saana*   *ky-a*   *iki-ngeleshi*
7CL-good   very   7CL-ASSOC   7CL-English
'my one big, really good English book'

(11) *iki-tabu*   *ky-a*   *iki-ngeleshi*   *ky-a*   *umw-ana*
7CL-book   7CL-ASSOC   7CL-English   7CL-ASSOC   1CL-child

     mu-suma   *w-a*   *im-fumu*   *y-a*   *bw-aushi*
1CL-good   1CL-ASSOC   9CL-chief   9CL-ASSOC   14CL-Aushi
'the Aushi people's chief's good child's English book'

In fact, this is to be expected, as Rijkhoff (2002: 23) notes that the grammatical complexity found in naturally occurring speech tends not to be as great as that of their written counterparts. Thus, while the previous two exemplars were verified by more than one native speaker as grammatical and logical, it should be

TABLE 2. Concord system in Ikyaushi

Class	Nominal Morphology		Verbal Morphology		Syntactic		Demonstrative Pronouns			
	Augment	Prefix	Subject	Object	Relative	Associative	Immediate	Proximal	Medial	Distal
1	u	mu	n- u- a-	-n-/-m- -ku- -mu-/-mw-	uu-	wa (u-a)	uno	uyu	uyo	ulya
2	a	ba	tu- mu- ba-	-tu-/-tw- -mi- -ba-	aba-	ba (b-a)	bano	aba	abo	balya
3	u	mu	u-	-u-	uu-	wa (u-a)	uno	uyu	uyo	ulya
4	i	mi	i-	-i-	ii-	ya (i-a)	ino	iyi	iyo	ilya
5	i	shi	li-	-li-	ishi-	lya (li-a)	lino	ili	ilo	lilya
6	a	ma	i-	-i-	aya-	ya (i-a)	yano	aya	ayo	ilya
7	i	ki	ki-	-ki-	iki-	kya (ki-a)	kino	iki	ikyo	kilya
8	i	fi	fi-	-fi-	ifi-	fya (fi-a)	fino	ifi	ifyo	filya
9	i	N	i-	-i-	ii-	ya (i-a)	ino	iyi	iyo	ilya
10	i	N	shi-	-shi-	ishi-	sha (sh-a)	shino	ishi	isho	shilya
11	u	lu	lu-	-lu-	ulu-	lya (li-a)	lino	ulu	ulo	lulya
12	a	ka	ka-	-ka-	aka-	ka (k-a)	kano	aka	ako	kilya
13	u	tu	tu-	-tu-	utu-	twa (tu-a)	tuno	utu	uto	tulya
14	u	bu	bu-	-bu-	ubu-	bwa (bu-a)	buno	ubu	ubo	bulya
15	u	ku	ku-	-ku-	uku-	kwa (ku-a)	kuno	uku	uko	kulya
16	Ø	pa	—	—	upa-	pa (p-a)	pano	apa	apo	palya
17	Ø	ku	—	—	uku-	kwa (ku-a)	kuno	uku	uko	kulya
18	Ø	mu	—	—	umu-	mwa (mu-a)	muno	umu	umo	mulya

noted that it did take some speakers a short period of time to understand both precisely, as this complexity was not similarly witnessed in the narratives transcribed or observed in naturally occurring speech.

Nonetheless, the underlying phrase structure is schematized on the basis of the attested exemplars as the following:

(12) NP → (Distr/Dem)N(Poss/Dem)(Num/Quant)(Adj*Adv)(Rel*)(Inter)

The *Dem* contains the quadrifurcated demonstrative pronouns[6]; *Distr*, the adverbial *kila* 'every'; the *Quant*, a numeral or non-numeral quantifier[7]; the *Num*, a cardinal number[5]; the *Poss*, a possessive pronoun[8]; the *Adj*, any number of adjectival modifiers, though certainly very few true adjectivals[9] exist in this particular linguistic variety; the *Adv*, an adverbial modifier[10] of the preceding adjectival; the *Rel*, a relative clause to provide additional context; and the *Inter*, an interrogative pronoun. Table 3 presents one or two exemplars for the most frequently attested, recurring nominal phrases from the narratives.

TABLE 3. Attested elements of the nominal phrase

Elements	Pattern	Exemplar	Gloss
1	N	*amasumbu* *Leesa*	'fishing nets' 'God'
2	Distr+N	*kila bushiku* *kila ng'anda*	'every day' 'every house'
	N+Dem	*kilemba iyi* *taatafyala uyu*	'these beans' 'this son-in-law'
	Dem+N	*uyu muntu* *balya abapongoshi*	'this person' 'those parents-in-law'
	N+Quant	*ulupwa lonse* *ifyakulya ifingi*	'all of the family' 'many foods'

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[6] These correspond roughly to the immediate, proximal, medial, and distal and refer deictically to gradual degrees of physical, visual, and emotional proximity/distance from the speaker and/or hearer.

[7] The non-numeral quantifiers include *-onse* 'all', *-ingi* 'many', and *-mbi* '[an]other'.

[8] The possessive pronouns require concord agreement and include the following: *-andi* 'my', *-obe* 'your, sg', *-akwe* 'his, her, its', *-esu* 'our', *-enu* 'your, pl', and *-abo* 'their'.

[9] These include the following: *-suma* 'good, beautiful', *-bi* 'bad, ugly', *-kulu* 'big, wide', *-noono* 'small, little', *-tali* 'high, long', *-ipi* 'low, short, narrow', *-bishi* 'unripe', and *–pya* 'new'.

[10] The two most frequently occurring are *saana* 'very, quite' and *fye* 'simply, just'.

Elements	Pattern	Exemplar	Gloss
	N+Num	*ikibwe kimo* *abaana batatu*	'one pebble' 'three children'
	N+Poss	*ng'oma yandi* *umwana wabo*	'my drum' 'their child'
	N+Rel	*muntu uushalubile* *kalulu kalitumpa saana*	'a saved person' 'very stupid rabbit'
	Dem+Rel	*balya abaleechiseka*	'those who are laughing at him'
	N+Assoc	*inshita sha kale* *umwonga wa Lwapula*	'a long time ago' 'the Lwapula River'
	N+Adj	*ng'anda itali* *ikitabu kipya*	'a tall house' 'a new book'
3	N+Assoc+Assoc	*imfwa ya kwa Yesu*	'the death of Jesus'
	N+Rel+PP	*ikinongo ikyali pa mumana*	'the clay pot which is in the lake'
	Dem+N+Poss	*uyu umupongoshi wabo*	'this child-in-law of yours'
	N+Poss+Adj	*ng'anda shandi shinoono* *ikyuungwa kyandi kikulu*	'my small houses' 'my big orange'
	N+Adj+Rel	*imfumu iyimbi iyakuti ikale*	'another chief who is able to stay'
	N+Num+Rel	*akanakashi kamo akapalamine*	'a woman who has come here'
	Dem+N+Rel	*uyu umulumendo waishile* *aba bantu bakaisa*	'this young man who has come' 'those people who will come'
3/4	Dem+[N]+Rel+Quant	*aba abashala bonse*	'all of those [people] who remained'
4	N+Poss+Adj+Adv	*munandi musuma saana*	'my very good friend'
	N+Poss+Adj+Rel	*umwina mwandi umupya uwalenga ikumi*	'my tenth new wife'

Although the speakers for the present study indicated a clear preference for pre-nominal placement of the demonstrative pronoun, it also arose in immediately post-nominal position when not co-accompanied by a possessive pronoun, which mirrors native speaker preferences uncovered in other Bantu languages

discussed above[11]. Similarly, this schema follows the general observations made in Lusekelo (2009) in which common patterns of the Bantu nominal phrase are explicated, viz. that the nominal serves as the head, that some languages permit the placement of the demonstrative both pre- and post-nominally, that the possessive is the most closely post-nominally bounded element, and that relative clauses appear at the rightmost edge of the nominal phrase. Contrasting directly with these generalizations, however, placement of the demonstrative pronoun both before and after the associative phrase was accepted as grammatical by many speakers of Ikyaushi, though it resulted in emphatic readings. This is illustrated in (12a-b), as the demonstrative agrees, regardless of its placement, with the head noun and *not* strictly with that which it emphasizes (compare 13a-b with 13c).

(13) a. *im-fumu   ilya   y-a   bw-aushi   ya-a-fw-a*
      9CL-chief   9CL.DEM 9CL-ASSOC   14CL-Aushi   9CL-PST-die-FV
      '*That chief* of the Aushi died.'

   b. *im-fumu   y-a   bw-aushi   ilya   ya-a-fw-a*
      9CL-chief   9CL-ASSOC 14CL-Aushi   9CL.DEM 9CL-PST-die-FV
      'That chief *of the Aushi* died.'

   c. *im-fumu   y-a   bw-aushi   balya   ya-a-fw-a*
      9CL-chief   9CL-ASSOC 14CL-Aushi   14CL.DEM 9CL-PST-die-FV
      'That chief of those Aushi [people] died.'

4. Conclusion

This article has presented the first formal investigation of the nominal phrase structure of Ikyaushi, an underdocumented Bantu linguistic variety. In pursuit of this goal, the existing literature on the Aushi and their language was first discussed, and this was followed by an examination of other analyses of the nominal phrase in a variety of Bantu languages in East and East-Central Africa. Hereafter, the data in Ikyaushi were explored in light of these prior analyses, ultimately resulting in a few generalizable conclusions. First, the noun serves as the head of the nominal phrase. Second, the demonstrative *or* distributive can appear in pre-nominal position, and this seems to be the default location for the former.

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[11] As pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, there may also be a discourse-pragmatic function involved in the placement of the demonstrative, particularly in constructions where novel information is presented and/or a nominal phrase is foregrounded, as naturally-occurring data – as opposed to elicited data – indicates that speakers have access to and can utilize linguistic resources differently.

In utterances where the nominal phrase only contains two or three elements, however, the demonstrative can appear in post-nominal position when not already occupied by a possessive pronoun. Third, all other adnominal modifiers appear in post-nominal position, including numerals, quantifiers, adjectives, adverbials, relative clauses, and interrogatives. Finally, important points of differentiation in the analysis offered here are: (a) that the adverbial is presented as a distinct element that arises post-adjectivally; (b) that more than one adjectival or relative clause is possible and reflected as such in the proposed phrase structure rule; (c) that the associative phrase remains unlisted in the phrase structure, given that it can occur in far too many unique positions to warrant its inclusion in the abstract underlying structure proposed here; and (d) that the template offered here characterizes the data in Ikyaushi but is not intended to be applied broadly to Bantu languages more generally, as existing studies have (expectedly) demonstrated idiosyncratic features of particular languages.

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Conceptualizations of HEAD in Dholuo

Abstract

The role of the body in human perception of the surroundings has been continually inves-
tigated in the recent past. It has been influenced by the embodiment hypothesis which
holds that the human body provides the very first experience that humans have about
their environments. This article brings evidence from Dholuo that the HEAD is conceptualized
in various ways like metonymic HEAD FOR HAIR, HEAD FOR PERSON, HEAD FOR CHARACTER TRAITS,
UNIT OF MEASUREMENT. Metaphorically, the HEAD is extended to mean REASON, EMOTION, CONTAINER,
TOOL, MEMORY, among others. These findings show that the HEAD is highly polysemous in
Dholuo.

Keywords: head, body, conceptualization, embodiment, metaphor, metonymy

1. Introduction

In this research, my aim is to explore the conceptualizations of HEAD in Dholuo.
This study is anchored on the embodiment hypothesis which proposes that
human body plays a fundamental and unquestionable role in how we perceive
and conceptualize the world. The body parts terminology is a source of produc-
tive lexical and semantic extensions (Wilkins 1996, Hilpert 2007, Maalej & Yu
2011) and grammatical meanings (Heine et al. 1991, Heine & Kuteva 2002).

In the recent past, a number of scholars have carried out studies on body part
terms and how they are extended into various "internal" and "external" domains.

These works include Hilpert (2007), Sharifian et al. (2008), Maalej and Yu (2011), Kraska-Szlenk (2014a, b), among others. Further, there are also several studies that have specifically been carried out on the body part 'head' in various languages (e.g. Mol 2004, Niemeier 2008, Siahaan 2011, Maalej 2014, Baranyiné Kóczy 2019). In these studies, it is clearly shown that the lexeme 'head' is polysemous and can be extended to denote different concepts. However, there are still numerous languages which have not been studied in this respect, including Dholuo, which has been largely out of the scope of cognitive linguistic and cultural linguistic studies. To fill this gap, I pose the following research questions: (1) How is the HEAD extended to abstract concepts in Dholuo conceptualization? (2) What imaginative structures aid these conceptualizations? (3) Which part or characteristics of head is highlighted in various conceptualizations? and (4) What cultural elements of Dholuo worldview are captured in the conceptualizations of the HEAD?

It should be noted that culture plays a very important role in conceptualization. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 57) in acknowledging the cultural basis of experience posit that "every experience takes place within a vast background of cultural presuppositions". Gibbs (2006: 13) further elaborates the idea of culture in cognition when he argues as follows: "bodies are not culture free objects because all aspects of embodied experience are shaped by cultural processes". Rohrer (2007) also acknowledges that the cultural environment influences embodiment and the use of the body and body part term in cognition. Sharifian (2008, 2011, 2017) emphasizes that there is an interconnection between language, cognition, and culture. He argues that they represent *cultural cognition*, that is: "networks of distributed representations across the minds in cultural groups" (Sharifian 2011: 5). Metaphors, metonymies, and image schemas can thus be considered to be culturally motivated as they transmit a cultural group's beliefs and ideas about their life, environment, religion, and so on.

This article aims to unveil the various conceptualizations of HEAD in Dholuo within the scope of cultural embodiment and it strives to find out the cultural models that are at play in these conceptualizations. The study adopts a lexicographic approach which is complemented by usage-based insights where further explanation is needed to gain a more complete view of the meaning. Although there are research works that have already been conducted on Dholuo, it can be considered a rather underexplored language from a cognitive-cultural linguistic perspective. Some of the remarkable research undertaken on Dholuo are Omondi's (1982) analysis of the major syntactic structures of Dholuo, Okoth's (1982) study on Dholuo morphophonemics in a generative framework, Atoh's (2001) semantic

analysis of Dholuo nouns, and Oduor's (2002) analysis of the syllable weight and its effects in Dholuo phonology. Abudho (2004) has also done an analysis of Dholuo coordinate and subordinate complex sentences under the Minimalist Programme, and Ochieng (2016) observed the metaphorical euphemisms used in Dholuo HIV/AIDS discourse. Apart from these, there is none, to the best of my knowledge, that has been carried out on the conceptualization of HEAD or any other body-part terms. This research aims to fill this gap.

The article takes the following structure: After the present introduction, Section 2 discusses theoretical background. Section 3 describes the corpus and the methodology of the study. Section 4 presents the main findings of the study and, finally, Section 5 offers the conclusions from the findings.

2. Theoretical background

In this section I will briefly introduce the Dholuo language, and after that I will also briefly look at the role of metaphor, metonymy, and image schema in cognition. This discussion is followed by a description of embodiment hypothesis as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and the figurative extensions of HEAD based on cross linguistic studies. The section further delves into the basic questions of body part semantics as proposed by Maalej (2004).

2.1. Dholuo language

The language, which many people refer to as Luo, is actually Dholuo. *Dho-* is a prefix for the noun class, it is a reduction of *dhok* which literally means 'mouth' but, in this case, means "language of…". Dholuo is, therefore, the language of the Luo people. It is a Nilotic language spoken by the Luo people that traces its roots to Southern Sudan (Greenberg 1966: 85). The language is among the languages of the Nilotic branch and specifically the Nilotic sub-branch belonging to the Eastern Sudanic family. Dholuo has two mutually intelligible dialects: Trans-Yala (TY) and South Nyanza (SN) dialects (Stafford 1967). Many scholars, among them Oduol (1990), have pointed out that the South Nyanza dialect is the standard dialect as it is used by a majority of the Luo population and is considered "socially" prestigious. It is the dialect used in Dholuo literature including the Bible and radio broadcasts.

2.2. Metaphor, metonymy and image schema in cognition

Metaphor involves understanding an abstract concept based on another, which is rather concrete, and this understanding is based on the perceived similarities

between the two concepts (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). The concrete one is the source domain and the abstract one the target. Metaphors are thus a major indispensable part of our ordinary, conventional ways of conceptualizing the world, they ensure that our everyday behavior reflects our metaphorical under-standing of experience. Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 4) state that "primarily on the basis of linguistic evidence, we have found most of our ordinary conceptual system is metaphorical in nature. And we have found a way to begin to identify in detail just what the metaphors are that structure how we perceive, how we think, and what we do".

Metonymy, on the other hand, is not anchored in perceived similarity but rather spatial, temporal or conceptual contiguity within the same conceptual domain. Radden and Kövecses (1999: 21) define metonymy as "a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same cognitive model". There are two basic metonymic mappings: PART FOR WHOLE and WHOLE FOR PART. Barcelona (2005) introduces the aspect of metonymic chain which they refer to as "direct or indirect series of conceptual metonymies guiding a series of pragmatic inferences" Barcelona (2005: 328). As pointed out by Brdar-Szabó and Brdar (2011: 229): "[t]his term has also been used in a different, more specialized sense in metonymy research", as documented, among others, in Reddy (1979), Radden and Kövecses (1999: 36), Nerlich and Clarke (2001, Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2002), and Hilpert (2007). What these scholars have in mind are mainly complex conceptual metonymies. It is stressed by Hilpert (2007: 80) that "these chains break up complex conceptual mappings into simple, well-motivated mappings with a strong experiential basis". Such metonymic chains are called metonymic tiers in Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007: 229). The advantage of this terminology is the distinc-tion between textual and conceptual metonymic chains which are considered by Brdar-Szabó and Brdar (2011: 229) as "two dimensions" which are "essential and inseparable". These authors argue as follows: "Both the textual (horizontal or linear) dimension and the conceptual (vertical) dimension should be integrated into a comprehensive study of how metonymy works in discourse, i.e., in the study of metonymic networks […]". In this framework double and triple metony-mies are defined as special cases of conceptual metonymic chains which are referred to as metonymic tiers or tiered metonymies and which are also "unified by common metonymic targets because the metonymic target of one tier serves as the metonymic source for the next higher metonymic tier"[1]. Furthermore, it

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[1] Cf. Brdar-Szabó and Brdar (2011: 234).

has to be mentioned that Nerlich and Clarke (2001) make a distinction between synchronic and diachronic metonymic chains and for the latter type they introduce the term serial metonymy.

Croft (1993: 348) makes a difference between metaphor and metonymy by considering metaphor as a cross-domain mapping and metonymy as mapping within one cognitive domain. Brdar (2019) summarizes some further differences between the two concepts by proposing that "it is widely accepted that metonymy is based on contiguity or association whereas metaphor is based on similarity. The two also differ in terms of the number of conceptual domains involved. The standard view is that metonymic mapping occurs within a single domain while metaphoric mappings take place across two discreet domains" Brdar (2019: 54).

Image schemas, as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) are recurring structures within our cognitive processes, which establish patterns of understanding and reasoning. Image schema theory began with Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and was later developed by other scholars including i.a. Gibbs (1994), Gibbs and Colston (1995), Langacker (1987), Mandler (1984), Talmy (1983), and Lakoff and Turner (1989). All these studies tend to support the fact that image schemas inform how our minds organize information, knowledge, and memories and also how we relate percepts to concepts.

Metaphor and metonymy remain key issues in cognitive linguistics, as they are part of our everyday thinking and conceptualization of the world. They are both conceptual and cognitive processes. Even though metaphor and metonymy are considered distinct conceptual phenomena, they function together in many linguistic expressions. This complex interaction between the two concepts is discussed in several studies, i.a. Lakoff (1987) and Kövecses (1995). Goossens (1990, 2002) coined the term *metaphtonymy* to capture the interplay between metaphor and metonymy. He proposes that the interaction between the two takes place in four ways, namely: metaphor from metonymy, metonymy within metaphor, demetonymization within a metaphor, and metaphor within metonymy. This is illustrated by Kövecses' (1986) example of the metonymy BODY HEAT FOR ANGER, which motivates examples like "he was boiling with anger" which can be demonstrated by metaphors like ANGER IS HEAT and BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR EMOTIONS.

2.3. Embodiment: the broader perspective

In a broader sense, Rohrer (2007: 27) defines the *embodiment hypothesis* as "the claim that human physical, cognitive, and social embodiment ground our conceptual linguistic systems". Research on embodiment has steadily grown

over the years. Many researchers (Gibbs 2006, Johnson 1987, 2007, Kövecses 2005, Lakoff and Kövecses 1987, Maalej 2004, 2007, 2008, Sharifian et al. 2008) have carried out extensive studies on embodiment. In these studies, there is a considerable attention paid to the role that the body plays in conceptualization by humans. 'Embodiment' is a term that has been widely used in linguistics to refer to what Gibbs (2006: 1) terms as "understanding the role of an agent's own body in its everyday, situated cognition". This is to mean that it is the way the human body shapes our thinking and language use. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Johnson (1987) talk about the embodiment hypothesis which holds that the conceptual system and the linguistic structures are highly metaphorical, and that they are often based on the physical embodied processes. All in all, human beings understand the complex aspects of their everyday experience through their bodies. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 112) argue that our conceptualization of entities in more abstract domains is based on concrete concepts which are more clearly delineated in our experience. Going by this view, body parts are one of the very first experiences humans have about their environment, and later on they play an important function in gaining impression about the bulk of the phenomena in the world. Gibbs (2006: 13) proposes, as already mentioned in the introduction, that bodies are not culture free objects since all aspects of embodied experience are shaped by cultural processes. Sharifian (e.g. 2011) strongly champions the connection between cognition, language and culture, and argues that human cognition is as much a cultural as it is an individual phenomenon. Gibbs (1999a) advances the claim that culture shapes our understanding of abstract concepts in our environment via our bodies by stressing on the interaction between mind, body, and culture. He argues: "Scholars cannot and should not assume that mind, body, and culture can somehow be independently portioned out of human behavior as it is only appropriate to study particular 'interactions' between thought, language, and culture, respectively. Theories of human conceptual system should be inherently cultural in that the cognition which occurs when the body meets the world is inextricably culturally--based" (Gibbs 1999a: 153).

2.4. Body part semantics and figurative extensions of HEAD

The issue of how the body is segmented into parts and part of parts is one that has been debated over time and has proved to be a complex topic. Kraska-Szlenk (2014: 15) poses that "any discussion of embodiment as well as of the extension of body part terms from a comparative perspective must first pose a fundamental question: what parts does the human body consist of, or, more specifically,

which parts are linguistically encoded?" Another big subject that arises is whether the body part segmentation is a language specific affair or is common to all languages. This topic of body part segmentation has been discussed by many, e.g. Andersen (1978), Brown (1976), Brown and Witkowski (1981), Enfield et al. (2006), Majid (2010), Wierzbicka (2007), and Wilkins (1996). These studies tend to agree that a basic vocabulary of body-part terms exists and occurs across numerous unrelated languages. It is also evident that the body partonomy is extensively subject to more cultural variation. The body part HEAD, what it entails and its boundary, has also been discussed. Majid (2010), for instance, claims that Aslan languages do not have a term for 'head' but only have a term referring to the part of the head covered by hair. This is evidenced in Majid (2010: 64) phrases such as: 'look through the head' meaning checking for lice or dandruff or 'cut head' meaning cut somebody's hair and not 'head.'

A number of studies in various languages have shown that the lexeme 'head' can be figuratively extended to create various meanings. In Hausa (Will 2019) it is evidenced that the HEAD is associated with LOCATION, UPPER PART, FRONT, PERSON, HUMAN CHARACTER TRAIT, SELF, REASON, and INTELLIGENCE. In Basque, according to Ibarretxe-Antunano (2012), the HEAD can be figuratively extended to mean PERSON, HAIR, FRONT PART, MIND, LOCATION EXTREMITY, and CENTER. Baranyiné Kóczy (2019) demonstrates that in Hungarian the HEAD is the SEAT OF INTELLECT/THINKING, which is represented by numerous metaphors of THOUGHT and THINKING.

The abstract nature of some conceptualizations of head in Dholuo is a result of grammaticalization. Traugott (2003: 645) defines grammaticalization as the process whereby lexical material in highly constrained pragmatic and morphosyntactic contexts is assigned grammatical function. Heine and Kuteva (2002: 2) and Heine (2014: 16) define grammaticalization as the evolution of lexical items to grammatical forms. Further, the concept embraces even more grammatical forms from other relatively less grammatical constructions. The chief concern of grammaticalization is to demonstrate how grammatical forms arise over time and come to be structured as they are. Heine (2014: 16) offers a model which presents a four-stage grammaticalization process, including:

1. Extension: Here, linguistic expressions are used in new contexts with reinterpretations that are of grammatical value.

2. Desemanticization: In this case, a lexical structure is stripped of its semantic content.

3. Decategorization: Here, grammaticalized items are ripped off the important morphosyntactic properties typical of other members of its lexical class.

4. Erosion: In this process, the grammaticalized lexeme is phonetically mutated or reduced.

This is discussed in Section 4.3 of the article.

3. Corpus and methodology

This study investigates the conceptualization of the HEAD in Dholuo. It seeks to look at how the HEAD is extended to create new meanings in the language. The objectives are as follows: 1. to understand how the head is extended to both the external and internal domains, 2. to understand what imaginative structures, like metaphor, metonymy, image schema etc., are implemented in the conceptualization, 3. to understand which part or characteristics of the head is highlighted in various domains, and 4. to capture the cultural elements in the conceptualization. Although there are a number of research studies on Dholuo, there is no existing corpus for academic research yet. This article, therefore, employs a lexicographic approach which is complemented by a usage-based approach. For the present study approximately 80 expressions were randomly collected from existing dictionaries, collocations, proverbs, and sayings. Expressions were further collected from programs aired in Dholuo radio stations and from recorded songs.

4. Presentation of the lexeme *WICH* ʻHEADʼ

This section deals with the different meanings from the extensions associated with *WICH* ʻHEADʼ in Dholuo. The Dholuo word for ʻheadʼ is *wich*, /wɪtʃ/ and *wiye* /wɪje/ in singular and plural respectively. In the genitive construction the word often takes the following forms: *wiya* /wɪjə / for first person, *wiyi* /wɪjɪ/ for second person, and *wiye* /wɪje/ for third person. as seen in examples (1) and (2).

(1) *wi-ye*
      head-POSS.3SG
      ʻhis/her headʼ

(2) *wi-ø Otieno*
      head-GEN Otieno
      ʻOtienoʼs headʼ

While there is considerable empirical evidence about cross-cultural variation in the categorization of body parts, the basic meaning of the head is rather clear; it is the physical part of the upper human body. Many studies devoted to the

body part head seem to agree with this partonomy. In this research I consider the head basically as "the part of the body on top of the neck containing the eyes, nose, mouth, and brain". In several languages, virtually all, there are numerous conceptualizations of the word 'head' other than just being the upper part of the body above the neck. Berthoz, Graft and Vidal (1992) emphasize that the head carries most of the sensory systems that allow us to function effectively in our three-dimensional habitat.

4.1. Meanings developed from metonymical extensions of WICH 'HEAD'

Regular metonymic process is a common occurrence in many languages. There are cases where part of something becomes the name of the whole thing – PART FOR WHOLE, or vice versa, where the whole of something is used to make reference to part of it, always the salient part – WHOLE FOR PAR. The whole for part metonymic process takes place in the conceptualization of 'head' in Dholuo.

4.1.1. Wich 'HEAD' for HAIR metonymy

In this case the term for HEAD is used to refer to part of the head, the crown, the part where hair grows, a case of PART-FOR-WHOLE metonymy. This is as in exemplified in (3) and (4).

(3) *Mary   o-dhi suko wi-ye.*
     Mary   PERF-go plait head-POSS.3SG
     'Mary has gone to plait her hair.'

(4) *Wi-ya   dongo-∅   piyo.*
     head-POSS.1SG grow-PRS.1SG fast
     'My hair grows faster.'

Examples (3-4) present the WHOLE FOR PART metonymy where HEAD is used to make reference to a part of it which is the hair.

4.1.2. Wich 'HEAD' for PERSON metonymy

Kraska-Szlenk (2019: 119) opines that "because of its upper location and distinctive features such as hair color and style and facial features, the head stands out as a prominent part of the physical appearance of a person which triggers a cross linguistically common metonymy HEAD for PERSON". She further asserts that, "while people with some of their body parts badly damaged or even lacking, they are unable to live without their heads" Kraska-Szlenk (2019: 145). From these assertions, the head is clearly one of the most important parts of the human

body. It is the uppermost part of the body, which is home to the brain and also bearing other human sensory organs, like the mouth, nose, ears and eyes, all of which play important role in the daily interaction by humans. HEAD FOR PERSON is thus a prominent metonymy across most languages of the world (Kraska-Szlenk 2019). In this conceptualization all human faculties are mixed and are undivided, for instance in example (5) emotional, moral, and intellectual faculties are combined. Here, it is more than one-step metonymy where HEAD could stand for WHOLE BODY which further stands for ENTIRE HUMAN BEING, including physical and psychological faculties.

(5) *Wich   e   dhano.*
     head   is   human
     'One is as good as his/her head is.'

Example (5) is a proverb that has a metonymic description – PART FOR WHOLE (*PARS PRO TOTO*), where HEAD is used for HUMAN, and it can also be used as a proverb to show that one's head determines who he or she is, and the quality of head stands for the person's quality. In this case the head is considered the seat of BEHAVIOR, MORALITY, INTELLIGENCE, and ETHICS. This conceptualization of HEAD FOR PERSON can further be exemplified in (6).

(6) *Jo-go   many-o   wiy-a   nikech wach mar lo.*
     people-those search-IMPV head-POSS.1PL because   issue of   soil
     'Those people want to kill me because of land.'

In example (6) HEAD represents a PERSON, the one who is being sought after. This meaning may have risen from the fact that in the African traditions, Luo included, one of the prototypical and traditional ways of killing people was to cut off their heads. This can be seen in African folk tales, like the legendary *Luanda Magere* of the Luo community, where success in war was coming back with the enemies' heads. It thus suffices to say that when one is looking for another's head, they have the intention of killing them. The metonymy HEAD FOR BODY is at play in this conceptualization. In Hausa, a Chadic language spoken in Nigeria. there is the idiom *neman kai da wani* 'seeking a head of someone'. Hausa's dictionary meaning for the idiom is 'getting rid of cheaply', e.g. by willing to take any price. In contemporary Hausa language use it means 'wanting to get rid of something or someone' (Will 2019: 170).

Hilpert (2007: 77) talks about the regular process of chained metonymy that involves several conceptual shifts. This phenomenon is referred to in the framework developed by Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007) as tiered metonymy, as al-

ready mentioned above[2]. The HEAD becomes a PERSON and a PERSON becomes SELF. According to example (7), the HEAD can be extended not only to mean a PERSON but also their PERSONALITY, IDEAS, and EMOTIONS.

(7) *Wi-ye-wa   ok   winjre.*
     head-POSS.1PL NEG agree
     'We cannot agree on issues.'

In example (7), HEAD represents WHOLE PERSON, it stands for people who differ in reason, moral, and emotions. The tiered metonymy is evident here – HEAD becomes PERSON, PERSON becomes REASON/MORAL/EMOTIONS. They cannot 'put their heads together' meaning they differ on principles and ideas. Tiered head for person metonymy is further exemplified in (8-9):

(8) *Wach pesa   chando   wi-ya.*
     issue money disturb-IMPV head-POSS.1PL
     'Money issue is bothering me.'

(9) *Kes-na   ma e doho chando   wi-ya.*
     case-POSS.1SG which in court disturb-IMP head-POSS.1SG
     'My case which is in court is bothering me.'

Examples (8-9) present tiered metonymy of HEAD-WHOLE PERSON-PERSONALITY, the HEAD does not only represent the PERSON but also represents their disturbed PERSONALITIES, the people worried about money and court case respectively.

(10) *Wi-ye   o-wuo.*
      head-POSS.3SG PERF- loose
      'He/she has gone mad.'

In example (10), HEAD is conceptualized as a MACHINE with bolts and nuts tightly connecting different parts of it together. A loosely tied machine is a malfunctioning machine and a good working machine has its parts tightly tied together. A WORKING MIND IS A TIGHTLY CONNECTED HEAD. Here the head is metonymically conceptualized not only as a whole person but further as the right state of mind. This presents HEAD-WHOLE PERSON-RIGHT STATE OF MIND metonymic tier.

(11) *Wi-ye   rach.*
      head-POSS.3SG bad/inappropriate
      'He/she is mad.'

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[2] Cf. also Brdar-Szabó and Brdar (2011).

In Dholuo *rach* means 'bad' or 'inappropriate'. Here, GOOD/APPROPRIATE HEAD is RIGHT STATE OF MIND. *Wich rach* 'madness', therefore, is an inappropriate state of mind. Here the HEAD is also the locus of sanity. It therefore represents the whole person who is not in their right state of mind.

4.2. Metaphorical extensions of *WICH* 'HEAD'

4.2.1. *WICH* 'HEAD' as the locus of reasoning

While many cultures associate the heart with emotion, the head is associated with reason. People tend to see reason as residing in the head since it is where the brain is located. This combination of head and brain thus presents HEAD as used for REASONING which also presents the notion of THINKING/KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING. The metaphor of HEAD AS REASONING in Dholuo can be presented via various conceptualizations of HEAD as A LIVING ENTITY, A CONTAINER, A TOOL, A MOVING ENTITY, and A POSSESSED ENTITY.

4.2.1.1. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A LIVING ENTITY: THINKING AS A LIVING HEAD

In various cases in Dholuo, the HEAD is conceptualized as a living entity and given such features as those of human. The head is considered a living thing which can die – this presents the metaphors HEAD IS A LIVING ENTITY and REASONING IS A HEAD BEING ALIVE where lack of reasoning and thinking maps onto a dead head. This is evidenced in the following example (12).

(12) *Wi-ye   o-tho.*
     head-POSS.3SG PERF-dead
     'He/she does not think.'

In this conceptualization the HEAD is a LIVING ENTITY, as such, a person described to have a dead head is thus considered to lack thinking, intelligence and understanding. Further, (13) gives the head the ability to grasp which is largely a human attribute. In this case knowledge and intelligence are presented as objects, that can be picked or grasped, thus, THE DEGREE OF INTELLIGENCE IS ABILITY OF ONE'S HEAD TO GRASP KNOWLEDGE. Again, the speed with which one's head grasps knowledge is the speed with which one learns.

(13) *Ochieng wi-ye   kwany-o.*
     Ochieng   head-POSS.3SG grasp-PERF
     'Ochieng is sharp/quick to learn.'

HEAD is conceptualized as a LIVING ENTITY as it is presented as having the ability of being asleep and awake, this does not only present the metaphor HEAD IS A LIVING

ENTITY but also THINKING IS BEING AWAKE in which case lack of thinking maps onto a sleeping head. As illustrated by (14-15), a person whose head is awake is therefore considered one who is intelligent.

(14) *Wi-ye   o-chiewo.*
     head-3SG   PERF-wake
     'He /she is sharp/intelligent.'

(15) *Ng'at-cha   wi-ye   nindo.*
     Person-that   head-POSS.3SG sleep
     'That person is a fool.'

4.2.1.2. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A TOOL FOR REASONING

The head is also conceptualized as TOOL that has weight just like any other tool used by builders. It is easier to use a light tool for work, LIGHT HEAD is easy to use thus INTELLIGENT. Head is construed as an object of thinking and its weight counts for its efficiency, the lighter the head the easier it is to use.

(16) *John wi-ye   yot.*
     John   head-3SG.POSS light/easy
     'John is fast/quick/sharp.'

(17) *En gi wich ma-pek.*
     3SG POSS head REL-heavy
     'He/she is slow/not brainy.'

These examples present the metaphor: THE DEGREE OF ACQUIRING INTELLIGENCE IS THE WEIGHT OF ONE'S HEAD. The heavier one's head is, the less intelligent one is considered. This conceptualization is present not only in Dholuo but in other languages too. In Hausa there is a phrase *saukin kai* (lit. 'lightness of the head') which means 'open mindedness" (Will 2019: 163).

Aside from the weight, efficiency of a tool is also in its sharpness, here THE DEGREE OF INTELLIGENCE IS THE SHARPNESS OF THE HEAD ability to think is having the right tool, which is a sharp one. A blunt tool is insufficient. This is exemplified in (18).

(18) *Nyako- no   wi-ye   bith.*
     Girl   -that head-3SG.POSS sharp
     'That girl is brainy/sharp/intelligent/keen/clever.'

The conceptualization in example (18), probably, is born out of the fact that, traditionally, Dholuo speakers were blacksmiths, they were also hunters, gatherers,

fishermen and farmers, and in all these activities they used tools like hoes, swords, spears, hooks, and other sharp tools. The effectiveness of these tools was in their sharpness. These activities, evidently, have led to the conceptualization of head as a tool.

4.2.1.3. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A CONTAINER WHICH KEEPS THOUGHTS

In many cases the HEAD has been conceptualized as a CONTAINER. In this container, thoughts, intelligence, memories, and data are stored. Here reasoning and memory are considered as located inside one's head. According to examples (19-20) information is kept in one's head.

(19) *Nyathi-ni ni-kod namba-na mar simu e wi-ye.*
child-this PERF-has number-1SG.POSS of phone in head-2SG.POSS
'This child has memorized my phone number in his head.'

(20) *Wach-no pok a-golo e wi-ya.*
issue-that not-yet 1SG-remove in head-1SG.POSS
'I have not removed that issue from my head.'

Further, this HEAD AS A CONTAINER conceptualization can be looked at from the viewpoint of the metaphor THOUGHTS ARE SATURATION IN THE HEAD. Here, the size of the container 'head' refers to the quantity of thoughts contained therein. Emptiness means having no thoughts at all which could further be extended to mean lack of knowledge or intelligence. This is seen in examples (21-22).

(21) *Wi- ye diny.*
head -3SG.POSS narrow/small space
'He/she is shallow/unintelligent.'

(22) *Wi- ye o-pong'.*
head- 3SG.POSS PFV-full
'His/her head is full of thoughts.'

These examples present us with the metaphor: THE DEGREE OF INTELLIGENCE IS THE SIZE OF ONE'S HEAD. Intelligence is considered a physical entity which is contained in the head and thus the smaller or narrower the container, the less intelligence contained therein. This expression is in examples (21-22). This presents the metaphors: HEAD IS A CONTAINER; INTELLIGENCE IS CONTAINED and KNOWLEDGE IS OBJECTS IN A CONTAINER.

Just like a closed container would not allow anything in or out, a blocked head does not only allow knowledge to enter it but also does not also allow knowledge to come out of it for use. This is exemplified by (23):

(23) *Wi-ye   o-dinore.*
     head-3SG.POSS PFV-block
     'He/she is blockhead/dumb/unintelligent.'

The example above presents an ontological metaphor where KNOWLEDGE is treated as a PHYSICAL OBJECT/ENTITY that is contained in the head. I find this example synonymous with the English 'blockhead'.

In Dholuo, conceptualization of LACK OF INTELLIGENCE has been associated with having water in the head. This conceptualization is also evidenced in other languages. Kraska-Szlenk (2019: 145) talks about Swahili example of *kichwa-maji* 'madman, lunatic' (lit. 'watery head', 'head of water'). 'Wet' is negatively evaluated and is considered unintelligence. Examples (24) therefore presents the metaphor UNINTELLIGENT IS WET/WATERY HEAD.

(24) *Otieno   wi-ye   o-pong' gi   pii.*
     Otieno head-POSS.3SG PFV-full with water
     'Otieno is foolish.'

In this example water is evaluated negatively as a weak thin liquid. It is considered tasteless weak and pale. For Dholuo speakers, therefore, tasty is considered less watery just like in their soup and tea, presenting us with the metaphor: HAVING WATER IN THE HEAD IS UNINTELLIGENT.

Again, in this language, lack of intelligence is associated with dirt in the head as opposed to having intelligence that is considered as having a clean head as evidenced in examples (25-26).

(25) *Wi-ye   o-timo chuodho.*
     head-3SG.POSS PERF-have mud
     'He/she is not intelligent/sharp.'

(26) *Japuonj   wi-ye   liw.*
     teacher   head-3SG.POSS clean/pure/clear
     'The teacher is wise/brainy/sharp/intelligent.'

Mud is dirt, thus, one who is not intelligent is considered to have mud in head as in example (25). Accordingly, intelligence, on the other hand, is described in terms of cleanliness of the head. When the ideas contained in one's head are considered clear, pure or clean, and their actions considered acceptable in the society, then they are judged to have clean head. This is exemplified in (26).

4.2.1.4. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A POSSESSED ENTITY

This conceptualization presents the HEAD as a precious object that is possessed. Here, the metaphor THINKING IS POSSESSING A HEAD is evident. Not possessing the head, therefore, means no reasoning, hence little or no intelligence. This further presents us with HEAD FOR THINKING metonymy. In examples (27-28) the HEAD is conceptualized as a TOOL FOR THINKING and POSSESSING A HEAD means POSSESSING A TOOL FOR THINKING. INSTRUMENT OF ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE IS HEAD, losing the head means no tool for thinking, hence little or no intelligence. The head is thus conceptualized as a precious object that is possessed and which is used for thinking.

(27) *Onyango   wiy-ye   o-lal.*
       Onyango   head-POSS.3SG PERF-lost
       'Otieno in foolish.'

(28) *Nyathi-ni   wi-ye   onge.*
       child-this   head- POSS.3SG   absent/missing/lacking
       'This child is foolish.

4.2.1.5. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A MOVING ENTITY

Here, THINKING/REASONING IS MOTION/MOVEMENT. A thinking head is in constant motion. (29) presents thinking as also based on movement of one's head. When the head is stuck, thinking is considered curtailed. MOVING HEAD is a THINKING HEAD. This movement of the head should also be in a reasonable speed. Slow speed like in (30) presents slow reasoning. In (31) ,likewise, head moving too fast is reckless.

(29) *Ng'at- no   wi-ye   o-moko.*
       person- that   head-POSS.3SG PFV-stuck
       'The person is slow/not sharp/not intelligent.'

(30) *Wi-ye   dhi-θ   mos.*
       head-POSS.3SG move-PRS.1SG slow
       'He/she is slow in thinking/not a fast learner.'

(31) *Wi-ye   dhi matek.*
       head- POSS.3SG go   fast
       'His is rash/reckless.'

4.2.2. *WICH* 'HEAD' as the locus of memory

Memory is an issue that presents us with a mixture of intellectual and emotional aspects of life. There are various expressions in Dholuo, like that in example (32), which present the head as the locus of memory and thought.

(32) *Wiy-e   o-wil*
   head-POSS.3SG PFV-???
   'He/she has forgotten something.'

Wich wil 'forgetfulness' is an idiomatic expression whose meaning of individual words is hard to determine. *Wil* for instance does not appear as a single word in the available Dholuo dictionaries but used together with *wich* brings out the meaning of 'forgetfulness'. While in some languages, memory is a function of the heart, it is clear from the expression that in Dholuo it is a function of the head. This is further shown in:

(33) *Ndiki wach-ne-no e   wi-yi.*
   write issue-3SG-that on head-POSS.2SG
   'Keep his/her issue in your memory.'

(34) *Pod a-kano wach-no e   wi-ya.*
   still 1SG-keep issue-that in head-POSS.1SG
   'I still remember that issue.'

(35) *Wach gop-i   a-serucho e   wi-ya.*
   issue debt-2SG 1SG-PERF-rub on head-1SG
   'I have forgotten about your debt.'

(36) *Nyathi-ni o-mako-Ø   wend-no te   gi   wi-ye.*
   child-this 3SG-catch-PERF song-that all with head-POSS.3SG
   'This child has memorized the whole song.'

Examples (33-36) present thoughts as inanimate objects stored in the head. Thoughts can be placed or written in the head or removed/rubbed from the head. These examples further present the head as a container as has already been discussed.

4.2.3. *Wich* 'head' as the locus of emotions

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) give the metaphors: SADNESS IS DOWN, HAPPINESS IS UP which is rather universal. This is evident in the posture and the position of the head in relation to emotion in Dholuo. Pride and joy are associated with upright posture of the head while shame and sadness are associated with droopy head. This presents the metaphor BODY POSTURE FOR EMOTION, as seen in examples (37-39):

(37) *Saa mane i-somo   ne ketho ne o-lung'o   wiy-e   piny.*
   time when i-read   for offence PST PERF-lower head-POSS.3SG down
   'He lowered his head when his offences were listed.'

(38) *Yombo mar Obama o-ting'o   wi-wa   malo.*
      win   for   Obama   PERF-lift head-POSS.1PL up
      'Obama's victory made us proud.'

(39) *Nyaka-ne   ko-re   yud loch sani o-wuotho   ka   wi-ye ni malo.*
      since-PST   side-POSS.3SG get victory now 3SG.PERF-walk when head-3SG is   up
      'From the time his/her side/team won he/she walk with pride.'

In these examples the upright position of the head is associated with pride and joy, while drooped head is associated with embarrassment or shame. Example (37) presents the emotion of shame, a negative emotion. The drooping of the head as a result of shame presents the metaphor DOWN IS NEGATIVE/SHAMEFUL. Examples (38-39) show that pride is experience with head in an upright position as opposed to shame, thus UPRIGHT IS POSITIVE/PRIDE. King (1989: 136) says that a person who is happy lifts his or her head up, Barcelona (2003: 43), on the other hand, opines that sadness is associated with drooping bodily posture which affects both the shoulders and the head.

Aside from movement of the head, experiencing an emotion is also seen to have a connection to physically felt body sensation. Researchers like Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Johnson (1987), and Kövecses (2000, 2005) have shown that there exists a metonymic connection between certain body parts and the experience of some emotions. In Dholuo it is evident that the swelling of the head stands for embarrassment; while fat head stands for a flattered person as exemplified in (40-41):

(40) Wi-ye   o-kuot.
      head-3SG.POSS PERF-swell
      'He/she is embarrassed/humiliated/ashamed/disgraced.'

(41) *Wek pugo   wi-ya.*
      don't fatten head-POSS.1SG
      'Don't flatter me.'

Experiencing an emotion has a metonymic connection to physically felt body sensation. In example (40) swelling of the head is considered caused by embarrassment – *wichkuot* in Dholuo is 'embarrassment/humiliation/shame or disgrace'. As for example (41) flattering is considered fattening one's head. This conceptualization, I believe, stems from the fact that culturally the Luo consider fat as special, for instance, traditionally, they slaughtered fat animals to mark special cultural occasions as childbirth and marriage. A respected guest is also slaughtered for a fat animal (sheep, cow or goat).

The emotion of anger has been equated to heat presenting us with the metaphor ANGRY IS HOT HEAD. Here hot depicts anger and its location in the head clearly shows that head is also the locus of the emotion of anger.

(42) *Kwe   wi-yi!*
     cool head-POSS.2SG
     'Calm down/sober up!'

This example present HEAD FOR PERSON metonymy. The head stands for the whole person, it also shows that low temperature stands for emotional control.

4.2.4. *WICH* 'HEAD' as the locus of character traits

Here, there is also the tiered metonymy, the HEAD is used for the WHOLE PERSON then to PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS. Most personal characteristics reflect somebody's ability for reasoning and thinking which is already listed and there are other few examples.

(43) *Wi-ye   wach.*
     head-POSS.3SG sour
     'He/she is rough/troublesome.'

A sour taste is considered unpleasant for the mouth, in the Luo community sour milk and porridge are part of their staple foods but when it is overly sour it is normally neutralized with fresh milk or water. Again, this sour milk is not served to children and people with certain illnesses. This probably informs this conceptualization of 'sour head' to be roughness or troublesomeness. The English speakers also have idioms like 'go/turn sour' which mean to 'stop being pleasant or working properly'. Example (43) therefore presents a sour head as that which presents a rough and troublesome personality that is not a welcome behavior in the society.

The head is also used to conceptualize the character trait of stubbornness. Example (44) shows this:

(44) *Wi-ye   tek.*
     head-POSS.3SG hard
     'He/she is stubborn.'

This example presents hard head as stubborn. Its hardness is indicative of resistance to persuasion. Society expects people of good moral to show some degree of softness of the head. This conceptualization of stubbornness as

based on hardness of one's head can thus be captured by the metaphor STUB-BORNNESS IS HAVING A HARD HEAD.

4.2.5. *WICH* 'HEAD' as location

There are meanings developed from HEAD understood as LOCATION in Dholuo. From these extensions many meanings arise in reference to its position in space. Heine (1997: 41) states: the "head is the topmost part of a human being and the frontmost part of an animal and that is why it is frequently associated: FRONT and TOP". The conceptualization of *wich* as TOP of something is based on the metaphor HEAD AS LOCATION. Thus, as the head is the topmost part of a human being it is also the topmost part of an object. This is exemplified in (45-46).

(45) *Yien cha   wi-ye   o-wang'.*
     tree   that   head-POSS.3SG PERF-burn
     'That tree's top is burnt.'

(46) *Od-ni   wi-ye   kwar.*
     house-this head-POSS.3SG red
     'This house has a red roof.'

Wich can also be extended to mean the front part of something, a shift from its conceptualization as the top of something. Heine (1997: 46) explains this shift by saying that human body in its upright position is not perceived as being absolutely vertical but rather leaning forward – that is the way it is situated when one is running or walking rather than when one is standing. This as shown in (47):

(47) *O-tuomo   wi   mitoka.*
     3SG-hit   head motorcar
     'He/she has hit the front of the car (bonnet).'

There is a further shift from the conceptualization of head as 'front of something' to 'beginning of something' like in the case of example (48) where speakers of Dholuo extend the head to name the part of the river where it begins:

(48) *O-lilo   pi   gi   e   wi   aora.*
     3SG-soil water from on   head river
     'He/she has made water dirty upstream.'

The HEAD in Dholuo is also extended to make reference to locative positions. Here, again, the metaphor OBJECTS FOR HUMAN BEINGS is at play. Going by this as-sociation, when things are situated on top of objects like tables, cupboards,

chairs etc., they are talked about as being on the heads of such objects like 'head of cupboard'. This is what (49-52) exemplify:

(49) *Wi   kabat   o-lil.*
     head   cupboard 3SG-dirty
     'The top of the cupboard is dirty.'

(50) *Buk ni e   wi mesa.*
     book is on head table
     'The book is on (top of) the table.'

(51) *Ne o-chungo mitoka e wi olalo.*
     PST 3SG.PERF-park car   on head bridge
     'He/she parked the car on the bridge.'

(52) *Wuon- wa   nind-o   e   wi kom.*
     father-POSS.1PL sleep-IMPV on head chair
     'Our father is sleeping on the chair.'

Spatial and locative extensions of the head in (49-52) can further be thought of as triggered by the metaphoric mapping of HEAD as TOP, UP, ABOVE. Here, the vertical schema also comes into play where Dholuo speakers consider the top part of different things as the head. In examples (49-51) *wich* 'head' has been used to refer to the topmost part of the cupboard, table, and bridge, respectively. It should be noted, with respect to (52), that most of traditional African chairs do not have backs, so the sitting part is probably the topmost part.

4.2.6. *Wich* 'head' as a unit of measurement

Maalej (2014: 228) posits that "the word 'head' in various languages is often used as a classifier of objects and typically occurs with numerals as in Tunisian Arabic *raaS bSall* 'onion head' *raaS bruklu* 'cauliflower head', and English *three head of cattle*". This motivation to use head to classify objects could be out of metaphorical mapping occasioned by the similar shape shared by these objects and the head, the round shape but often not the size. Most objects classified in this manner are thus fruits and vegetables which have a round shape as that of the human head. The meaning in example (53) is motivated by metaphorical mapping that makes reference to cabbage as head in terms of the similarity in the round shape of the head and that of the cabbage:

(53) *A-dwaro   alot   kabich ma wi-ye duong.*
     1SG-want   vegetable cabbage REL head-3SG big
     'I want a big sized cabbage.'

Head as an upper part of an item is not only because of the topological position of the human head but also its important role as a carrier of loads. Kraska-Szlenk (2014: 112) shows that the top position makes the human head ideal for carrying loads. This has given rise to meanings of head as location, a place where something can be placed. This is coupled with the fact that in many African cultures, Luo included, loads are often carried on the head. Uncountable things like firewood and grass are often tied with ropes as bundles fit to be carried on the head. This creates a unit of measurement that can thus be defined as something that is appropriate to carry on one's head. For example in (54-55):

> *Ne   o-kelo   lum wiy-e adek.*
> PST 3SG.PERF-bring grass head-PL three
> 'He/she brought three bundles of grass.'

(54) *Wa-dwaro yien wiy-e ariyo*.
 1PL-want   tree head-PL two
 'We want two bundles of firewood.'

Just as people use their physical heads to carry material loads, as demonstrated in the examples above, the head is also conceptualized as the carrier of non-material loads – responsibilities or problems in Dholuo. It is considered the body part where responsibilities and problems are located. This is as seen in (56-57):

(55) *Ting   mar jo-nyuol-na   ni e   wi-ya.*
 burden of   PL-parent-POSS.1SG is on head-POSS.1SG
 'The responsibility of taking care of my parents is on me.'

(56) *En gi ting   ma-pek mar   rito   ki-ye mang'eny.*
 3SG has burden REL-heavy of   IMPER-care orphan-PL REL-many
 'He/she has the heavy responsibility of taking care of many orphans.'

4.2.7. *Wich* 'head' as title, chapter or heading

Here is a similar conceptualization which relates to the central issue of head being the most important part of one's body. It also used to make reference to the title, chapter or heading of songs, stories or bible readings. However, these conceptualizations also stem out of the idea that titles and headlines do not only appear at the beginning but also at the top of such songs and stories. This as seen in the following examples (58-59):

(57) *Wi-∅   wer ma   gi-wer en kwe.*
 head-GEN song REL 3PL-PERF.sing is peace
 'The title of the song they have sang is peace.'

(58) *Wi-Ø   sigana ma   o-gan kawuono en ang'o?*
head-GEN story REL PERF-told today   is   what
'What is the heading of the story told today?'

4.3. Grammaticalization of *WICH* 'HEAD'

Grammaticalization involves embedding into grammar of a once no grammatical phenomenon. Haspelmath (2004: 26) terms it as a diachronic change by which parts of a constructional schema come to have stronger internal dependencies. Kraska-Szlenk (2014a, 2014b) opines that the domain of spatial orientation seems to be the most significant target domain in the grammaticalization of body part terms as evidenced by innumerable languages of the world. In Dholuo, *wi* /wɪ/, which is also a genitive preposition is used to mean 'upon' or 'on top of' however, there is also the conceptualization of HEAD as ahead of or front of something. This is in respect to the direction of movement of something, as illustrated by examples (60) and (61) below:

(59) *Ka   i-dwa chungo dho-go   to chung' e wi-gi.*
if 2SG-want stop cows-those then stand in head-POSS.3PL
'If you want to stop the cows then stand in front of them.'

(60) *Dhako-no   o-ringo e   wi-wa   ma o-wuoyo gi ruoth.*
woman-that   PERF-run on head-POSS.1PL REL   PERF-talk with chief
'That woman has gone ahead of us and talked to the chief.'

Example (60) talks about a locative position which is a point in front of the cows in the direction they are moving, in (61) the head is used to refer to time, the time before other people's action.

The HEAD in Dholuo can also be extended to mark the TOPIC of conversation. In this case it corresponds to the English preposition *about*. This conceptualization is motivated by the fact that people normally come up with an issue first then its discussion follows. Examples (62) and (63) demonstrate this.

(61) *Wa-wuoyo e   wi Otieno.*
we-talk.IMPF on head   MN
'We are talking about/discussing Otieno.'

In example (62) the HEAD FOR PERSON metonymy is used where the head of the person under discussion is used to represent the whole person, in (63) however the head is metaphorically used to represent the concept of the topic that is under conversation.

(62) *Gi-dwaro   wuoyo e   wi wach mar liel.*
     3PL-want.IMP   talk   on head issue   of   funeral
     'They want to discuss the issue of the funeral.'

It is worth noting that, sections 4.2.5, 4.2.6 and 4.2.7 that are previously men-
tioned are also, to some extent, cases of grammaticalization albeit not fully.
Wich HEAD AS LOCATION (4.2.5) for instance, can also mean 'above', i.e. 'above the
cupboard, table and bridge' in examples (49, 50 and 51) respectively where part
of the physical entities (cupboard, table and bridge) are used as space. This
makes the meaning more abstract hence classical cases of extension and de-
semanticization processes of grammaticalization. Further, although HEAD AS
TITLE, CHAPTER OR HEADING 4.2.7 also seem abstract, in often cases they are written
down thus visualized. Their reference as head probably is because they inte-
grate the main part and are vertically the topmost part of songs and stories as
in examples (58-59).

4.4. Infrequent extensions of HEAD

These are extensions that are rather infrequently used in Dholuo. For instance,
while many languages use head to refer to the most important person in an organ-
ization or country, for example English 'head of state' and 'head of department',
such kind of reference does not exist in Dholuo. Other languages like English
tend to present leadership in a vertical top-down manner, with the most senior
person being the head/at the top and the rest working under him/her. Dholuo,
on the other hand, presents leadership horizontally with the leader in front and
others following him/her. The only examples given, in which the leader is referred
to as head in Dholuo are thus from religious books like bible, and are standard
across languages.

(63) *Dichuo e   wi dhako mana kaka Kristo e   wi kanyakla jomao-yie kuome.*
     man is head woman   just like Christ is head   together people-who 3PL-agree
     'For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church.'

<div align="right">(Joefesos/Ephesians 5:23)</div>

Example (64) is a famous/popular? Bible verse mostly used in weddings, it says
that the husband is the "head" of the wife, and thus wives should submit to
them. It brings out the concept of interpersonal relations, husbands as given
"power" over their wives.

(64) *Kristo e wi   od-   ni.*
      Christ   is head house this
     'Christ is the head of this house.'

Example (65) presents the metaphor HEAD IS SUPREME POWER, here Christ is said to be the head of the house to mean people of the house consider themselves under the protection of Christ. They acknowledge and submit themselves to Christ.

5. Conclusions

This article focused on the conceptualizations of *wich* 'HEAD' in Dholuo. The analysis has demonstrated that in the language the HEAD can metonymically and metaphorically be extended to mean a number of notions like HAIR, LOCATION, UPPER PART, FRONT, BEGINNING, AHEAD, UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, WHOLE PERSONALITY, REASON, INTELLIGENCE etc. It is also proven that there exist certain infrequent extensions borrowed from other cultures like the Christian Bible. These extensions prove that the conceptualization of HEAD in Dholuo in richly polysemous. From the onset, the study focused on both the metaphorical and the metonymic conceptualizations of HEAD. The results have demonstrated that the two concepts provide an appropriate understanding of the various conceptualizations of HEAD in Dholuo. The metonymical extensions show that the HEAD can be conceptualized as HAIR and PERSON, and it can also stand for concepts external to human, like LOCATION, UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, CARRIABLE QUANTITY, TOPIC, TITLE, and HEADING. The analysis of the metaphors of head shows that it is primarily connected to REASONING and in some cases to EMOTION and MEMORY. Fig.1. summarizes the metonymical and metaphorical conceptualizations of HEAD and it also highlights how they are conceptually linked to one another.

It comes from the data that some meanings like HEAD FOR LOCATION and HEAD FOR PERSON are more salient than others. The HEAD FOR PERSON is more prevalent because the head has always been considered the most important part of the human body home to the brain and major sensory organs like the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Aside from that, while one can survive without other body parts like, legs and hands, no one can survive without the head. This, I believe is the reason for the prominence of the HEAD FOR PERSON metonymy in Dholuo. Again, most of human behaviors are related to the head. HEAD is also metaphorically associated with LOCATION in the language and this is also prominent. It has been understood as TOP, UP, FRONT, BEGINNING and AHEAD which I believe this is due to the fact that the head is the uppermost part of the human body when sitting or standing. This aids the association of the head with the uppermost part of objects. REASON and INTELLECT have also been found to be key function of the HEAD in this language. There is also a rich source to the spatial experience connected to head for

example, UNIT OF MEASUREMENT and CARRIABLE QUANTITY seem to be culture specific. English *foot* and *inch* as units of measurements may come from probably universal experience as walking and measuring with hands however using the head as carrier for loads may not be a common practice in all in all cultures.
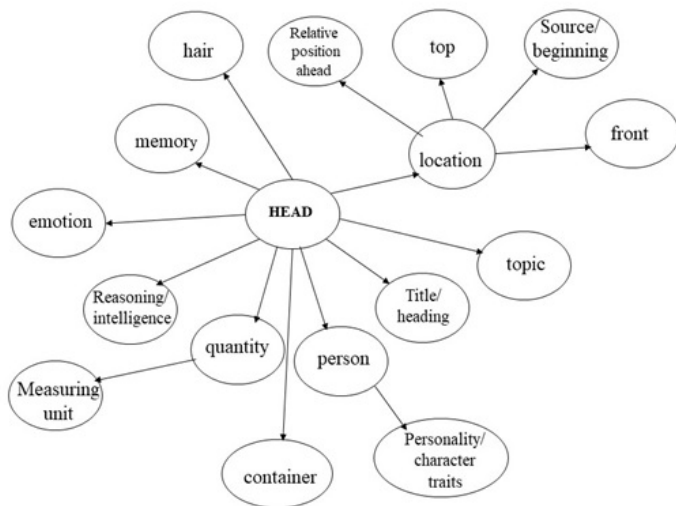
Fig. 1. The figurative extensions of head in Dholuo.

Among the metaphorical extensions HEAD FOR REASONING is the most outstanding one. Within this domain the head is conceptualized as LIVING ENTITY, TOOL, CONTAINER, POSSESSED ENTITY AND MOVING ENTITY. While EMOTION is represented only by a few examples, it is remarkable that swelling or fattening head represent contradictory feelings like shame and pride.

The article has also briefly pointed out that some meanings covered by *wich* that are found in other languages, especially those spoken in Africa, notably in the case of *kichwa* in Swahili and *kan* in Hausa, among others. Certain similarities were also found with languages spoken outside Africa like Basque in the case of *buru* or Hungarian in the case of *fej*. It is however my hypothesis that some of the conceptualizations discussed are unique to Dholuo language, however, cross-linguistic studies in future can prove this right or wrong.

It can be seen that the study of the figurative extensions of body parts are benefi-cial to understanding the semantics of a language and also systematically analyze

the cultural elements incorporated in language. The metonymies and metaphors involved in body parts highlight the way the Dholuo cultural community view the human body and its interaction with the environment. I suggest that further studies be carried out on other body parts in this language as they could also be richly polysemous and loaded with a lot of cultural meanings.

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Construction morphology in Yoruba names: Schemas and processes

Abstract

This article is an attempt to explore how the framework of construction morphology may apply to the analysis of Yoruba names. Following this approach, we show that each Yoruba name is a unique construction involving semantic, syntactic and phonological properties. Hence, this discussion highlights that names constitute a form-meaning pair. Yoruba names may be grouped into categories as distinct constructions with unique SEM, SYN and PHON properties. More specifically, it is observed that PHON properties may include word initial vowel elision, syllable elision, vowel and consonant elongation while SYN features include processes of lexicalization of sentential forms. Furthermore, the article reveals that Yoruba names may show constructional patterns that are deviant from regular processes, observed by previous studies to occur in similar linguistic environments. These patterns, therefore, are part of the unique constructional property of Yoruba personal names in contradistinction to other word formation contexts.

1. Introduction

As discussed by Ehineni (2021), Construction Morphology (CM) specifically provides application of the insights of Construction Grammar to morphological analysis. The framework of CM was extensively developed through a series of works particularly by Booij (2005, 2007, 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2013). This devel-

opment is informed by previous views by Michaelis and Lambrecht (1996: 216), who claim that "[i]n Construction Grammar, the grammar represents an inventory of form-meaning-function complexes, in which words are distinguished from grammatical constructions only with regard to their internal complexity"; and also by Croft (2001: 17), who observes: "[...]the internal structure of words are also constructions[...] The only difference between morphological constructions and syntactic ones is that the former are entirely made up of bound morphemes while the latter are largely made up of free morphemes". In the development of the CM framework, Booij emphasizes a continuum view of the relationship between the lexicon and grammar, and suggests the use of morphological schemas to express generalizations about form-meaning pairings.

According to Booij (2016), language users can assign internal structure to a word if there is a systematic correlation between its form and meaning. Using the following sets of words such as (a) *dancer*, *fighter*, *singer*, *walker* and (b) *dance*, *fight*, *sing*, *walk*, Booij explains that the verbal base (*dance*, *fight*, *sing*, *walk*) is followed by the suffix -*er*, and a corresponding systematic meaning pattern 'one who Vs', where V stands for the meaning of the verb. Also, the systematic form difference between the words in (a) and those in (b) correlates with a systematic meaning difference – the words in (a) have the additional form component -*er*, and the additional meaning component 'agent of' (Booij 2016: 424). However, as Booij notes, while the nouns (1a) are considered as deverbal agent nouns and may be assigned an internal structure – [V-er]N –there is no reason to assign internal structure to nouns like *brother* and *father* that end in the same sequence /ər/, because these nouns do not correspond to verbs like **to broth* or **to fath*. Hence, according to Booij, assignment of word structure is based on systematic paradigmatic relationships between sets of words. These relationships may be expressed through the use of morphological schemas. For instance, the form-meaning correlations observed in the English deverbal (agentive) construction can be represented as a constructional schema: $<[x]_{Vi} \ er]_{Nj} \leftrightarrow$ [Agent of SEM$_i$]$_j>$ (Booij 2015: 425).

On the structure of the schema, Booij explains that the double arrow indicates the correlation between form and meaning, and by means of co-indexation, the systematic relationship between form and meaning is specified. The index *i* in the schema serves to indicate that the meaning of the base word (SEM) recurs in that of the corresponding complex word. The index *j* indicates that the meaning of the construction as a whole correlates with the form as a whole. The angled brackets demarcate a constructional schema. He further clarifies that the variable *x* in the schema represents the phonological content of the base word, and there-

fore indicates an empty slot. Hence, when a concrete word occupies this variable *x* position, it results in a complex word.

Basically, the main tenets of Booij's CM are a theory of word grammar and the notion of CONSTRUCTION. The theory of word grammar/structure in CM is based on the assumption that the word is the minimal linguistic sign, a form-meaning pair. The structure of a word comprises two dimensions – its phonological form and its morpho-syntactic properties. This means that each word links three types of information – PHON(ological), SYN(tactic) and SEM(antic) – and morphology or the grammar of words (Booij 2007a) must deal with the systematic relation between all three components (Booij 2010b: 429). Hence, constructions are pairings of form and meaning.

The notion of CONSTRUCTION in CM is motivated by the observation that construction in morphological analysis may include properties that do not derive from their constituents but from the entire construction itself. Booij supports this view by noting that the suffix *-er* in words like *dancer, fighter, singer, walker* does not carry a meaning of its own in isolation and it is the constructional schema as a whole; that is, it is *-er* in combination with a verb that evokes the agent meaning. In other words, the meaning of the suffix is associated and bound to the construction. CM therefore claims that the properties that pertain to form, meaning, and usage are better captured holistically belonging to the construction itself. A very significant aspect of CM is the use of schemas and subschemas to formalize morphological constructions.

2. Schemas in construction morphology

A schema is characterized as a cognitive representation comprising a generalization over perceived similarities among instances of usage, which emerges from repeated activation of a set of co-occurring properties (Barlow & Kemmer 2000: xxiii). As Booij explains, complex words can be seen as instantiations of abstract morphological schemas. The relation of instantiation is expressed by vertical links between the schema and the individual instantiations as shown in the Fig. 1 from Booij (2016: 431):

$$< [x]_{Vi} \, er]_{Nj} \leftrightarrow [\text{agent of SEM}_i]_j >$$

$$| \qquad\qquad | \qquad\qquad | \qquad\qquad |$$

$$[[danc]_V er]_N \quad [[fight]_V \, er]_N \quad [[sing]_V \, er]_N \quad [[walk]_V er]_N$$
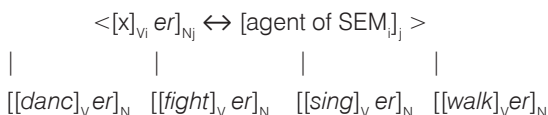
Fig. 1. Vertical links between the schema and the individual instantiations

As Booij elucidates, the individual words, that is: *dancer, fighter, singer, walker* are form-meaning relations that reflect the information specified in the schema, thus making parts of the information contained in the lexical entries for these words redundant. This is indicated through the vertical link. Also, the verbal bases of these nouns are co-indexed to the corresponding lexical entries for these verbs, and this motivates part of the meanings of these agent nouns (Booij 2016: 431). Thus, schemas are used to represent patterns of word formation and this makes it possible to express generalizations about subsets of the complex words involved, especially through the use of subschemas, which are in between the most general schemas and the individual words. That is, subschemas within schemas help to capture subcategories in the morphology of complex words. In other words, sub schemas actually specify idiosyncratic properties of subtypes of words that instantiate the larger schema in question. In a more general sense, schemas can be seen as templates that specify generalizations that capture general predictable properties of existing complex words.

Notably, construction schemas in CM capture a cluster of properties collectively as a form-meaning-usage complex, which constitutes "tripartite parallel architecture" that is built upon "a pairing of three types of information […] labeled as PHON, SYN, and SEM" where SEM "may have both strictly semantic and pragmatic components" (Booij 2010: 429). Schemas and the constructions they instantiate coexist in a hierarchically organized lexicon, where two kinds of relations obtain an explication which exists between a schema and a construction formed by that schema, and "part of ", which obtains between a construction and its constituents.

Significantly, the construction morphology approach offers a conceptual framework for analyzing the complex nature of Yoruba names where names are seen as form-meaning-usage complexes having specific properties of PHON, SYN and SEM. This approach is different from a specific morphological approach exploring only how morphemes combine to form lexical units or a phonological approach focusing only on sound patterns, or a semantic approach aiming at interpreting meaning. Based on my observation, Yoruba names are characterized by different structural features. Hence, these names may be grouped into different construction categories that are typified by certain unique properties. Hence, we adopt the framework of construction morphology, which provides an avenue to see names as unique categories with specific properties. In this view, each name is a construction with unique form and meaning properties. We provide a CM analysis of Yoruba names in the next section.

3. Construction morphology analysis of Yoruba names

In this section, we provide a detailed account of constructions in the formation of different categories of personal names including royal names, deity-informed names, death-prevention names, circumstantial names, and reincarnate names. In our discussion of each phenomenon, we illustrate that linguistic properties pertaining to its form and meaning go hand-in-hand. Although some of their behavior follows from general and specific linguistic principles, they also exhibit an intriguing set of characteristics that cannot be attributed to anything but the schemas in which they appear.

Hence, due to the unique patterns that Yoruba names exhibit, the construction morphology framework provides a relevant approach to exploring their linguistic complexity and peculiarity. In our analysis, we focus on each name category and the relevant construction schema. Also, various linguistic processes involved in the construction of each name category are discussed. We aim to show, following the CM framework, that each Yoruba personal name is a specific construction that indexes three properties of information from the lexicon – PHON, SYN, SEM – and that these properties are unique to the name construction. In other words, Yoruba personal names can be identified and classified based on their distinctive properties. The following subsections will identify specific categories of Yoruba personal names and discuss the nature of their constructions. It should be noted that Yoruba names show both sentential structures and compound structures, which are discussed in subsections 3.1 and 3.2, respectively.

3.1. Sentential name construction

A sentential name construction is a name construction that has an underlying sentence structure. A sentential Yoruba name has a NP + VP structure, where there is an entity (NP) that is identified as well as action/activity (VP) that is specified. Sentential names may capture a doer of an action, the action that is done by an entity as well as the quality that such entity possesses. This type of construction occurs in kingship names, deity-informed names and death-prevention names. A general schema utilized in sentential names is illustrated below:

$$< [NP + [VP]] \leftrightarrow [\text{sentential name}] >$$

Fig. 2. The sentential construction schema in Yoruba names

Here, the NP captures an entity, while the VP specifies the actions or describes the quality of the entity identified in the NP. It is important to note that while these names are seen as sentences underlyingly, they are realized as desentential-

ized or lexicalized sentences. Lexicalized sentences are formed by reducing a sentence to a unique lexical or conceptual element. The sentential construction schema identified in (2) is utilized in the following categories of Yoruba names – kingship names, deity-informed names, and death-prevention names. These categories of names are discussed in the following subsections.

3.1.1. Kingship names

Kingship names are names that signify royalty in Yoruba. These are names used to indicate that someone comes from a family of kings. These names reflect a sentential-type construction, as shown in (1-7) below:

(1) *Adéyẹmí*
     crown-deserve-3sg
     'The crown is entitled to me.'

(2) *Adéfúnkẹ́*
     crown-give-1sg-pamper
     'The crown gives me to adore.'

(3) *Adébáyọ̀*
     crown-meet-joy
     'The crown meets joy.'

(4) *Adégbeńga*
     crown-lift-1sg-up
     'The crown elevates me.'

(5) *Adékúnle*
     crown-fill-house
     'The crown fills the house.'

(6) *Adéwálé*
     crown-come-house
     'The crown comes home.'

(7) *Adéṣọlá*
     crown-make-wealth
     'The crown makes wealth.'

These names have a declarative structure which describes what the crown – which symbolizes the king – does. In other words, the CROWN[1] (or KING) is the

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[1] In Yoruba, *adé* literally means crown, which symbolizes the personhood occupying the royal authority over a community. Usually, this is a king (a male person) or a regent (a female sometimes when there's no eligible candidate).

subject of the action in the names. These names index royalty or kingship and they reflect a sentential name construction schema. This sentential construction type schema that is utilized is presented in below.

$$< [adé + [VP]] \leftrightarrow [\text{nominalized royal name}] >$$

$$[[adé]_{NPi}\ [bá\ olá]_{VPj}]_{Ni}\ \text{'Crown meets wealth.'}$$

Fig. 3. Sentential construction schema in kingship names

First, it should be noted that the above schema is the application of the sentential construction schema identified in Fig. 2 in the area of kingship names. The name illustrated in the schema, given in Fig. 3, is a nominalized kingship name, and has the element *adé* which designates these forms as royal names and also functions as the head of the construction. Furthermore, as nominalized sentential names, these sentence type royal names behave syntactically like a noun. For instance, in sentences like *Adéyẹmí féràn agbára* 'Adeyemi loves power' and *Aàfin gba Adébáyò* 'The palace receives Adebayo', the nominalized sentential names *Adéyẹmí* and *Adébáyò* function as subject and object.

TABLE 1. SYN features in kingship names

derived name form	underlying structure
Adéyẹmí	*adé* + *yẹ* + *èmí* crown deserve me
Adébáyò	*adé* + *bá* + *ayò* crown meet joy
Adégbeńga	*adé* + *gbé* + *n* [*mí*] + *ga* crown lift me up
Adékúnlé	*adé* + *kún* + *ilé* crown fill house
Adéwálé	*adé* + *wá* + *ilé* crown fill house
Adésolá	*adé* + *ṣe* + *olá* crown make wealth

Desententialization is a major SYN feature in sentential kingship names and it is a process where constructions that are originally sentences are reduced to a single lexical unit. This process may lead to morphemic and phonemic changes.

In other words, there is loss of phonological segments especially vowels shown in the realized name form area in Table 1.

What is also important to note is that while names are formed based on patterns in the lexicon of the language, they may also reflect unique PHON features. A major PHON feature in these royalty names is word initial vowel deletion.

3.1.1.1. PHON features: word initial vowel elision

Word initial vowel elision is a form of vowel elision that occurs when a vowel preceding a consonant is deleted. Thus, it is common in kingship names for the initial vowel to be deleted as shown in (8-13) below:

(8) *Débáyọ̀*   ←   *Adébáyọ̀*

(9) *Déwálé*   ←   *Adéọlá*

(10) *Dékúnlé*   ←   *Adéọlú*

(11) *Déyẹmí*   ←   *Adéyẹmí*

(12) *Défúnkẹ́*   ←   *Adéfúnkẹ́*

(13) *Désọlá*   ←   *Adésọlá*

In the examples in (8-13), the low initial vowel /a/ is deleted. It is also important to note that the word initial vowel elision does not occur across morpheme boundaries. That is, in the name *Désọlá* (= *adé-ṣe-ọlá*), the initial low vowel [a] deletes before the voiced stop [d]. Additionally, the front vowel [e] deletes before the back vowel [ọ]. While the latter case (prevocalic vowel deletion) occurs in an environment where vowels co-occur across a morpheme boundary, the former does not occur in this environment – there is no co-occurence of a vowel in the initial position of the word. This shows that vowel deletion may also occur in a preconsonantal position. Also, this word initial vowel elision may not be conditioned necessarily by the nature of following consonants since the vowels delete before other consonants (not only [d]) in initial position – see the discussion on deity-informed names in subsection 5.5.2.

Significantly, this kind of elision creates a name-form that is non-vowel initial – which is not necessarily similar to the regular prevocalic vowel elision that may be a "hiatus resolution strategy". Elision of vowels is often disallowed in initial position of Yoruba constructions as may be seen in the examples given by Orie and Pulleyblank (2002: 102), i.a. *owó.kí.owó* 'any kind of money' > *owókówó* (*wókówó) and *ọmọ.kí.ọmọ* 'any kind of child' > *ọmọkọ́mọ* (**mọkọ́mọ*). This

form of elision is, however, possible in names, as shown in (8-13), where initial vowels of names are deleted. In fact, in a much similar context identified by Orie and Pulleyblank (*mọkọ́mọ*), where deletion has been seen as impossible, deletion may also occur in Yoruba names. This context is illustrated in names such as *ọmọbọ́laji* 'child comes with wealth' or *ọmọbọ́lanle* 'child meets wealth at home', which are often productively realized as *Móbọ́laji* and *Móbọ́lanle,* respectively. More importantly, these names show that vowels may also be deleted preconsonantally in a different phonological environment. Consequently, initial deletion as in (9-13) can be seen as property of the construction. What is also important to note is that this initial vowel deletion in names functions as means of showing intimacy or familiarity by users.

3.1.2. Deity-centered names

Deity-centered names are names that are informed by deities among the Yoruba people. These are names used to indicate people's belief in these deities. These names are presented in the examples below in (13-16):

(14) *Òrìsàdélé*
     idol-come-PST-house
     'The god came home.'

(15) *Òrìsàbùnmi*
     idol-dash-PST-1SG
     'The god gifted me.'

(16) *Òrìsàbíyí*
     idol-birth-PST-this
     'The god birthed this one.'

(17) *Òrìsàgbèmí*
     idol-benefit-PST-1SG
     'The god benefits me.'

In terms of their semantic properties (SEM), these deity-informed names are very different from kingship names. They are names that valorize specific deities among the Yoruba people. Historically, among the Yorubas deities or idols are worshipped by clans and families. When a child is born, a name is given to reflect the deity worshipped by a particular family. These deities are believed to have supernatural abilities and are worshipped by people who desire these qualities. Thus, it is possible for a Yoruba child to have both a kingship name and a deity-informed name.

In terms of structure (SYN), just like kingship names, deity-informed names assume the sentential construction schema and may also be seen as sentential nominals.

$<$ [deity-name + [VP]] $\leftrightarrow$ [deity-informed name]m$>$

[[*òrìṣà*]$_{NPi}$ [*gbè mì*] $_{VPj}$]$_{Ni}$ 'Deity saves me.'

Fig. 4. Sentential construction schema in deity-informed names

Again, the above schema is the application of the sentential construction schema identified in Fig. 2. According to the schema shown in Fig. 4, *deity-name* captures a general terminology referring to deities among the Yorubas, which is followed by a VP that information about the deity actions or its beneficiary. The realized form by combining a [deity name] + [VP] is a [deity-informed name]. In other words, a deity-informed name construction structurally has a subject which designates a specific deity and a VP that specifies the actions of the deity. A deity-informed name may also be given to convey what a deity has done for a family. They may therefore be seen as sentences underlyingly. In other words, deity-informed names originate in the lexicalization of sentences.

TABLE 2. SYN features in deity-informed names

derived name form	underlying structure
Òrìṣàdélé	[*òrìṣà* [V – NP]] *òrìṣà dé ilé* deity arrive home
Òrìṣàbùnmi	[*òrìṣà* [V – NP]] *òrìṣà bùn mi* deity gift me
Òrìṣàbíyí	[*òrṣà* [V – NP]] *òrìṣà bí èyí* deity born this-one
Òrìṣàgbèmí	[*òrìṣà* [V – NP]] *òrìṣà gbè mí* deity save me

It should be noted that deity-informed names, like kingship names, also reflect morphophonological processes in the language. First, is the fact these *òrìṣà* names do not show word initial vowel elision as reflected in kingship names.

Second, they demonstrate the PHON feature of syllable elision and compensatory vowel lengthening. These PHON features are explained below.

3.1.2.1. PHON features: r- elision triggering vowel lengthening

Syllable elision[2]

Syllable elision is a phonological process where a syllable is "dropped", which could be an attempt to simplify the pronunciation of names. This may be seen in the following names:

(18) *Òòṣàgbèmí*   [= *òrìṣà gbè mí*]   'The deity saved me.'

(19) *Òòṣàfúnmí*   [= *òrìṣà fún mi*]   'The deity gave me.'

(20) *Òòṣàdélé*   [= *òrìṣà dé ilé*]   'The deity came home.'

In the examples above, the second syllable *rì* is deleted while the first syllable or initial vowel is lengthened in the process. The same sequence (*rì*) is deleted in all these names, which typifies these names as a different instance of syllable elision. For instance, in reincarnate names, discussed in subsection 3.1.3, syllable elision involves a different segment. As also observed, the elision of the second syllable triggers the lengthening of the initial vowel. The issue of vowel lengthening is further discussed below.

Vowel lengthening

Vowel lengthening is a phonological process where a vowel is lengthened or prolonged. This may also be seen in the names previously presented in (17-19) and repeated in (20-22) for further explication:

(21) *Òòṣàgbèmí*
     òrìṣà → òòṣà

(22) *Òòṣàfúnmí*
     òrìṣà → òòṣà

(23) *Òòṣàdélé*
     òrìṣà → òòṣà

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[2]   As noted by a reviewer, this has also been described in the literature as the process of intervocalic [r] deletion triggered when one of the following conditions is met: 1. The two vowels flanking [r] are identical or 2. one of the vowels is high (Akinlabi 1993).

In the above examples, the initial vowel of each name is lengthened. However, the process of vowel lengthening occurs after elision. This manifestation has a number of implications. First, vowel lengthening in (21-22) may be seen as a process of compensatory lengthening, where the initial syllable lengthens to cover for the "gap" left over by the deletion of the second syllable. In other words, *Orìṣà* has three syllables (or moras) – *ò.rì.ṣà*, and by deleting the second syllable *rì*, it becomes reduced to two syllables. But, by lengthening the initial syllable, *orìṣà* preserves the initial moraic structure of three moras – *ò.ò.ṣà*. Thus, vowel lengthening is a phonological strategy of preserving the moraic structure in elision contexts, where a syllable may be elongated to fill in a prosodic gap caused by a deleted syllable.

Second, while Davis and Ueda (2006) discussed the idea of vowel lengthening resulting from mora augmentation – where a syllable is increased in length by one mora, usually for prosodic or morphological reasons; these examples in (21-23), however, suggest that vowel lengthening may also result from mora preservation, a case where a syllable is increased in length by one mora to preserve the moraic structure of the word. However, these examples (20-22) also reflect Davis and Ueda's view that vowel lengthening may be prosodically induced, since in the examples, it actually occurs to preserve the prosodic structure of the personal names.

It is also important to note, according to Ikọtun (2010: 180), that Yoruba personal names may also be lengthened finally as in *Fẹ́mií*, *Adéé* but usually for sociolinguistic reasons such as to express caution or surprise. However, the names provided in (20-22) show that lengthening can occur word initially in Yoruba personal names. Hence, lengthening in Yoruba names may not be restricted to final syllables for sociolinguistic functions, it may occur in initial positions of names for phonological reasons. Furthermore, we observe that compensatory lengthening discussed in (20-22) seems to occur only in deity-informed names. However, as pointed out by a reviewer, this may also occur in other Yoruba nominal forms, e.g. *eèpẹ̀ < erùpẹ̀* 'sand', *ookì < oki* 'praise name'.

3.1.3. Reincarnate names

Reincarnate names relate to the idea of reincarnation in the Yoruba community. These are names that are used to indicate that the birth of a child is the 'coming back' of one of the ancestors. These names are presented in the examples (23-25) below:

(24) *Yé³túndé*
　　　mother-aux-come-PERF
　　　'The mother has come again.'

(25) *Yéwándé*
　　　mother-seek-PST-1SG-come-PERF
　　　'The mother has sought me.'

(26) *Yéjídé*
　　　mother-wake-PST-come-PERF
　　　'The mother has woken.'

In terms of their semantic properties (SEM), these reincarnate personal names are very different from previous names. They are names given to a child born immediately after the death of a grandfather or grandmother in a family. To the Yorubas, it is the spirit of the deceased grandfather or grandmother that has returned. This idea of reincarnation is significant to the Yorubas, as Awolalu and Dopamu (2005) also explain that the Yorubas strongly believe that the souls of the departed good ancestors were reincarnated and reborn as grandchildren in the family for them to continue their existence in the family. The ancestors do this as a result of the love they have for their family members or for the world. For more discussion of this aspect of Yoruba names, see Ehineni (2019).

In terms of structure (SYN), these reincarnate names are constructed by combining the word for the reincarnated individual (i.e father, mother, hunter) with other words. Like kingship and deity-informed names, reincarnate names may be seen as nominals, and therefore assume the following sentential construction schema:

$< $ [reincarnated subject $+$ [VP]] $\leftrightarrow$ [reincarnate name]m$>$

yé]$_{NPi}$ [*tún dé*] $_{VPj}$]$_{Ni}$ 'Mother has come again.'

Fig. 5. Sentence type construction schema in reincarnate names

Note that the above schema shows an application of the sentential construction schema identified in Fig. 2. According to the Fig. 5, "reincarnated subject" captures a particular person considered to be the subject of reincarnation, which is followed by a VP that provides information about the person. The realized form

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³ *Yeye* and iyá are both used to mean 'mother' in Yoruba. However, in constructions involving *yeye*, the initial syllable [ye] in *yeye* may be deleted.

by combining a [reincarnated subject] + [VP] is a reincarnate name. Just like previously discussed names, reincarnate names are desententialized names. They can be seen as lexicalized words, which are formed by reducing a sentence to a single noun as shown in the examples below.

TABLE 3. SYN features in reincarnate names

derived name form	underlying structure
Yétúndé	yèyé [V – NP]]
	yèyé tún dé
Yéwándé	yèyé [V – NP]]
	yèyé wán dé
Yéjídé	yèyé [V – NP]]
	yèyé jí dé

It should be noted that reincarnate names, like previous names discussed, also reflect significant morphophonological processes in the language. These names show that syllable elision in Yoruba names is not restricted to the *rí* segment – as shown in deity-informed names – since in reincarnate names, another segment is deleted. This is further explained in examples (26) and (27) below.

3.1.3.1. PHON features: syllable elision not triggering vowel lengthening

(27) *Yétúndé* [= *yèyé tún dé*] 'Mother has come again.'
     mother again come

(28) *Yéwańdé*[4] [= yèyé wá mi dé] 'Mother has sought me.'
     mother see me come

Here, the first syllable in *yèyé* is deleted to realize only *yé.* Note that there is no vowel elongation or mora augmentation in these examples. Hence syllable elision may not necessarily trigger vowel elongation or mora augmentation. So far we have examined sentential structures in our discussion of how names are formed, the next subsection 3.2 will focus on compound structures in the names.

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[4] Yorubas may sometimes render the names *Yetúndé* and *Yéwandé* as *Iyetúndéé* and *Iyéwandéé* when calling the name bearers. The insertion of the initial [i] is often accompanied with the lengthening of the final [e] as a pragmatic marker in the context of name calling. This is done when parents call their children loudly to ensure they hear them.

3.2. Compound name construction

A compound name construction is a name that involves the combination of two free morphemes or words to derive a nominal form. In other words, a compound name is formed by adding two words to form a name. This type of name construction uses the schema provided below:

$$<[[a]_{X_i} [b]_{Y_j}]_{N_i} \leftrightarrow [[SEM]i \text{ with a relation R to } [SEM]j]k>$$

Fig. 6. Compound name construction schema

Following Booij (2010b, 2016), the upper-case variables X and Y stand for the major lexical categories (X = N & V | Y = N, V & A). The lower-case variables *a* and *b* stand for arbitrary strings of phonological segments, while *i*, *j* and *k* are indexes for the matching properties of the constituents of the compound. Also, note that the schema is left-headed, which indicates that the left nominal constituent is the head of the N-N compound. This type of name construction is what occurs in compound kingship names discussed in subsection 3.2.1.

3.2.1. Compound kingship names

Kingship names are names that signify royalty in Yoruba. These are names used to indicate that someone comes from a family of kings. These names are presented in (28-34) below.

(29) *Adéoyè*
    crown-title
    'he crown of nobility'

(30) *Adéọlá*
    crown-wealth
    'the crown of prosperity'

(31) *Adéẹ́kọ́*
    crown-lesson
    'the crown of instruction'

(32) *Adéìyè*
    crown-life
    'the crown of salvation'

(33) *Adéìfẹ́*
    crown-love
    'the crown of love'

(34) *Adéògo*
    crown-glory
    'the crown of glory'

(35) *Adéìyá*
    crown-mother
    'the crown of motherhood'

Based on the CM approach – where words reflect a combination of form-meaning--usage properties indicating the three different types of information labeled as PHON, SYN, and SEM –these names have different structural properties, which include phonological, syntactic and semantic information. Semantically, these names have kingship or royal meaning. They are names that Yoruba kings give to their newborn children. Also, a kingship ancestry may also have a kingship surname which is passed down from generation to generation. That is, persons born to a lineage of kings, even when immediate parents are not kings, may still be given a kingship name.

Structurally, these compound royal names are constructed by combining the lexeme *adé* 'crown' with another word. The occurrence of *adé* in all these forms typify them as royalty-based. These names are compound nominals, and utilize the compound name construction schema in Fig. 7. below:

$$<[[a]_{Xi} [b]_{Yj}]_{Nk} \leftrightarrow [[SEM]j \text{ with a relation R to } [SEM]i]k>$$
$$[[N]i [N]j]_{Nk} \leftrightarrow [[SEM]i \text{ with property } [SEM]j]k$$
$$[[adé]_{Ni} [Y]_{Nj}]_{Nk} \leftrightarrow [\text{crown of SEMj}]$$

Fig. 7. Compound name construction schema

The schema $[[adé]_{Ni} [Y]_{Nj}]_{Nk} \leftrightarrow [\text{crown of SEMj}]$ represents the specific construction that is applied in forming kingship names. In this schema, *adé* occupies the leftmost position as a lexically fixed element, while the other [right] slot is left open to be occupied by variables matching [Y]. Hence, *adé* is the head of the compound nominal construction. The application of this schema to generate compound kingship names is presented below:

$$[[adé]_{Ni} [Y]_{Nj}]_{Nk} \leftrightarrow [\text{crown of SEM}_j]$$
$$[[adé]_{Ni} [oyè]_{Nj}]_{Nk} \text{ 'crown of nobility'}$$
$$[adé]_N \text{ 'crown'} \quad [oyè]_N \text{ 'nobility'}$$

Fig. 8. The application of the schema to generate compound kingship names

The schema $[[adé]_N [oyè]_N]_N$ 'crown of nobility' contains subschemas for *adé* and *oyè*. These subschemas reveal the compositional meaning of the schema. The necessity of subschemas relates to the fact that constituents of compounds may have a specific meaning that is bound to the compound construction, and yet can be used productively (Booij 2005). Thus, the meaning of *adéoyé* derives from both parts of the construction as 'crown of nobility'. It is a name that not only signifies that a child is of royal birth (for instance born to a king), but may also indicate that both parents have royal ancestry. It should be noted that all the names in (28-34) have the constituent *adé*, which occurs initially in the names. The schema reflects a leftheaded structure which means that the head of compound construction relates to the left nominal constituent *adé-*. The occurrence of *adé* as a kingship morphological marker in compound names is further presented in another schema:

$$[[adé]_{Ni} [Y]_{Nj}]_{Nk} \leftrightarrow [\text{crown of SEMj}]$$

$$[[adé]_{Ni} [\d{o}lá]_{Nj}]_{Nk} \quad \text{'crown of wealth'}$$

$$[adé]_N \text{'crown'} \qquad [\d{o}lá]_N \text{'wealth'}$$

Fig. 9. Kingship morphological marker in compound names

In the above example, the meaning of *adéǫlá* derives from both parts of the construction [*adé* + *ǫlá*] as 'crown of wealth'. It is a name that not only signifies that a child is of royal birth (for instance born to a king), but may also indicate that both parents are very rich. It important to noté while these kingship names reflect compound name construction forms. It is also important to note that compound type construction in names may exhibit unique PHON features as discussed below.

3.2.1.1. PHON features: non application of vowel elision

Vowel elision has been observed to occur in Yoruba in intervocalic contexts (see Akinlabi & Oyebade 1987, Pulleyblank 1988, Orie & Pulleyblank 2002). In these previous studies, a vowel is expected to delete when two vowels co-occur over a morpheme boundary (or one vowel assimilates to the other to resolve vowel hiatus – Orie and Pulleyblank (2002)). However, in kingship names, this rule is violated, as vowels may co-occur without deletion (or even assimilation). This may be seen in the kingship names presented below with their underlying morphemic structures:

(36) *Adéagbo*   [N[N*adé* [N*agbo*]]] 'crown of union'

(37) *Adeòtí*   [N[N*adé*[N*òtí*]]] 'crown of indestructibility'

(38) *Adéèkọ́*   [N[N*adé*[N*èkọ́*]]] 'crown of instruction/morality'

(39) *Adéayò*   [N[N*adé*[N*ayò*]]] 'crown of joy'

(40) *Adeòṣọ́*   [N[N*adé*[N*òṣọ́*]]] 'crown of adornment'

The names in (36-40) do not follow the vowel deletion rule over a morpheme boundary since the names preserve the vowels over the morpheme boundary. Also, this manifestation would be contrary to the vowel hiatus resolution strategies in Yoruba (Orie & Pulleyblank 2002) where, if vowel deletion does not occur, vowel assimilation is expected to occur to prevent vowel co-occurence over a morpheme boundary. In these kingship names, there is no vowel assimilation. Note that the vowels in (38) *adéèkọ́* [*adé* 'crown' + *èkọ́* 'instruction'] are different segments (see (36-40) for other examples). One reason that could militate against vowel deletion is the issue of meaning. For instance, if vowel deletion occurs in *adéòtí*, what would be realized would be *adétí*, which would mean a crown that destroys. This would generate a negative connotation in the name.

Consequently, names have unique linguistic features which may deviate from regular processes in the language. This observation, therefore, motivates the necessity to explore names as a "tripartite parallel architecture" (Booij 2010) where there is significant interaction between the PHON, SYN, and SEM features. In other words, a name may have unique PHON, SYN and SEM features which identify such names as a distinct construction. In essence, each name category has unique linguistic properties – which is the crucial idea in CM.

5. Conclusion

Following the CM framework, the article shows that Yoruba personal names exhibit various construction patterns, Yoruba names are categorized into kingship names, deity-informed names, reincarnate names and death-prevention names. These construction patterns include both similar and different SEM, SYN and PHON properties. First, we show that Yoruba personal names may reflect either sentential name construction and compound name construction in terms of their SYN properties. Second, each name category (kingship, deity-informed and reincarnate) has have different SEM features such as royalty, beliefs in idols and reincarnation. These names also has unique PHON properties. While word initial vowel deletion occurs in kingship names, deity-informed names

reflect deletion motivated lengthening while reincarnate names exhibit syllable deletion without lengthening.

Finally, by employing a constructionist approach in our analysis, it is advanced that the framework of construction morphology may be applied to the study of Yoruba personal names. Through this framework, we show that each Yoruba name is a unique construction involving semantic, syntactic and phonological properties. Hence, this discussion highlights that names constitute a form-meaning pair. Yoruba names may be grouped into categories as distinct constructions with unique SEM, SYN and PHON properties. Through analysis of names in the CM framework, it is suggested that construction morphology framework may provide a relevant approach to exploring the complex aspects of Yoruba word formation.

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Forms and functions of "impossibility" expressions in Yoruba informal interactions

Abstract

This study investigates the forms and pragmatic functions of "impossibility" slangy expressions in Yoruba informal interactions, within the framework of Mey's pragmatic acts (2001). Data comprised ten informal interactions randomly sampled from thirty interactions observed among the Yoruba in different contexts. Findings revealed "impossibility" slangy expressions in Yoruba trifurcate into function-oriented, structure-function-oriented, and danger-oriented types. They are deployed to express rejection, rejection with warning, caution, discountenance and disapproval, rebuke with dare, challenge and threat in Yoruba informal interactions. Participants in Yoruba informal interactions make recourse to facial expression (physical act), and contextual elements: shared cultural knowledge (SCK), shared experiential knowledge (SEK), voice (VCE), inference (INF) and relevance (REF) to deconstruct the pragmatic imports of impossibility expressions.

Keywords: slangy expressions, Yoruba, informal interactions, pragmatic acts, impossibility

1. Introduction

Many functionalists (i.a. Durban 1996, Allan 2003, 2010, Odebunmi 2006a, Kesckes 2014, 2010, Filani 2015) have reiterated the role of context in language use. These scholars have essentially argued that emphasis should be placed on the context of language use rather than structure, particularly as it relates to meaning. Some of the language phenomena that make valid the disciplinary

claim of these language scholars are concepts like proverbs, idiomatic expressions, slang and unconventional use of language generally whose use and meaning rely heavily on context. Thus, following these views, it suffices to conclude that human languages, beyond their sentential structures, exhibit semantic and pragmatic dynamism. The Yoruba language, mainly spoken by the Yoruba people of south-western Nigeria (although there are speakers in places like Cuba, Brazil, Republic of Benin, among others), like other languages of the world, manifests semantic and pragmatic dynamism. For instance, in the Yoruba language and culture, it is not uncommon to come across lexical items and linguistic expressions (other than idiomatic expressions and proverbs) whose semantic and pragmatic nuances cannot be figured out by mere looking at or considering their linguistic or syntactic components, but by making recourse to their contextual usage. For example, as observed by Ajayi (2016a), the word *pèlé* whose English equivalent is 'sorry', can be interpreted as feminine or masculine, depending on the context(s). While the feminine (*abo*) sense depicts the actual or conventional meaning of the word, the masculine version (*ako*) is pragmatically deployed to give the lexical item a meaning other than the conventional one. Hence, according to the people's culture and philosophical orientation, the ability to display dexterity in the use (including being able to use and decode "loaded" expressions) of the language is a major mark of wisdom, maturity and shrewdness. This phenomenon is one major reason the language has attracted the attention of language scholars, especially sociolinguists, discourse analysts, pragmaticians and ethnographers of communication who have mainly focused on idiomatic expressions and proverbs in the language (i.a. Owomoyela 1981, Fasiku 2006, Daramola 2013, Ehineni 2016 and Bolaji & Kehinde 2017).

In this study, attention is focused on certain utterances in Yoruba informal interactions, whose pragmatic imports can best be realised by discourse participants by making recourse to certain shared contextual elements. In particular, some expressions that demonstrate impossibilities in the Yoruba worldview and culture, which are often pragmatically deployed by the people, especially contemporary youths and young adults, to convey a sense or message of warning, disapproval, threat and rejection, among others are examined. The knowledge of these expressions has implications for the learning of the language, especially among second (language) learners or speakers of the language, hence the relevance of this study. We conceive as impossibility slangy expressions in this study such unconventional, colloquial and context-adaptive utterances that express ideas that the Yoruba understand or consider logically, pragmatically and culturally impossible. The expressions are conceptualised slangy given their

unconventionality and colloquialism in line with the arguments of e.g. González (1994), Chen (2006), Adeyanju (2007). While their unconventionality places them in the same class with other context-driven genres such as proverbs and idiomatic expressions in the language, impossibility slangy expressions are essentially different from them in that, given their "colloquial" nature, they are exclusively restricted to informal contexts and interactions. They are ad hoc expressions that are contextually created by users in specific discourse situations to achieve certain pragmatic goals. These expressions, as shall be seen later in the study, are characteristically framed as *o ò ní fẹ́…* 'you won't want to…' expressions.

2. Slang(ifying)

Different scholars have expressed different views about slang. For instance, Eble (1996: 11) describes slang "as an ever-changing set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers use to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within a group or with a trend or fashion in society at large". Ellis (2002) opines slang is "a variety of language used in certain contexts by means of which people express their sense of belonging to a particular group within the community which is not specific to any geographic location". Adeyanju (2007: 267) sees slang as "substandard but widely used expressions with or without the attributes of existing words/expressions usually employed to facilitate communication in a new sense, which may last for a while in a sociolinguistic environment and later disappear if not widely accepted and used". Adeyanju's definition reinforces Lorimer's (1994: 933) definition that "slangy expressions consist of new meanings attributed to existing words or wholly new words generally accepted as lying outside standard polite usage". In the submission of Zhou and Fan (2013), slang is an informal speech style which can be made up of a single word or a group of words. It is a speech form that is characterised by informality and it is often treated with low prestige. Zhou and Fan further note that slangy expressions are often identified with youths and young people in society.

As observed by Gbogi (2016), slang (or slangifying) is a phenomenon that largely characterises the language behaviour of Nigerian youths. Many of these slangy expressions are traceable to the Nigerian hip hop music genre which has become the toast of many urban youths in the country (Ugot 2009, 2014, Osisanwo 2009, Dozie & Madu 2012, Gbogi 2016 and Ajayi & Bamgbose 2018). In line with the observation of Osisanwo (2009), Gbogi (2016) opines that slang(ifying) operates as an urban lingo that is produced and consumed within

the Nigerian hip hop nation and speech community. He further posits slangifying produces a youth-ocused language whose potential meanings are hard to decode by non-group members, that is, members who do not share in the hip hop culture. One major feature of slangifying, as Gbogi (2016) observes, is its heavy reliance on context for semantic interpretation. For instance, the word *badoo* which evolved from a popular Nigerian hip hop artiste, Olamide, is such that has become a salutary term among Nigerian youths. Literally, the word has the same lexical weight as the word *bad* from which it is coined. However, in the context of social interaction among Nigerian youths, it is a term that is used to hail youthful escapades and exuberances. Gbogi further notes that even in instances that involve the use of already existing words, slangifying usually recreates the words through pun and language mixing, making them not easily understandable. This notion is further reinforced in Odogwu's (2018) conceptualization of slang. In her opinion, slangy expressions are "coded" expressions deployed in conversation. As gleaned from her submission, the codedness of slang lies in its characteristic extension of the meaning of already existing words in a speech society (Yahaya 2010). It can also involve the use of newly coined colloquial words or phrases (Chen 2006) whose meanings are only decodable by members of a particular social or age group (mainly youths). It is a symbol of sub-culture in every human society (Idiagbon-Abdullahi 2010)

From these various definitions, it suffices to describe slang (or slangifying) as an unconventional use of language, which manifests a high sense of informality and colloquialism among users, particularly among youths or young adults. This conceptualization is predicated on González's (1994) description of slang as signalling an atmosphere of informality and relaxation. This understanding of slang guides the description/categorisation of the "unconventional" expressions focused in this study.

3. Relevant studies on the contextual use of Yoruba

The Yoruba language, like other world's languages, is very dynamic and its use is highly context-sensitive. This submission is predicated on the observation that many linguistic constructs in the language are capable of attracting different semantic/pragmatic realisations, depending on contexts. That is why, as observed by Ajayi (2016a), the word *pèlé* 'sorry', for instance, can actually express remorse or being genuinely apologetic for a wrong done (by which case it would be feminine) or a form of rebuke, ridicule or mockery (by which it is considered masculine) depending on the tone and manner of rendition on the one hand, the

situation and the nature of the relation between the user of the word and the fellow so addressed with the word on the other. This vital role context plays in the use of Yoruba, perhaps, explains why the language has enjoyed much scholarly attention particularly from linguists and stylisticians. A number of studies provide the foundation upon which this study is laid. These include Ajayi (2016a, 2016b & 2018), Akanmu and Ajetunmobi (2017), Bamgbose (2016), Odebunmi (2008), Oyetade (2000). Oyetade (2000) examines the phenomenon of verbal indirection in Yoruba informal interactions. His argument, essentially, is that, participants in interactions involving the use of verbal indirection in Yoruba often make recourse to context (common ground) for meaning construction. Odebunmi (2008) engages the place of context in the deconstruction of proverbs in Ola Rotim's *God's are not to blame.* With the deployment of Mey's pragmatic acts theory (2001), Odebunmi carefully and systematically demonstrates how recourse to contextual elements contributes to the understanding of the use of Yoruba proverbs in the text. Similarly, Odebunmi (2015) explores how contextual use of greetings in Yoruba indexes being 'a cultured person' (ọmọlúàbí) among the people. Ajayi (2016a) is a pragmatic exploration of the role of context in the interpretation of "abusive" commendations among Yoruba youths, particularly in south-western Nigeria. The study, among other things, reiterates the fact that some expressions that could be described as superficially abusive can underlyingly serve as commendations among Yoruba youths. Ajayi (2016b) is an application of Mey's pragmatic acts theory (2001) to analyse pain-relieving strategies in Yoruba burial songs. Ajayi notes that Yoruba Christian pain-relieving burial songs are emotional acts that interact with contextual elements like shared Yoruba cultural belief (SYCB), shared Christian religious belief (SCRB), inference (INF), relevance (REL) and metaphor (MPH) to offer antidotes to the pain of death among Yoruba Christians in Nigeria.

Bamgbose (2016) is a pragmatic investigation of the use of indirect speech acts in Yoruba informal expressions. He notes that indirectness, mainly expressed through simple sentences in Yoruba, can be used to warn, instruct, and caution individuals, among others. Akanmu and Ajetunmobi (2017) examine the historical evolution, definition, denotative and connotative realisations of some slangy expressions and argots which have, overtime, become recognised expressions among the Yoruba. These scholars argue essentially that these slang and argots serve as precursor to the emergence of new idioms and idiomatic expressions in the language. Ajayi (2018) is an ethno-pragmatic investigation of verbal indirection in Yoruba, particularly with a view to invalidating the position of Oyetade (2000) that verbal indirection is solely a face-saving mechanism in Yoruba inter-

actions. In this study, the scholar demonstrates, in concrete terms, how verbal indirection can be deployed as a face-threatening phenomenon in Yoruba, depending on context. Ayigun (2018) is a pragmatic analysis of the use of euphemisms in Yoruba language. In particular, Ayigun examines the contextual factors that influence the use and meaning of the direct and indirect acts performed by Yoruba speakers with the use of euphemistic expressions.

These scholars, as noted above, have examined the role of context in the use of the Yoruba language from different dimensions, particularly within ethnographic, cultural and pragmatic studies. In particular, they have clearly shown how the conventional and idiomatic use of Yoruba rides on context for successful communicative interactions. However, the role of context in the deconstruction of "impossibility" slangy (unconventional) expressions in informal interactions in Yoruba, whose knowledge, given their essential pragmatic functions beyond just being colloquial elements of informal discourse, is germane to the speaking, teaching and learning of the language, especially among second speakers and early learners, has conspicuously been glossed over by these scholars; perhaps due to its relative newness in the language. Essentially, while the knowledge of conventional "impossibility" or "rejection" expressions (which are non-idiomatic, figurative or formulaic) such as i.a. *láí láí* 'never', *rárá* 'no', *kò ṣeé ṣe* 'it is impossible' is commonplace from existing literature on use of Yoruba; practically, no scholarly attention has been given to slangy/unconventional "impossibility" expressions in the language. Thus, given the global recognition of Yoruba as one of the most researched African languages of the world (Bamgbose 2016), especially in non-native environments, the need to further reinforce the role of context in the learning of the language is highly imperative. Similarly, there is need to emphatically draw the attention of teachers of the language at all levels to the pragmatic dynamism (and perhaps functions) of some of the so-called "colloquial/informal" expressions in the language which teaching has been largely left out in the pedagogical scope of the teaching of the language and culture. Thus, with a study of this nature, some of the contextual dynamics/issues revolving round achieving meaningful and purposeful intercultural communication in Yoruba, arising from indirectness and unconventional use of the language, particularly among second speakers/learners who are only familiar with the conventional way of expressing rejection, warning, threat, and disapproval, among others in Yoruba are foregrounded and addressed. The study is therefore significant given its potentiality of providing a veritable reference material for the teaching of effective communication in the Yoruba language and culture.

4. Theoretical framework: Pragmatic act theory

This study benefits essentially from Mey's pragmatic act theory (2001)[1] which is considered in pragmatics circle as an improvement on speech act theory. As evident in Fairclough (1989) and Mey (2001), for instance, the speech act theory has been heavily criticised by scholars for its perceived deficiencies which have been demonstrated in several studies, hence the emergence of pragmatic act theory. One of the commonest arguments often used to point out the deficiencies of speech act theory is its inability to take care of context, and as such, it is more oriented towards utterances' classifications rather than functions. Thus, at best, the pragmatic act theory can be described as one that systematically addresses the lapses identified in speech act theory. Fairclough (1989: 9) describes speech act theory as being "atomistic" and individual-centred. In the same vein, Mey (2001: 214) opines that speech act lacks "a theory of action". Therefore, pragmatic act theory, unlike speech act theory, takes care of not just utterances but "action" and the situation that influence these utterances. This theory, as opined by its adherents: Fairclough (1989), Mey (2001), Odebunmi (2006a and 2008), Ajayi (2016a, 2016b, 2017 and 2018), among others, deals with how people use language within their individual limitations, situations and the "affordances" of the immediate context (Ehineni 2019). In the submission of Mey (2001), pragmatic act theory focuses on "the environment in which both speaker and hearer find their affordances, such that the entire situation is brought to bear on what can be said in the situation, as well as what is actually being said" (2001: 221), and central to the theory is the notion of pragmeme (a situated speech act that reveals how the rules of language and society interact to determine meaning, Capone (2005)).

According to Mey (2001), there are two parts to a pragmeme – the activity part and the textual part. The activity part focuses on the interactants, while the textual part refers to the context of language use. The interactants, operating within the confines of the activity part, communicate using different speech acts such as indirect speech acts, conversational ("dialogue") acts, psychological

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[1] Although there are other context-oriented theories like Hymes' (1974) ethnography of speaking, for instance, which could as well be deployed for a study of this nature, these theories are however considered not appropriate for this study, given their criticism which revolves round their being too ritualistic in their approach to discourse, and especially because of their exclusive "applicability to ritualized speech events including funerals, weddings and their non applicability in non-ritualized events/interactions" (Unuabonah 2016), as detailed in this study.

acts, prosodic acts, and physical acts. Similarly, in the textual part, the interactants operate within the ambit of (con)textual phenomena such as INF (inference), REF (relevance), VCE (voice), SSK (shared situation knowledge), MPH (metaphor) and M (metapragramatic joker). The interaction between these two parts, activity and textual, makes up the pragmeme. Capone (2005) provides further insights into the workings of pragmeme. He argues that pragmemes are transformations utterances go through when subjected to the forces of context. In his arguments, these transformations "reshape the original illocutionary nature of a speech or speech act by providing contextual layers of meaning or change the illocutionary value of the speech act" (Capone 2005: 1360).

The pragmatic act theory is considered apt for this study, given the fact that the "impossibility" slangy expressions considered for analysis are expressions in non ritualized interactions that carry underlying and deep contextual and cultural meanings beyond the surface level. In other words, beyond what a non action or contextual theory like speech acts can reveal, the pragmatic act theory demonstrates clearly how contextual linguistic and non-linguistic variables interact to generate meanings in interactions involving the use of "impossibility" slangy expressions, whose meaning cannot be realized by mere recourse to their wordings. However, for the purpose of this study, as a data-driven modification of Mey's pragmatic acts (2001), we introduce the concept of SEK (shared experiential knowledge, which refers to specific experiences shared by some individuals which have influence on their interpretation of certain linguistic utterances) as part of the contextual elements that become handy in the interpretation of "impossibility" slangy expressions in Yoruba informal interactions. We also make recourse to Odebunmi's (2006a) SCK (shared cultural knowledge, which refers to some aspects or tenets of the culture of discourse participants which are often brought to bear in utterance interpretation) in our data analysis.

5. Methodology

Data for this study were acquired through ethnographic techniques: participant and non-participant observation. The data comprised unobtrusively observed informal and casual conversations/interactions among speakers of Yoruba (with some fluency in English and Nigerian Pidgin English as well). In particular, conversations among young parents and children, co-workers, siblings and friends, in different contexts such as the home, school, workshop, and social gatherings, were specifically observed. My observations were complemented with the practical experiences and observations of my LIN 381 (Ethnography of Communication (2018/2019 Session)) students who assisted with data collection. The

students, through our class interactions, had earlier been introduced to the phenomenon of impossibility slangy expressions and their characteristic features (largely being unconventional and causing semantic (Charteris-Black 2004, Ezeifaka 2013), pragmatic, contextual or comparison tension or incongruity. This knowledge adequately guided the students' observation and identification of such expressions used around them. Observatory notes were made of the basics of the interactions sampled, after which discourses were generated around them for coherence. Drawing insights from Bernard's (1994) and deMunck and Sobo's (1998) position on gathering natural and unobtrusive data in natural environments, different interactions were initially observed in different settings, out of which thirty were considered relevant to this study. However, given their similar features, ten excerpts, generated from ten different interactions, have been randomly sampled and presented for analysis in this study, with the participants given pseudo-names for ethical consideration. All the participants in the interactions observed were between eight and forty years of age. This confirmed the fact that slangy expressions are commonly found among toddlers, youths and young adults. Data were classified based on the observed "impossibility" features in the expressions and subjected to pragmatic analysis, particularly within the purview of Mey's pragmatic acts theory. Being Yoruba, my linguistic, cultural, experiential and imaginative competence in the language was handy in data engagement.

6. Data presentation and analysis

6.1. Yoruba impossibility slangy expressions in context

For ease of data analysis in this study, we have identified three forms/types of "impossibility" utterances, all of which project evidence of co-occurrence impossibility. These form the basis of our data discussion.

6.1.1. Function-oriented impossibility expressions

Function-related impossibility expressions involve a strategic combination of items or ideas that cannot co-occur based on their functional use or relationships by a speaker in order to express rejection, denial, or abhorrence for an action or a practice. Examples are discussed in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 1. Generated from a student-lecturer interaction

Student: *E kaaro sir.*
　　　　　'Good morning sir.'

Lecturer: *Booni o? Hope you are good.*
             'How are you? Hope you are good.'

Student: *E wòó, mo wà pa jàre.*
             'I am very fine.'

Lecturer: *Kí ló ń ṣẹlẹ̀?*
             'What is happening?'

Student: *Happiness ni o…* [sights a pack of food on A's table and asks:] *Uncle T, ṣé èmi ni mo ni oúnjẹ yìí?*
             'It is happiness. Uncle T, is this food mine?'

Lecturer: ***O ò ní fẹ̀ fi póò mu gàarí.***
             'You won't want to use potty for *gàarí* consumption.'

Student: *Ah an, ẹ ẹ̀ wà caring kankan.*
             'You are not caring at all.'

Lecturer*:   Irọ̀ọ́, lọ wá abímọ má jẹun wáà.*
             'No, give the instance of a parent who would not eat because s/he has children.'

Lecturer and Student: [Laugh]

In excerpt 1, the impossibility expression (1) *O ò ní fẹ̀ fi póò mu gàarí* 'you won't want to use potty for *gaari* consumption' signals/practs rejection/denial. In the interaction, the student asks the lecturer friend if she could eat the food placed on the lecturer's table. In his response, rather than rejecting the request directly, the lecturer chooses to employ the expression *O ò ní fẹ́fi póò mu gàarí* 'you won't want to use potty to drink *gàarí*' to convey his message. The lecturer (a young Yoruba man in his mid 30s), operating within the ambit of the shared cultural knowledge (SCK) among the Yoruba, orientates towards the cultural practice among the people in his response to the request of the student, knowing the student, who is also Yoruba, shares same and as such would understand the message. In the Yoruba socio-cultural system, *póò* 'potty' and *gàarí* 'a very popular kind of food/snack among the Yoruba made from cassava, often mixed with water for consumption' are concepts whose uses are well defined by the cultural practices of the people. *Pòó* 'potty', for instance, is an item for defecation (especially among little children) associated with the toilet, and as such it is considered indecent, unhealthy, disgusting, and ultimately against the norm among the people to use it for food consumption. *Gàarí*, as mentioned earlier, is a snack-like food among the people. Typically, given their incompatibility in use, the former would not be found with the latter, especially as it relates to the food consumption practice/culture of the people. Thus, their (co-)occurrence in the statement of the lecturer is a deliberate metaphoric reinforcement of the oppositeness of the

two cultural domains where *póò* and *gaàrí* feature in the Yoruba cultural practices to reject the request of the student. The pragmatic weight of this utterance in the interaction is reinforced with the physiognomic act: a "serious look" on the face of the lecturer which accompanies his statement.

Drawing inference (INF) from the impossibility of the Yoruba to use *póò* 'potty' for *gaàrí* consumption, coupled with the 'serious look on the face of the lecturer, the student understands the statement to mean an indirect rejection of her request. This is evident in her response *áh an, ẹ ẹ̀ wà caring kankan* 'you are not caring at all'. The statement of the lecturer, although linguistically 'irrelevant' to the request made by the student, is pragmatically relevant (REL) as it is understood by the utterer, the lecturer and the hearer, the student, as 'no or rejection' to the student's request.

Excerpt 2. Generated from a mother-son interaction

Son: *Mummy, ṣé mo lè lo omi inú bucket yẹn?*
          'Mummy, can I take my bath with the water in the bucket?'

Mother: **O ò ní fẹ̀ fi ata gúngún lé tìróò.**
          'You won't want to use ground pepper for eyelid beautification.'

Son: *Oh oh! Mummy ẹ ẹ̀ dè jọ̀ọ́.*
          'Mummy, please now.'

Mother: *O ti kúrò níwájú mi; ṣé èmi ni mo má a pọn omi ìwẹ̀ fún ẹ ni!*
          'Have you left my presence; would I be the one to fetch bath water for you!/Get out of my presence, should I be the one to fetch water for you?'

Son: [Leaves his mother's presence grudgingly].

In excerpt 2, a mother-son interaction, the mother (who, from my estimation/observation, is in her thirties) employs the use of *O ò ní fẹ́ fi ata gúngún lé tìróò* 'you won't want to use ground pepper for eyelid beautification' to pass a message of rejection and warning to her son. In the interaction, the son makes a request to the mother on whether he could take his bath with the bucket of water fetched by her. In her response, rather than making direct utterances such as *rárá, o ò lé lò ó* 'no; you cannot'; or *má lò ó* 'don't use it, among others, the mother deploys the impossibility statement *O ò ní fẹ́ fi ata gúngún lé tìróò* which indirectly projects the metaphor 'you will regret your action' to convey her message of rejection, threat and warning to the son. In this instance, the mother rides on three contextual features: SCK, SEK and VCE in relation to the physiognomical act, a stern facial look, to construct the meaning of her impossibility utterance. The mother and the son are Yoruba who expectedly, as defined by their shared cultural

knowledge, know *ata gúngún* 'ground pepper' and *tìróò* 'eye pencil (for facial/eyelid beautification)' are incompatible items in the "business" of eye/facial beautification. For instance, they both know that 'ground pepper' is a culinary item in the Yoruba cultural practices and 'eye pencil' is an item for the beautification of the eyelid or face, especially among young girls and ladies. As such, from their shared experiential knowledge, they both know the pepper, given its physiological components, hurts the eyes and makes them produce discomfort tears (when/if the former comes in contact with the latter). This unlikely relationship between the two provides the ideology behind the Yoruba proverbial statement which rides on metaphor: *kíkéré l'ata á kéré tí fi ń ṣ'ọkọ ojú* which translates as 'notwithstanding the size of the pepper, it always constitutes a menace to the eyes when they both come in contact'. Thus, it would be a foolish attempt on the part of a right-thinking fellow to attempt deploying pepper for facial beautification, especially on the eyelid as expressed in the statement of the mother in the excerpt above. The son, in particular, orientating to contextual features of SCK, SEK and INF, infers the message the mother is passing across, both as a rejection and an implicit warning. In particular, he knows if he dares to go ahead and use the water in the bucket, the consequence would be likened to the unpalatable experience of any fellow who 'puts pepper in their eyes'. This understanding explains why he resorts to begging the mother (3) *Oh oh! Mummy ẹ ̀ dẹ̀ jọ́* 'mummy, please' in a 'pleading' voice (VCE) in the next line as presented in the interaction.

Just as observed in excerpt 1, although the utterance *O ò ní fẹ́ fi ata gúngún lé tìróò* is not superficially relevant to the request of the mother, it is underlyingly relevant, particularly with the aid of contextual features such as SCK, SEK and INF. Both participants, being guided by the aforementioned contextual linguistic and non-linguistic variables, construct and deconstruct the meanings of the impossibility slangy expression used in the interaction.

6.1.2. Structure-function-oriented impossibility expressions

What makes the structure-function-oriented "impossibility" type different from the function-related "impossibility" type discussed earlier is that, while the former is strictly about items/ideas whose relationships are considered impossible strictly based on their *function*, the latter deals with items which are *structurally* similar but *functionally* dissimilar to achieve certain pragmatic goals. In other words, in this instance, we relate to objects, items or phenomena that share some sort of similarity physically but are functionally used for different purposes. Examples are discussed in the excerpts below:

Excerpt 3. A sitting-room interaction between siblings

Bisola: *Seyi, daddy is calling you o*[2].

Seyi: *Ohhh! Why is he calling me now!*

Bisola: *I don't know o.*

Seyi: *Daddy disturbs someone a lot.*

Bisola: *Ha! I dare you to go and say that in front of him;* ***o ò ní fẹ́ f'èlùbọ́ ṣe powder.***
          'You won't want to use *èlùbọ́* ('yam flour') to powder your face.'

Seyi: [Keeps quiet].

The interaction presented in excerpt 3 transpired between two siblings. Bisola informs Seyi their father needs her attention but she is not pleased with this message because she feels she is being disturbed. She then complains to the conveyer of the message that 'daddy disturbs someone a lot'. Bisola is surprised by this comment and retorts she dares her (Seyi) to say that before the father with the "impossibility" utterance (4) *o ò ní fẹ́ f'èlùbọ́ ṣe powder* 'you won't want to powder your face with yam flour'. Making recourse to the SCK, both Bisola and Seyi, being Yoruba, could relate to *èlùbọ́* 'yam flour' as a powdery substance for preparing *àmàlà,* a popular food among the Yoruba people. In other words, they both could relate to the substance as an edible item and not one culturally deployed for beautification, even though it looks very much like the powder (a substance that looks very much like yam flour) used for that purpose. As a cultural practice, no sane Yoruba fellow would resort to deploying yam flour for facial beautification, even though the yam flour and the powder look very much alike. The conveyer of the message, Bisola, interprets the statement by Seyi as an insult to their father, given their shared cultural practice as Yoruba that condemns the practice of a younger fellow abusing, insulting or talking down on an elderly person. Thus, she deploys the impossibility statement to rebuke her for violating that cultural norm. She is so sure, Seyi, being a fellow who understands this cultural norm, would not dare repeat that forbidden linguistic practice in the presence of the father who would not spare her the cane and thorough beating, if she did.

Stretching the argument further, one could as well submit the participants are equally drawing on their shared experiential knowledge of how strict and intolerant the father is to such anti-*ọmọlúàbí* linguistic behaviour as exhibited by Seyi, hence he would deal seriously with her if it ever came to his knowledge. Seyi's

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[2]   For emphasis as is the practice among the Yoruba.

subsequent reaction (of keeping silent) shows she understands the pragmatic import of Bisola's statement as intended. Against this backdrop, it would suffice to conclude that the impossibility statement/utterance by Biola is (de)constructed, making recourse to contextual elements of SCK (seeing Seyi's linguistic practice as unacceptable among the Yoruba), SEK (given their experience of their father as being strict and his non condoning of anti-*ọmọlúàbí* practices like the one Seyi just exhibits) and INF, by both her and her sister (Seyi) as rebuking and challenging the untoward cultural practice of Seyi in the encounter. Without making recourse to the interaction between the target utterance and the contextual variables mentioned above, it would be difficult to place the pragmatic import of the statement. The addressee, for instance, would be wondering what relevance does *èlùbọ́* and powder have to the subject of discourse.

Excerpt 4. A well-side interaction between two roommates

Bode: [Not comfortable with the way his roommate is handling the rope of the fetcher
        used from drawing water from the well].
        Rọra máà ju doro yẹn s'ómi...k'ókùn yẹn má jà o.
        'Please be care with that rope… so that it does not drop in the well'

Tayo [Laughs]: *Tó bá já, ṣèbí a lè r'àmîî.*
        'If it does (drop in the well), we will buy a new one'.

Bode: ***O ò ní fẹ́ fi spaghetti fa'mi lódò*** [with a warning look].
        'You won't want to use spaghetti to draw water from the well.'

Tayo: Don't worry, I will be careful.

The interaction presented as excerpt 4 took place between two friends staying in the same apartment. Bode, the first speaker here, is not comfortable with the "careless" manner Tayo, his friend and roommate, is handling the rope tied to the fetcher with which water is being drawn from the well. He then calls his attention to it. In his response, Tayo is of the opinion that if anything goes wrong with the rope (or by extension, the fetcher), they would buy a new one. Bode finds this response awkwardly unacceptable and, with a warning facial look (physiognomical act) has to quickly send a message of warning and caution to him to let him know he would not be a party to buying a new rope nor a fetcher if anything happened to them by virtue of his "carelessness". This message is captured in the impossibility statement (5) *O ò ní fẹ́ fi spaghetti fa'mi lódò* 'you won't want to use spaghetti to draw water from the well'.

Riding on contextual element of SEK, both Bode and Tayo could relate to spaghetti, a type of pasta (made with flour, water and sometimes egg which is cooked and

usually served with sauce) as an edible item or substance. Similarly, they both understand how soft, fragile, and rope-like spaghetti becomes, especially after cooking, hence the impossibility of using it as a rope to be tied to a fetcher to draw water from the well. And essentially, they both know, although spaghetti has the look or shape of a rope (after cooking), it does not measure up to the length, thickness and firmness of a rope; hence it cannot perform the same function as a rope. Against this shared experiential knowledge, Bode deliberately deploys the impossibility utterance in the excerpt above with the understanding that Tayo, who equally shares the same experiential knowledge of the impossibility of using spaghetti as rope, particularly for fetching water, would interpret it as signalling warning and caution. From the response of Tayo, it is quite evident, he too, deploying INF, in addition to SEK (which clearly demonstrates the impossibility of deploying spaghetti as a tool for fetching water from the well as known to both participants), and Bode's uncomplimentary facial expression, deconstructs Bode's statement as one signalling warning and caution, as evident in his response 'Don't worry, I will be careful'. He must have understood the statement of Bode as such that suggests he (Tayo) would be solely responsible for replacing the fetcher and the rope if anything should happen to them, hence his promise to be careful.

Excerpt 5. A room chat between two students

Toyin: *Ronke, I like that Bayo guy so much, I think I am going to ask him out oo.*

Ronke [Apparently shocked by Toyin's statement]: *Are you sick or something, you want to ask a man out! Go and ask him out...* ***Nígbà tóò ní fẹ́ f'eja kíká ṣe bangle*** [with a frantic look].

'When you won't want to use smoked curved fish as bangle.'

Toyin: [Keeps silent].

In excerpt 5 above, Toyin calls Ronke's attention to the fact that she is developing feelings for a young man whose name is Bayo. She does not stop at that, she concludes she is going to ask him out. Given the shared cultural background of the duo, Ronke considers the idea as a wrong one and as such should not be pursued. She actually condemns the idea with the impossibility statement (6) *Nígbà tóò ní fẹ́ f'eja kíká ṣe bangles* 'when you won't want to use smoked curved fish as bangle' with a frantic look. Operating within the ambit of their shared cultural knowledge (as Yoruba), both of them understand the impropriety of a lady asking a man out, as what is culturally acceptable is that a man should be the one to woo a lady. In most cases, ladies who flout this norm are seen as uncul-

tured, weird, and shameless. This practice points to the patriarchal nature of the Yoruba society. Drawing on this shared cultural knowledge, Ronke considers Toyin's proposed move as unacceptable and as such warns/cautions her against it with the impossibility statement observed in the interaction. Besides, their shared experiential knowledge suggests they both are aware of how practically impossible it is for anyone to attempt using smoked curved fish (which are often dry) as bangle, even though both of them have the same shape. They both know that, beside the fact that using smoked curved fish as a bangle is not fashionable, such an attempt would result in the fish breaking into pieces (from its dryness). Obviously from her reaction, Toyin infers Ronke's impossibility utterance as a cautionary warning against her intended action. However, to scholars interested in humour, for instance, such an utterance as this might not be appreciated beyond its humorous nature, following Attardo's (1994) incongruity concept of humour. But of course, the participants in this excerpt, especially Ronke, do not intend to invoke laughter in Toyin, and that understanding is demonstrated through Toyin's response.

Excerpt 6. A casual road-side interaction between two friends

Addy: *Bro, how far now?*
           'Brother, how are you?'

Banny: *I dey o.*
           'I am okay.'

[A military man passes by.]

Banny: [Raises his hand in saluting the military man] *My ọ̀gá.*
           'My boss.'

Military man: Bro, how you dey? [walks away]
           'Brother, how are you?'

Anny: *Bro, shey you know say I feel like slapping that soldier.*
           'Do you know I feel like slapping that soldier.'

Banny: [Laughs] *Slap!* ***Nígbà t'ó ò ní fẹ́ fi òpó iná tayín...wòó****, you go suffer.*
           'When you won't want to use an electricity pole as toothpick, see you will suffer'

Anny: *Nothing fit happen jọ̀ọ́.*
           'Nothing will happen, please.'

Banny: *Okay o, go try am.*
           'Okay, go and try it.'

Anny and Banny: [Laugh].

The two speakers, Anny and Banny, in excerpt 6 above were having a casual discussion by the roadside while a military man known to Banny passed by.

After the salutary interaction between Banny and the military man, Anny comments to Banny that he feels like slapping the military man, perhaps as a jocular interjection in the interaction. The interjectory comment sounds ridiculous but funny to Banny who must be wondering why Anny would conceive such an idea. He then warns him not to try carrying out his thought/wish with the impossibility utterance (7) *Nígbà tóò ní fẹ́ fi òpó iná tayín* 'when you won't want to use an electricity pole as toothpick'. Given their shared situational knowledge (SSK), both speakers Anny and Banny understand the structural and functional differences between the electricity pole and the toothpick, even though both items are made from the wood. Structurally, an electricity pole, for instance, is usually long in size, thick, and heavy in weight (and more often than not, it is usually carried by two or three people whenever it is going to be erected, as it is not an object that can possibly be handled or carried by a single individual), while a toothpick is a small thin pointed stick of wood that is very light in weight.

Functionally, while the electricity pole serves as an object with which wires are connected to a source of power for electrification, the toothpick is mainly used to pick food dirt and residue stuck between the teeth. Thus, given their structural and functional differences, one cannot be used in place of the other. It is therefore an impossible task to attempt to deploy the electricity pole for tooth picking. Banny chooses to resort to the use of this "impossibility" utterance to warn Anny against his "intention", because given their (Anny and Banny) SSK of how soldiers are known to be brutal, "inhuman" and deadly in dealing with perceived "ruthless" or erring civilians, he expected Anny would draw the inference (INF) the statement was expressing warning and caution. Not even the smiley facial looks on Banny could veil the weight of the warning inherent in the utterance. To Banny, slapping a military man, especially by a "bloody"[3] civilian like Anny, would attract unimaginable beating and ruthless treatment from him. The message, as intended, is understood by Anny as such that warns or cautions him against his imagined action which is certain to come with grave consequences.

6.1.3. Danger-oriented "impossibility" expressions

In this category, we deal with those expressions that emphasise what the Yoruba would not consider possible actions based on the fear that such might attract dangerous or serious consequences. The striking difference between this type of impossibility and the two other forms earlier identified, which are most times

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[3] It is a common practice among uniformed men representing law enforcement agencies such as the army and police to refer to civilians as "bloody civilians" in Nigeria.

predicated on the notion of fear, is that it is more around actions or practices considered not just fearsome but also dangerous. Besides, this particular form, unlike the first two, does not involve drawing an association or link between two or more (un)related items. These are discussed in the excerpts below:

Excerpt 7. An interaction between a boss and an apprentice in a mechanic workshop

(rejection/warning)

Boss: *Mutiu, sáré wá lọ bámi ra pure water wá* [gives him 100 naira for a bag of pure water])
'Mutiu, quickly go and buy some table water for me.'

Mutiu: *Oga, ṣé kí n mú shenji tó kù ni?*
'Boss/Sir, should I keep the balance?'

Boss: *Mú kíni! Mun ùn,* **nígbàtí o ò ní fẹ́ gbatẹ́gùn lóríi transformer** [in a raised voice].
'Take what! Keep it, when you won't want to relax on the transformer.'

Mutiu: [Leaves his boss disappointedly].

The interaction in excerpt 7 took place in a mechanic workshop between a boss and one of his apprentices. The boss calls on him to help buy some sachet of table water (called pure water in the Nigerian context). The young man enquires if he could keep the change of the money he is given after he might have bought the sachet water. The request is quickly declined by his boss with the impossibility statement (8) *nígbàtí o ò ní fẹ́ gbatẹ́gùn lóríi transformer* 'when you won't want to relax on the transformer' with a *raised and firm voice.* The boss deploys this statement to decline/reject the request of the apprentice, knowing, given their shared situational knowledge about the sensitiveness of the transformer; the apprentice would interpret it accordingly. Every Nigerian, including the boss and the apprentice, knows the transformer, being an apparatus for reducing or increasing the voltage of an alternating current, is highly electrified and as such should not be played/toyed with let alone being seen as an object for relaxation. This shared knowledge, for instance, is what results in the coinage of another interesting version of this "impossibility statement" *O ò ní fẹ́ hug transformer* 'you won't want to hug the transformer' often interchangeably used with the one in the excerpt among Yoruba youths. The reaction of the apprentice points to his understanding of his boss' statement as an unequivocal rejection and perhaps one that signals serious consequences if he did not return the change of the 100 naira given to him. It therefore suffices to comment that, drawing on contextual features of SSK, and INF, and the physiological act VCE, the participants in the excerpt are able to achieve a meaningful interaction.

Excerpt 8. An interaction between two siblings

Motun: [Enters with a long face apparently from hunger] *Oúnjẹ mi dà?*
'Where is my food?'

Bola: *Mo fún òrẹ́ mi tó wá kí mi.*
'I entertained my guest with it.'

Motun: *Mo jẹ́ríi kápẹ́ntà ẹ, kò ní fẹ́ feyín yòṣó.*
'I trust your carpenter, he won't attempt using the teeth to pull out a nail from the wood.'

Bola: *Mi ò ṣeré, mo ti fi ṣe álejò...*
'I am not joking. I already used to entertain my guest.'

Motun: *Uhn, o ò ní fẹ́ fi petrol dín dòdò.*
'You won't want to attempt frying plantain with petrol.'

Bola: *E maa binu, mi ò mọ̀ pé ẹ máa tètè dé.*
'Don't be offended, I never knew you would arrive so soon.'

In excerpt 8, a discussion between two sisters, the elder sister deployed two impossibility slangy expressions which are co-texually coreferential: (9) *Mo jẹ́ríi kápẹ́ntà ẹ, kò ní fẹ́ feyín yòṣó* 'I trust your carpenter, he won't attempt using the teeth to pull out a nail from the wood' and *o ò ní fẹ́ fi petrol dín dòdò* 'You won't want to attempt frying plantain with petrol' pass a message of expressing dis-countenance and disapproval to her interlocutor. The former is an example of function-related impossibility while the latter exemplifies danger-related impossibility, even though, by extension from the interaction, it becomes obvious that the elder sister comes home famished, and expects her food to be served to her as soon as she arrives. She is however taken aback when the younger sister comments that she had served the food to entertain her friend. This is a response she does not take kindly to it as evident in her anger-laden response. In the first instance, the elder sister, making reference to the shared situational knowledge (SSK) among the Yoruba regarding the unwelcomed and unwholesome practice of attempting to remove the nail from the wood by any carpenter, discoun-tenances the sister's response and particularly to show she is not in for a "prank", if indeed that is the intention of her sister.

The message is clear to the sister who responds she is actually serious (about the fact that the food had been served to a friend who came visiting) as shown in her response (10) *Mi ò ṣeré, mo ti fi ṣe álejò* 'I am not joking, I had given it out to a visiting friend'. Apparently, this response does not go down well with the elder sister who goes further to show her disapproval of this act with another "impossibility" utterance which is co-textual to the initial one: (11) *Uhn, o ò ní fẹ́ fi petrol dín dòdò* 'you won't want to use petrol to fry plantain', accompanied with

a frown on her face. With this statement, the elder sister is making recourse to the shared situational knowledge (SSK) among the people of the "unfriendly" relationship between petrol and frying which of course involves fire.

All over the world, and particularly among the Yoruba, the danger of playing with the combination of petrol and fire is a common knowledge, and as such it is often warned against. Therefore, to attempt to fry plantain with petrol, as captured in the utterance of the elder sister, is to attempt committing suicide, a practice anyone in his/her right senses would not give a thought to. The elder sister makes this utterance to express her disapproval for the "unpardonable" offence of the younger sister. Thus, in this context, the utterance *Uhn, o ò ní fẹ́ fi petrol dín dòdò,* which inherently expresses impossibility in the Yoruba socio-cultural worldview, carries as much pragmatic weight as direct speech acts as i.a. 'why would you do that?', 'that is a foolish and unacceptable thing to do!'. Drawing on the contextual features of SSK, inference (INF), and the unfriendly physiognomic expression on Motun's face, the sister understands the message: as one that carries a tone of disapproval and disaffection, hence she apologises accordingly.

Excerpt 9. From an interaction between an bus conductor and a passenger

Conductor: *Owó ẹ dá?*
'Where is your money?'

Passenger: *Èèló ni ẹ gbé UI?*
'How much to UI?'

Conductor: 100 naira.

Passenger: *80 naira ni máá fún un yín o.*
'I am going to pay 80 naira.'

Conductor: *80 naira lẹ ma fún un mi kẹ̀? **Nígbá t'ó ò ní fẹ́ kírun l'express**.*
'You are going to pay me 80 naira? When you would not want to pray [in the Islamic way] on the express [way].'

Passenger: *Ó ga ò* [brings out 100 naira note from her purse and gives to the conductor]
'That is really serious.'

The interaction presented in excerpt 9 was an exchange between a bus conductor and a passenger. The conductor demands the passenger pay her transport fare as they are gradually approaching her (the passenger's) point of disembarkation. The passenger then asks how much she is to pay and is surprised the conductor is charging a sum of 100 naira. She then responds she is going to pay 80 naira. The conductor is apparently not pleased with the amount she offers to pay, hence resorts to the making of the impossibility utterance (12) *Nígbá t'ó*

ò ní fẹ́ kírun l'express 'when you won't want to pray [in the Islamic way] on the express/high way' to reject the amount she is offering to pay. The conductor, riding on the shared situational knowledge (SSK) among Nigerians in general, and the Yoruba in particular about the impossibility of attempting to spread a prayer mat (as found among Muslims) on the high way or express, knowing how suicidal that can be, to observe their statutory five-time prayer sessions daily, to decline/reject the amount the passenger offers to pay. In the Nigerian context, the express or high way is considered a dangerous zone, given the high speed at which drivers on such roads move (perhaps with the notion that it is a free route and as such is a "platform" to explore their driving skills to the maximum). This high speed explains why there are incessant cases of ghastly and sometimes fatal auto crash on the express. Of course, the conductor imagines the passenger shares that situational knowledge with him, being a fellow Nigerian who knows how reasonably impossible it is for anyone who is sane to attempt to conduct a prayer session on the way.

That the lady passenger understands this utterance as a relevant response to her offer to pay 80 naira and as such a rejection of same by the conductor is obvious in her response and action in reaction to the conductor's utterance. Combining the SSK, the unfriendly facial look on the conductor's face, his raised voice (VCE) and inference (INF), the message becomes clearer to the passenger that the conductor is determined to go to any length, including embarrassing or abusing her, (as commonly found among commercial car and bus drivers as well as their conductors in Nigeria), to make sure she pays the amount he charges. The young lady, in order to avoid such untoward scene and scenario, has to quickly do the bidding of the conductor. The conductor could as well have chosen to reject the amount mentioned by the passenger with such direct acts/expressions as *rárá* 'no', *mí ò gba 80 naira o* 'I am not collecting 80 naira', *kò gbà* 'not at all', among others, but deliberately resorts to the deployment of the "impossibility" slangy utterance as a pragmatic strategy of scaring the passenger into acceding to his demand. The choice of this impossibility expression noted above could as well be necessitated by the conductor's belief that gentlemanly even with his linguistic practice in the encounter would not allow him achieve his goal (of overwhelming the passenger to pay the amount charged).

Excerpt 10. From a room interaction between two undergraduates

Tolu: Abeg, who use my pef?
       'Please who used my perfume?'
Sola: Na me finish am yesterday.
       'It got exhausted while I was using it yesterday.'

Tolu: *Abeg, make una no touch my tins again o. Mi ò ṣeré rárá*
      'Please don't touch my things again. I am not joking at all.'
Sola: *Na today! Tí mo bá lò ó ńkọ́?*
      'Since when! What happens if I touch them?'
Tolu: **O ò ní fẹ́ fa wèrè l'ọ́yàn.**
      'You won't want to pull/touch the breast of a mad woman.'

The initiator of the interaction presented in excerpt 10, Tolu, starts with a complaint with protest upon the realisation that his perfume had been exhausted, knowing he still had some left the last time he used it. The complaint triggers a response from one of his roommates who owns up that it got exhausted while he was using it. Tolu is really upset by this development and retorts such should not repeat itself, not only as it relates to his perfume but also all his other belongings. Sola, apparently surprised at such an outburst, asks to know what would happen if he does not desist from "touching" his belongings. As a way of letting him (Sola) know the grave consequences that await him if he does, Tolu responds with the impossibility utterance (13) *O ò ní fẹ́ fa wèrè l'ọ́yàn* 'you won't want to pull or play with the breasts of a mad woman'. With the aid of contextual elements such as SEK, SCK and INF, Tolu and Sola are able to interpret the utterance as expressing threat and warning. Going by the shared experiential and cultural knowledge among the Yoruba, *wèrè*, a mad person, is a mentally ill fellow, who does not have the mental capacity to behave in a reasonable manner. Such individuals are considered violent and sometimes dangerous to deal with. Thus, they are most times avoided or abandoned by the people (except in few cases where the relatives are seen taking care of them). Their queer behavioural lifestyle often attracts the attention of sane minds, especially kids and toddlers who most times make jest of them. They are thus considered special beings that must be avoided as much as possible, hence the popular proverb among the Yoruba: *wèrè dún ún wò, kò ṣe é bí lọ́mọ* 'watching a mad fellow display their madness can be pleasurable, but no one prays to have one as his/her child'. If mad people are then considered unapproachable, given their violent and irrational nature, it would be an act of foolishness or stupidity for any man to attempt to have an erotic relationship or affair with a mad woman, let alone playing with or pulling her breasts[4]. Attempting to play with or pull the breasts of a mad woman would have its serious and unimaginable consequences, as the fellow, having

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[4] Although it is culturally believed that some individuals engage in this practice but such are seen as being emboldened by some protective charms. Such fellows are believed to do such for fetish reasons, in most cases as money ritual.

lost her sanity, could attack the "offender" who might lose his life in the process.

Against this backdrop, both participants in this excerpt interpret the utterance *O ò ní fẹ́ fa wèrè l'óyàn* as one that carries a serious message of warning and threat to Sola if he dares touch Tolu's belongings again. The utterance is an indirect way of Tolu telling Sola he would attack him with the same level of violence a mad woman would attack her "offender".

7. Conclusion and general remarks

With recourse to Mey's pragmatic acts theory, this article has attempted a pragmatic analysis of "impossibility" slangy expressions in Yoruba informal interactions. It has attempted a contextual classification of impossibility slangy expressions in Yoruba into function-oriented, structure-function-oriented and danger-oriented types. The study has also further reinforced the essential role context plays in utterance interpretation, as often amplified by fields of linguistics such as pragmatics, sociolinguistics and ethnography of communication. In particular, this study investigates the role of contextual features such as shared situational knowledge (SSK), shared experiential knowledge (SEK), shared cultural knowledge (SCK) relevance (REL), inference (INF), and voice (VCE) in (de)constructing the meaning of indirectness embedded in impossibility slangy expressions in Yoruba informal interactions. With the aid of these contextual features, such utterances are understood as expressing rejection, rejection with warning, caution, discountenance and disapproval, rebuke with dare, challenge and threat. This study is further evidence that slang and slangifying are pointers to linguistic creativity, linguistic and communicative competence among users. It has further emphasised the submission of Bamgbose (2016) that the study and learning of the language should not only focus on structure, vocabulary and proverbs but also on other pragmatic aspects of the language. The major contribution of this study to scholarship, therefore, is that, following the arguments of "contextualists" like Allott (2010), Odebunmi (2006b), Hymes (1972), among others, context is very central to the use, teaching and learning of languages in general, and the Yoruba language in particular. Borrowing the words of Goffman (1981) in his book *Forms of Talk,* impossibility slangy expressions in Yoruba are 'orphans' when deprived of the contextual cues and clues that animated them. The study also provides fresh data that give further insights on the use and application of Mey's pragmatic acts theory (2001), especially in an African language context.

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Metaphorical euphemisms in death-discourse among the Nzema

Abstract

This article seeks to deepen our understanding of the cognitive processes in death euphemisms in Nzema, a Kwa language of Ghana. The article highlights the metaphorical "mappings" across conceptual domains, where the concept of DEATH (target domain) is well understood in terms of more physical events such as JOURNEY, DEPARTURE, RETURN, INVITATION, CONTINUOUS SLEEP, LOSE A FIGHT, etc. (source domain). It is demonstrated that the Nzema conceptualise DEATH also as RETIREMENT, SUBTRACTION, BEREAVEMENT as LIVING IN DARKNESS, BEING MISSING AT THE CROSSROADS, BURIAL as HIDING/PRESERVING, BURYING as SOWING A SEED, COFFIN as HOUSE FOR AN INDIVIDUAL, CEMETERY/GRAVE as BETTER PLACE, PLACE OF REST, and CORPSE as A THING among others.

Keywords: Nzema culture, death discourse, euphemisms, conceptual metaphor

1. Introduction

Nzema is a Niger-Congo Kwa language spoken mainly in the south-west of the Western Region of Ghana. However, speakers of Nzema can be found also in some parts of Côte d'Ivoire (Annan 1980, Kwaw 2008). People who are the

speakers of the language are also referred to as "Nzema". In Ghana, Nzema is studied from basic to the tertiary level of education. The Ghana Population and Housing Census conducted in 2021 puts the total number of Nzema at 342 090. The people are predominantly peasant farmers and fisherfolk who also relish in trading to supplement their livelihood. The Nzema value their cultural heritage, cherish and hold their traditional practices in high esteem. Traditional ceremonies such as puberty, marriage, naming and funeral rites are observed with dedication and passion. The Nzema thus have various cultural conceptions regarding the aforementioned practices, especially about funeral (death). In this article, our interest shall be on language use in context, focusing on the topic of language taboos and the social appropriateness of linguistic expression in discussing DEATH and its associated concepts from the Nzema socio-cultural perspective.

As in many other cultures, death is seen as a fear-based taboo in the Nzema society. Thus, the people try to employ indirect expressions to speak fairly about it. They feel reluctant to speak freely about death due to the perceived shocks and discomfort it might cause when listeners hear the bare mention of death without linguistics hedges and safeguards. In view of this, the Nzema dwell on euphemistic utterances to mitigate the unpleasant feelings associated with DEATH, BEREAVEMENT, COFFIN, BURIAL and GHOST. Adopting the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (henceforth CMT) with further insights from Cultural Conceptualisations (hereafter CC), the article looks at how the Nzema use metaphor-based euphemisms to engage in conversations regarding death. It aims to bring to light the culturally established metaphoric-euphemisms used in "death language" among the Nzema to make such discourse convenient for public hearing.

Due to its "embeddedness" in everyday cultural experiences, the "language of death" has gained some scholarship in the literature. Across languages and cultures, studies on metaphorical conceptualisations of DEATH and DYING have been extensively undertaken. For example, Fernández (2006) and Solheim (2014) explored euphemistic-metaphors in Victorian obituaries and British and American obituaries respectively. These studies showed that there was a tendency to present sentimental obituaries in which the taboo of DEATH can be accounted for by various conceptual metaphors, most of which viewed death as a desirable event under the influence of Christian beliefs. Adepoju (2016) also investigated metaphors of DEATH in Nigerian newspaper obituaries. In a corpus-based contrastive study, Kuczok (2016) discussed metaphorical conceptualisations of DEATH and DYING in American English and Polish. Ongonda (2018) also did a cognitive analysis of metaphorical euphemisms in Kenyan obituaries; whereas Musah and Atibiri (2019) looked at metaphors of DEATH in Kusaal, a Mabia (Gur)

language of Ghana. In a comparative analysis, Owiredu (2020) examined metaphors and euphemisms of DEATH in Akan and Hebrew. These works noted that DEATH is commonly conceptualised as JOURNEY (DEPARTURE/ARRIVAL/RETURN), REST, SLEEP, LOSS, REWARD, and TRANSITION – observations which the findings of this study also corroborate. The previous works also have some resemblance with the current study in terms of theoretical applications, and provide an immense assistance to our analysis. This study further presents discussions on the conceptualisations of the following: BEREAVEMENT, BURIAL, COFFIN, CORPSE, CEMETERY and GHOST, which the previous studies remained silent about.

After a general introduction in Section 1, the rest of the article is structured as follows: Section 2 presents the sources, procedures and methods of data elicitation and how data were categorised for analysis, Section 3 gives an overview of euphemisms, Section 4 provides some orientation on the theoretical underpinning of the study, whereas Section 5 presents and discusses the data. The final Section 6 concludes the study. A reader can find an Appendix with linguistic data excerpts attached below the references section.

2. Methodology and data collection techniques

The study employed a qualitative ethnographic research design. The data collection period was from July 2020 to August 2021. The researchers used participant and non-participant observations to gather data at various ethnographic situations related to DEATH (e.g. during funeral rites). These were the periods where communication concerning DEATH and its associated concepts: BEREAVEMENT, CORPSE, COFFIN, BURIAL, CEMETERY and GHOST abounded. In terms of political jurisdiction and demarcation, the people of Nzema constitute the Ɛlɛmbɛlɛ District, Dwɔmɔlɔ Municipal and Nzema East Municipal (Ɛvaloɛ) in the western part of Ghana. Therefore, in order to avoid biases, and to obtain more reliable and authentic data for analysis, the researchers visited two communities in each Municipal/District[1]. This was done to ascertain uniformity in how the Nzema as a cultural group may have the same conceptual metaphors of DEATH and its related concepts. So, at various funerals settings in such Nzema communities, the researchers sought

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[1]   The communities visited were Asasetelɛ and Awiebo (in the Ɛlɛmbɛlɛ District), Mgbɔtɛba and Kabenlasuazo (in the Dwɔmɔlɔ Municipality) and Bolɔfo and Yediyɛsele (in the Nzema East Municipality). These days, funeral performances are almost rampant in many communities; however, the researchers visited these particular communities purposively because of proximity and the fact that they were motorable areas. This approach is a defeatist one.

consents as matter of ethics, and tape-recorded the funeral proceedings. This endeavour was crucial because, in those contexts, speakers resorted to indirect expressions to avoid explicit mentioning of *ewule*[2] 'death', ɛlɛ*ka* 'coffin', *aziezo* 'cemetery/grave', *nwomenle* 'ghost' – concepts that threaten and cause embarrassments and displeasure to listeners. From spontaneous natural speech context, where interlocutors reported and shared their experiences on matters of death, the researchers further extracted some data for the study[3]. Additional data were generated during focused group discussions[4]. These metaphor-based euphemisms of death were expressed using the local language (Nzema); however, the researchers have provided the English translation of each excerpt (see appendix) to enhance the flow of the discussion. The analysis of the metaphorical euphemisms was done using content analysis approach in which there was reference[5] to the excerpts found at the appendix.

3. Euphemisms as an avoidance technique

As a taboo avoidance technique, a euphemism is an indispensable communicative device which permeates many discussions across languages. Numerous writers have thus proffered various definitions of euphemisms. Rawson (1981) sees euphemism as a mild, agreeable, or a roundabout utterance that is used in place of coarse and offensive expressions. Allan and Burridge (1991) also perceive a euphemism as a courteous means through which a harsh, inappropriate, obscene, or offensive word is replaced by a more decent one. Cameron (1995) concisely describes euphemisms as "verbal hygiene". This shows that interlocutors can dwell on euphemisms to "sanitise" and "polish" their discourse; by way of neutralising an assumed unpleasant. In the words of Agyekum (2013: 190): "euphemisms are verbal art forms which the speaker uses to embellish his speech in an attempt to show his communicative competence and linguistic politeness within the socio-cultural norms of communication". He reports further that, in dealing with verbal taboos, euphemisms and metaphors are significant

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[2]   The Nzema language is transcribed according to the rules of standard orthography which comprises Latin alphabet with additional letters ɔ and ɛ to represent vowel phonemes.
[3]   Examples that were obtained from "spontaneous natural discourse" contexts are labelled as SND.
[4]   These examples are labelled as FGD, meaning "from focused group discussion".
[5]   In order to ease the referencing of the data found in appendix, we have used Exct to mean 'excerpt' and Sp to mean 'speaker'. Therefore, e.g. "(from Exct1, Sp1)" means that particular example is found in excerpt 1., said by speaker 1. etc.

substitutes of verbal taboos themselves. We can thus infer that euphemistic utterances do not only "purify" the discourse, but also embellish and measure one's level of communicative competence in discourse.

To Annan (2017), euphemisms are meant to guide a speaker to make a "fair speech". By this, the speaker escapes from direct pronouncement of a tabooed word. Al-Khasawneh (2018) avers that people often use euphemistic expressions to avoid offensive topics, to make them more implicit and considerate. Adepoju (2019) corroborates Al-Khasawneh's position by contending that euphemisms usually serve as a way to alter human perception of certain inconvenient truth and tendency to avoid speaking directly about notions that are considered sensitive. Almost every language and culture has a stock of euphemisms to refer to specific areas of life. The people of Nzema consciously make use of such euphemisms. In discussing matters of sexuality, the Nzema try to refrain from profanity and use refined expressions like *bɛva bɛ nwo* 'they have taken each other' (meaning they had sex), *ye ɛzɔlɛ nu yɛ ɛnlomboɛ* 'he carries a heavy load in-between his thighs' (meaning his penis is big), *ɔnnea ɛleka ko* 'she does not look at one place' (meaning she is a prostitute) and *ye etu ɛngu nane* 'his gun cannot kill an animal' (meaning he is impotent) (see Yakub 2020: 14). It is ascertained that euphemisms are used cross-culturally to handle vulgar issues and concepts that pose sudden shocks, threats and embarrassments. Matters concerning dangerous/deadly diseases, pregnancy, nakedness, drunkenness and suicide, among others, have several euphemisms employed to tone down their effects (Agyekum 2010, Annan 2017). Tomekyin and Nyame (2019: 81), therefore, report as follows:

[...] death is also another area which evokes fear and nervousness. Usually, the language that is used to talk about death is created by virtue of euphemistic metaphors, metonyms and circumlocutions. Expressions with implicature are also widely used to refer to death in the most pleasant and decent way [...]

The above means that euphemisms enable speakers to "refine" and reconstruct certain expressions that are deemed obscene or ugly; by making them more pleasant and beautiful. Euphemisms function as face-saving mechanisms to both the speaker and the hearer (Wardhaugh 2006). Overall, euphemisms are implicit and strategic expressions which serve as a means to swerve impoliteness. Euphemisms are "clean" expressions deployed in discourses in order to desist from direct reference to taboo expressions. Table 1. shows some euphemistic concepts and expressions in Nzema language and culture.

TABLE 1. Some euphemistic concepts in Nzema[6]

Tabooed concepts	Euphemistic expressions	English translations
A. DEFECATION Tabooed word *ebinli*	a. *Mekɔ baka zo* b. *Mesɔho me gyakɛ*	a. 'I am visiting the tree.' b. 'I am escorting my legs.'
B. URINATION Tabooed word *miene*	a. *Mekɔ meahɔgua nzule* b. *Megua aze*	a. 'I am going to pour water.' b. 'I am pouring water down.'
C. DEATH Tabooed word *ewule*	a. *Ɔnde aze* b. *Ɔ ti ɛbɔ aze* c. *Yehɔ namule nu*	a. 'He is not seated anymore.' b. 'His head has hit the floor.' c. 'He has gone to the village.'[7]
D. THEFT Tabooed word *awule*	a. *Ɔ sa wale/ Ɔ sa le tendenle* b. *Ɔ sa ɛnga ɔ nwo*	a. 'His hands are long.' b. 'His hands do not touch his body.'
E. WITCHCRAFT Tabooed word *ayɛne*	a. *Ɔnlɛ ɔ sa*	a. 'He does not possess hands.'
F. WANDERING Tabooed word *akpɔsa*	a. *Yeli twea gyakɛ*	a. 'He has eaten a dog's legs.'
G. OLD AGE Tabooed word *kyɛlera*	a. *Ɔ nye ɛvi* b. *Yeli ngyenle ekyii* c. *Yenwu maanle nu*	a. 'His eyes are grown.' b. 'He has tasted some salt.' c. 'He has lived for some time.'

Adapted from Yakub (2020: 4) and modified.

4. Theoretical framework

The article mainly employs the CMT by Lakoff and Jonhson (1980), with additional insights from the CC framework by Sharifian (2011). In what follows, we provide overviews of the theoretical frameworks adopted to underpin the analysis of data.

4.1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)

Besides its literary significance as a poetic device and a figure of speech, metaphor in most contemporary studies is seen as "cognitive mechanism", which concerns a cross-domain mapping within the conceptual system (Lakoff 1993: 208).

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[6]   In table 1., the words which are not to be said plainly (seen in the first column) are in italics. These are conveniently expressed using their euphemistic forms as presented in the second column.

[7]   The Nzema use this expression to refer to the demise of a king/chief.

Lakoff further notes that metaphor is not just a matter of language, but of thought and reason. Strengthening this claim, Steen (2011: 28) asserts that:

Metaphor has turned out to be a conceptual mechanism, a "figure of thought", by which specific and operational knowledge about more concrete phenomena and experience is projected onto a wide range of more abstract ones.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 5) aver that "the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another". Conceptual metaphors typically make use of more abstract concepts as target and a more concrete/physical concepts as source, through which we are able to understand unfamiliar concepts better (Kövecses 2002, Semino 2008). In the view of Semino (2008: 5), conceptual metaphors are systematic sets of correspondence, or "mappings" across conceptual domains, whereby a "target" domain is partly structured in terms of a different "source" domain. Consider, for example, TIME IS MONEY. In this, money (which is the source) could be projected onto time (which is the target); hence, MONEY → TIME. Here, in this schema, our basic knowledge of MONEY (as a commodity that one can spend, invest or lose) could be transferred metaphorically to understand the connection it has with TIME (as something that can also be spent) (see Adepoju 2016: 71). Let us consider another conceptual metaphor, such as TO DIE IS TO SLEEP. Here, Fernández (2006: 107) explains that:

There is a projection from a source domain (SLEEP) onto a target domain (DIE) and the associations that constitute this metaphor map our perception about sleep onto our perception about death. It is in this correspondence between the source and the target domains where cognitive conceptualisation fulfils its euphemistic function. The source domain is therefore used to understand, to structure and in some cases, mitigate the target domain.

In this article, our analysis seeks to draw similar metaphoric conceptualisations of DEATH as concealed in the Nzema data, for readers to best appreciate the discussion.

4.2. Cultural Conceptualisations (CC)

Cultural Conceptualisations (CC) framework is responsible for exploring the relationship between language, culture and conceptualisations (Sharifian 2011). Sharifian (2011) proposed and advanced the concept of cultural linguistics from a multidisciplinary perspective, using the term Cultural Conceptualizations;

which, as he notes, enables members of a cultural group to think in one mind (see also Sharifian 2003). Sharifian (2014) contends that cultural linguistics is responsible for exploring features of language that have cultural basis. It employs three analytical tools, such as *cultural schema*, *cultural category* and *cultural-conceptual metaphor*; in which we are interested in this study. He argues that many items/concepts of human languages lend themselves best to cognitive schemas that are abstracted from cultural experiences. This implies that users of a particular language establish their own cognitive-conceptions about a phenomenon; the Nzema also do perfectly the same as we will see in this study. Our discussion is done using CMT and CC, since these theories can fully help to describe and understand the Nzema's culturally constructed perception and conception of DEATH and its related issues.

5. Data and discussion

This section deals with presentation and discussion of the euphemistic utterances obtained. They abound in metaphorical (metonymic) relations which help to achieve the communicative effectiveness of the utterances. The analysis is grounded in the thoughts of CMT and CC to explicate the metaphoric corresponding that exists in the data. Our discussion begins with the Nzema conception of DEATH and metaphor-based euphemisms that are used to avoid direct mentioning of death.

5.1. The Nzema conception of death

The Nzema spiritual system and worldview allow them to have certain conceptualisations of the world, life, death, life hereafter, morality, creation, fate, and others. DEATH, which is generally associated with DISPLEASURE, is noted for having some culture-specific conceptions, and the Nzema people are not exempted. As in many diverse Ghanaian cultures, the Nzema consider black as a symbolic colour of death. When one is bereaved, the person sticks to wearing black clothing for some time to signify his/her current situation (loss of a relative). The Nzema understand DEATH as a UNIVERSAL HUMAN EXPERIENCE. This is evidenced from some of their proverbial expressions presented in (1):

(1)   a.   *Ewule kpolike sonla   ko   ε-n-vo.*   (SND)
           death   ladder   person single EMPH-NEG-climb
           'One person does not climb the ladder of death.'

      b.   *Ewule   ε-n-ze   fakyε.*   (FGD)
           death   EMPH-NEG-know   forgiveness
           'Death does not spare anyone.'

c. *Saa ewule lɛ a ngoane ɛ-n-lie.* (SND)
COND death hold part life EMPH-NEG-take
'When death possesses something, life cannot take it back.'

In example (1a), the Nzema try to communicate their view that no person can escape from the mishap of death. The mercilessness of death is also depicted in (1b) and (1c). In both cases, death is personified as having the capacity to deal with all people. Traditionally, the Nzema trust that wrong doers are paid off by death. Thus, the Nzema use these pithy statements to entreat fellow members to be righteous, since death is inevitable and will surely snatch everyone uniformed. According to the Nzema traditional worldview, when someone dies unexpectedly, such as through road accident or by committing suicide, the Nzema usually suspect that an enemy might have a hand in the person's demise. When this happens, mourners, while weeping bitterly, commonly use the expression in (2):

(2) *Saa ɛ-kɔ a mma-da.* (FGD)
COND 2SG-go PART NEG-sleep
'If you go, do not sleep.'

By this utterance, the Nzema seek to challenge the deceased not to rest at all in the grave. They expect his/her spirit (ghost) to revenge by killing whoever might have caused the person's death. In some contexts, however, the Nzema rather hail death as a good master. For instance, when someone grows too old, or passes on after a long period of ailments, the common expressions used by mourners are those shown in (3):

(3) a. *Ewule le nvasoɛ.* (FGD)
death COP profit
'Death is a blessing.'

b. *Saa ɛ-kɔ a da koonwu.* (FGD)
COND 2SG-go PART sleep silent
'If you go, sleep quietly.'

In example (3a), the Nzema consider death rather as a kind of blessing, which relieves the sick person from agony as he/she passes on, and also relieves the family members who might have spent their time and energy in ensuring the person's survival. In (3b), the spirit of the deceased is to rest peacefully in the grave. Some physiological effects and characteristics of death make the Nzema to reflect about DEATH as something associated with parts of the human body as exemplified in (4):

(4) *Ye-ha   ɔ   nye   ye-gua zo.*   (FGD)
     1SG-keep.PERF 1SG eye.PL 1SG-close top
     'He has kept his eyes shut'.

The example in (4) partly portrays the Nzema worldview of the state of death as the involvement of eyes. We proceed to examine metaphorical conceptualisations of death in subsection 5.2.

5.2. Metaphoric conceptualisation of death

DEATH is a necessary end of humans; a concept that is feared in every society. The Nzema also associate DEATH with FEAR, and so they resort to certain convenient utterances to describe DEATH, comparing it with real-life events such as INVITATION, RETIREMENT, CONTINUOUS SLEEP and LOSING A FIGHT among others. Consider the following from the data.

5.2.1. DEATH is JOURNEY (INVITATION/ DEPARTURE)

The data showcased many instances of metaphor-based euphemistic expressions used to talk conveniently about death. The embodied conceptual structures of the language users enable them to perceive such metaphorical constructs as being related to some of the issues that pertain when one embarks on a physical journey (see also Musah & Atibiri 2020). These explain DEATH in terms of a JOURNEY with a spiritual destination. Some examples that show how the Nzema perceive DEATH as JOURNEY are presented in (5):

(5) a. *Nyamenle ɛ-do   ɛsalɛ ɛ-vɛlɛ   ye.*   (from Exct1, Sp2)
         god   PERF-stretch hand PERF-call 3SG
         'God has invited him[8]'.

     b. *Adenle mɔɔ awie kɔ   a   ɔ-m-ba.*   (from Exct 2, Sp 2)
         road   COMP person go   PART 2SG-NEG-come
         'A journey that one can never return'.

     c. *Ye-hɔ   ye ɛkɛla   nzi.*   (from Exct7, Sp2)
         3SG-go.PERF 3SG spirit reverse
         'He/she has gone back to his/her spirit'.

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[8] The Nzema do not make distinction in terms of gender marking, and so the personal pronouns ɔ and ye as found in the data do not necessarily make any distinction between 'he' or 'she' and 'his' or 'her'.

     d.   *Ye-du   ye nɔhalɛ adenle.*   (from Exct5, Sp2)
        3SG-travel.PERF 3SG   true   road
        'He/she has made his/her faithful journey'.

The Nzema deem it uncomfortable to make explicit mention of *ewule* 'death', and so the above expressions are some of the linguistic mechanisms employed to substitute the taboo of death. The examples in (5a-d) indicate the Nzema conceptualisation of death as a journey, which involves the processes of "departing" and "returning". In (5a), for instance, DEATH is seen as INVITATION, since invitation can lead to departure (embarking on a journey). In this context, it is perceived that the person departs from this physical world to honour a call by his/her creator. The Nzema also refer to DEATH AS A JOURNEY from which the traveller never returns as shown in (5b). This type of departure is a unidirectional journey that is never retractable. In (5c), the deceased is said to have gone back to the spiritual world where he/she is believed to have come from. In (5d), DEATH is further likened to a faithful inescapable JOURNEY that is decreed and ordained by God.

5.2.2. DEATH is RETIREMENT

The Nzema also see DEATH as RETIREMENT, and the deceased is considered to have ended all his/her responsibilities in the physical world. Consider the examples in (6):

(6)   a.   *Ye azɛlɛ ye azo gyima   ɛ-ra awieleɛ.*   (from Exct4, Sp 2)
         3SG earth DEM top   duty   PERF-come end
         'His/her responsibilities on this earth have ended'.

     b.   *Ye-wie   ye gyima muala di.*   (from Exct4, Sp 2)
         3SG-finish.PERF 3SG work   whole do
         'He/she has completed all his/her works'.

When one is on retirement from a particular occupation, all active services are expected to cease so that the person can relax comfortably at home. Metaphorically, in (6a) and (6b), DEATH is seen to be the END POINT of all the toils people go through, and so once someone passes on, the person finalises[9] his/her duties on this earth.

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[9] During our focus group discussions, a respondent explained that, death, according to the Nzema, generally marks the end of all human activities, though the people believe that the deceased may do other things while in the grave.

5.2.3. DEATH is LOSING FIGHT

When someone passes on, the Nzema conceptualise the person's DEMISE as A LOST FIGHT. In this context, the phenomenon is seen as a battle; the person fights for life. When he/she loses the fight, death wins. The expressions in (7a-c) underscore this observation:

(7) a. *Ye-ho   ye-dɔ.*   (from Exct7, Sp1)
         3SG-fight.PERF 3SG-fall.PERF
         'She has fought and fell on the ground[10]' (she passed on during child delivery).

     b. *Nrenyiakpa ne   ati   ɛ-bɔ   aze.*   (from Exct5, Sp1)
         man   DEF   head   PERF-hit floor
         'The man's head has hit the ground'.

     c. *Gyanemanza asa   ɛ-dɔ   ɔ nwo zo.*   (from Exct6, Sp2)
         Gyanemanza   hand PERF-fall 3SG self top
         'Gyanemanza has conquered/ laid hands on him'.

One of the determinants of defeat during a fight perhaps is to "ground" or "floor" an opponent. The expressions in (7a) and (7b) do not basically inform us about the physical act of falling on the ground, but as metaphoric means of describing demises in the sense that 'death has overpowered life (a person)'. Both (7a) and (7b) indicate the metaphor, LIFE IS UP/DEATH IS DOWN. In (7c), DEATH is referred to as *GYANEMANZA*, which emanates from a myth around the Nzema conception of DEATH[11]. Therefore, when a person passes on, the Nzema conceptualise the unfortunate incident as *Gyanemanza* having conquered or laid hands on the person.

5.2.4. DEATH is BEING MISSING

A missing item remains out of sight. Thus, one other way the Nzema conceptualise death is by comparing the situation with a lost item. Consider the expressions in (8):

(8) a. *Ye-ha   ɛleka   bie.*   (from Exct5, Sp2)
         3SG-remain.PERF place   some
         'He/she has got missing somewhere'.

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[10] The expression in (7a) is used specifically to refer to maternal death; where a woman passes on in the course of child delivery.

[11] A myth concerning death among Nzema narrates that there is an invisible creature called *Gyanemanza* (-*manza* is in fact a proper feminine Nzema name) who is believed to have knocked down a recalcitrant man long time ago. As a consequence, the man never returned to life. Thus, the early Nzema people believed that *Gyanemanza* had "conquered" (killed) the man. This is why they referred to death as *Gyanemanza*.

b. *Ɛ-to   ɛ nye a   ɛ-n-nwu   ye ko.*   (from Ext5, Sp3)
    2SG-cast 2SG eye PART 2SG-NEG-see 3SG again
    'One can never see him/her with naked eyes anymore'.

The interpretations derived from the expressions in (8a) and (8b) actually transcend the literal sense of someone or something being misplaced. In the context of death, the expressions actually imply everlasting absence, where one can never spot the departed soul any longer.

5.2.5. DEATH is SUBTRACTION

Another conceptual metaphoric notion of death that seems interesting not only among the Nzema, but may also be construed in other languages and cultures is the phenomenon of the deceased "being taken away" or "subtracted" from a multitude of living souls. Example (9) demonstrates the Nzema version of such figurative utterances.

(9) *Ye-vi   nu.*   (from Exct7, Sp1)
     3SG-remove.PERF   inside
     'He has left.'

Subtraction deals with reduction in size or quantity, as a part is taken out of a whole. In (9), therefore, the deceased is said to have been picked out of the societal populace (living beings).

5.2.6. DEATH is CONTINUOUS SLEEP

DEATH is seen as an EVERLASTING SLEEP. Example 10 underscores this conception:

(10) *Ɔ-la-le   a   ye-a-n-dwazo.*   (from Exct3, Sp1)
      3SG-sleep-PST PART 3SG-EMPH-NEG-wake
      'She slept and never woke'.

Some basic properties of sleeping, such as shutting the eyes and being absolutely unconscious, pertain to the state of death. The fact that a person cannot respond to stimuli while he/she is asleep, though the heart will continue to function, is another reason for perceiving DEATH as SLEEP. However, one may be said to be dead when the person goes through these experiences continuously without returning to life (breathe).

5.2.7. DEATH is LYING ON THE LEFT HAND

In most African cultures, including the people of Nzema, the left hand is deemed somewhat inferior to the right hand, perhaps as a result of its peculiar function such as using it to clean the anus after defecation. In fact, no "cultured" Nzema person (whether an adult or a child) is expected to give or take an item from another person using the left hand. This notion of "inferiority" or "something unwanted" that is associated with the left hand[12] can further be conceptualised in relation to death. Consider the expression in (11):

(11)　*Ye-la　　　ye　bɛne　zo.*　　　　　　　(from Exct6, Sp1)
　　　3SG-lie.PERF　3SG　left.hand　top
　　　'He has laid (slept) on his left hand'.

In example (11), the semantic and pragmatic imports go beyond the physical act of lying sideways on one's left hand. In this context, therefore, the Nzema conceptualise the current state and status of the deceased and try to imply that the person has become useless or inferior, since the deceased body is of no value and importance. Agyekum (2010: 160) reported that in the old days the deceased were laid in bed with their (left) side on the bed. This position gave rise to the Akan euphemism *wada ne benkum so* 'he/she has slept on the left hand' to indirectly refer to death.

5.2.8. DEATH is FACING A WALL

Turning to face the wall shows that one cannot see what others may do behind. This notion is comparable with the situation of death as seen in (12):

(12)　*Ye-hakyi　　ɔ nye　ye-zi　bane.*　　　(from Exct2, Sp1)
　　　3SG-turn.PERF　3SG　eye.PL　3SG-look　wall
　　　'He has turned to face the wall'.

In (12), DEATH is perceived as FACING THE WALL. In the basic (physical) event, when one faces a wall (building), the person turns to rather make his/her back visible to others. The person cannot see whatever transpires behind him/her. When one passes on, the person leaves every worldly thing behind, and so nothing concerns the dead person anymore. All the sorrows that mourners may experience are not recognised by the deceased. Also, this wall can be per-

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[12]　This is however not to say that the left hand is virtually of no significance to the Nzema. Obviously, the left hand supports the right in doing many things in human life, especially that hygienic function it performs.

ceived as an obstacle (a blockage) in the journey of life. When one faces such an obstacle, the person is unable to move further (go on living).

5.2.9. DEATH is CUTTING LIFE

The verb *pɛ* 'to cut' in Nzema, which basically denotes an event of separation and material disintegration, can provide various contextual interpretations by way of meaning extensions (Yakub 2019: 10). Among such extensions are to shorten the length/height of an object or to result in discontinuity of ongoing phenomenon, such as *pɛ awolɛ* 'to cut childbearing' (meaning to cease procreation). We find that these notions can be applied to the conceptualisation of death as provided here:

(13) *Ye ngoane zo   ɛ-pɛ.*   (FGD)
      3SG life   top   PERF-cut
      'His/her life has been cut'.

The cognitive metaphoric projection in example (13) indicates that the lifespan of the deceased is discontinued. His life is shortened, "cut", while all activities in the world rather continue to move on.

5.2.10. DEATH is FELLING A TREE

In the context of death-discourse among the Nzema, the process of felling a tree can also be likened to death as example (14) indicates:

(14) *Baka kpole   ɛ-bu.*   (from Exct1, Sp4)
      tree huge   PERF-fall
      'A big tree has fallen/uprooted'.

Example (14) also shows LIFE IS UP/DEATH IS DOWN metaphor. Crucially, the metaphoric corresponding is derived from the functional aspect of a tree, which can make mankind and animals comfortable by providing shelter and food among other benefits, just as a responsible parent provides the needs of his/her ward(s). A "big" tree that is said to have fallen/uprooted, in this context, implies that a reputable (responsible) individual has passed on[13].

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[13] Among the Nzema, this euphemistic expression is usually used to describe the demise of very responsible parents, breadwinners, chiefs and all prominent people who matter most in the society or a particular family/clan.

5.3. Metaphoric conceptualisation of bereavement

In reporting the experience of bereavement, the Nzema try to avoid a "non-palatable" utterance, such as *me awie ɛwu* 'my beloved one is dead'. Bereavement is a period of time in which a person experiences their grief and mourning. As a cultural group, therefore, the speakers have established metaphor-based euphemisms to make reference to bereavement. Among the Nzema, a bereaved person is likened to someone whose eyes are affected, for example, a certain substance falling onto his/her eyes which causes displeasure and affects proper vision. The Nzema also liken a bereaved person to someone living in an environment or a room that is completely dark, or one who is missing at the crossroads. We discuss these conceptions as the data proved as follows.

5.3.1. BEREAVEMENT is SOMETHING FALLING INTO ONE'S EYE

The eye is very sensitive and is one of the vital sensory organs of a person. When any 'foreign' or unusual particle drops into one's eye, the person obviously feels uncomfortable. The Nzema thus have metaphorical euphemism to talk about bereavement, linking it to an unwanted particle that falls into one's eye as provided in example (15):

(15) *Debie   ɛ-dɔ   bɛ nye zo.*   (from Exct2, Sp2)
     something   PERF-fall 3Pl eye top
     'Something has fallen onto their eyes (They are bereaved).'

In (15), the phenomenon of bereavement, where people experience grief, is described as any substance or particle that falls into one's eyes. When an unwanted substance falls into one's eyes, the victim becomes uncomfortable and hardly gets rid of that substance alone without external assistance. Likewise, the phenomenon of bereavement; once you are bereaved, you need external encouragement and consolation in order to recover fully from the grief.

5.3.2. BEREAVEMENT is LIVING IN DARKNESS

The death of a beloved one also causes family members to be stranded and frustrated, just as when one lives in darkness where he/she cannot simply locate an item that might even be closer. Consider example (16) in this case of Nzema socio-cultural conception:

(16) *Wɔ-maa   awozinli   ɛ-va   yɛ.*   (from Exct3, Sp2)
     2SG-make.PERF darkness   PERF-take 3PL
     'Your demise has caused us to be in total darkness'.

When someone is bereaved, people may need to direct and support him/her in undertaking certain personal duties. These include activities concerning the burial and funeral ceremonies since the bereaved is seen as 'living in darkness' and may not be able to perform some duties perfectly without guidance. While in the grieving process, there is a feeling of disorientation, as may happen when a person lives in darkness.

5.3.3. BEREAVEMENT is MISSING DIRECTION

BEREAVEMENT is also conceptualised as MISSING A DIRECTION at a particular crossroads as indicated in the following expression:

(17) *Wɔ-maa   yɛ-minli nwɔnda.*   (from Exct1, Sp4)
      2SG-make.PERF 3PL-miss crossroad.PL
      'Your demise has caused us to get lost at the crossroads'.

Example (17) has some parallel conceptualisations with (15) and (16) discussed above. In (17), it is seen that the lost of a beloved one can cause the living (family members) to be "disoriented" – a sense of not seeing, not knowing, as a result of grief. While the bereaved is grieving, the support from sympathisers becomes extremely valuable. This is rightly likened to being missing at the crossroads, where one would need somebody else to give the right direction.

5.4. Metaphoric conceptualisation of burial

The data further proved the Nzema cultural perceptions about the act of burial, and as a way to ensure "sanitised" death discourse. They conceptualise BURIAL as CONCEALMENT, PRESERVATION and SOWING A SEED. These are discussed in the following subsections.

5.4.1. BURYING is CONCEALING/PRESERVING

The process of burial is seen as concealing (hiding) an item and/or preserving it, which may be retrievable in the future, any time the hider needs it. This conception seems to feature essentially in the examples in (18):

(18) a. *Yɛ-fa   ye yɛ-a-hɔ-wula ɛleka kpalɛ.*   (from Exct1, Sp1)
         3PL-take 3SG 3PL-EMPH-go-hide place good
         'We are going to hide it (the body)'.

     b. *Kɛkala bɛ-hɔ-vu   me diema ne bɛ-vea.*   (from Exct1, Sp3)
         now   3PL-go.PERF-dig 1SG sibling DEF 3PL-hide.PERF
         'As they have gone to hide my brother's body, all is finished now'.

c.   *Yɛ-fa   ye   yɛ-kɔ-sie.*   (from Exct4, Sp1)
      3PL-take   3SG   3PL-go-keep
      'We have to go and preserve/keep it (the body)'.

All the expressions in (18a-c) deal with the basic concept of keeping something safely, perhaps for future use. In the case of burial, the Nzema trust that the soul of the deceased would be raised one day, based on two conceptions: one is their belief in reincarnation and another is their belief in resurrection for "Godly judgement"[14]. Though the primary notion concerns concealment, such that the dead-body becomes out of sight, the Nzema also liken BURIAL to "PRESERVATION", as can be seen typically in (18c). The body is considered as something that is preserved for a good reason (future purpose). Through these convenient expressions, the Nzema can console the bereaved by reassuring them that their loved ones are not merely buried to undergo decomposition, but are kept temporarily for future resurrection.

5.4.2. BURYING is SOWING/PLANTING A SEED

The activity of seed sowing can also correspond to burial as illustrated in the example below:

(19)   *Bɛ-hɔ-lua   me diema ne.*   (from Exct4, Sp2)
        3PL-go-sow.PERF 1SG   sibling DEF
        'They have gone to sow it (my brother)'.

The example in (19), not only serves as a means of being polite in the context of death discourse, but also foregrounds our conceptual experiences and metaphoric structures. Planting a seed involves thrusting it into the soil and covering it. After some time, the seed is expected to germinate and appear above the ground. This is likened to the phenomenon of burial where the corpse is also covered under earth and it is believed to be able to reincarnate or reappear before God.

5.5. Metaphoric conceptualisation of cemetery/grave

An explicit pronouncement of *aziezo* 'cemetery/grave' among the Nzema also tends to pose some threat because it is noted that the place is a habitat for "ghosts" – souls that are expected to dwell in the spiritual underworld. The Nzema

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[14] This conception emanates from religious beliefs among the Nzema (both Christian and Islamic perspectives).

have culturally constructed metaphorical euphemisms to cater for any overt mention of such a scary place. These are discussed per the data as follows.

5.5.1. CEMETERY/GRAVE is PLACE OF REST

Rest is considered as a period of relaxing after a rigorous period of activity. The deceased, having "retired" from all herculean tasks, is finally sent to a suitable place of rest. Here, in order to refrain from any direct mention of *aziezo* 'cemetery/grave' the Nzema rather resort to the expression as exemplified in (20):

(20) *Bɛ-va   ye   bɛ-hɔ   ɛnwomenlelielɛ ɛleka.*   (FGD)
     3PL-take.PERF 3SG 3PL-go.PST   relaxation   place
     'They have taken it (the body) to the place of rest'.

In (20), the cemetery is likened to a convenient place of rest, which is strictly quiet, no disturbances at all. There are no musical jams, no ceremonial functions, and children also do not cry at the cemetery whatsoever to distract attention. Therefore, over there, the Nzema believe that the deceased enjoys ample and peaceful relaxation.

5.5.2. CEMETERY/GRAVE is BETTER PLACE/PLACE OF TRUTH

Beyond the concept of having a peaceful mindset in the grave as examined in (20) above, the Nzema also see GRAVE as BETTER PLACE and as PLACE OF TRUTH to the deceased. The expressions in 21 affirm these cultural conceptualisations:

(21) a. *Yɛ-fa   ye   yɛ-a-hɔ-wula ɛleka kpalɛ yɛ-a-ra.*   (see Exct1, Sp1)
         3PL-take 3SG 3PL-EMPH-go-hide place good 3PL-EMPH-return
         'We are going to hide it (the body) at a better place'.

     b. *Bɛmaa yɛ-va   ye   yɛ-hɔ nɔhalɛ ɛleka.*   (see Exct4, Sp1)
         let   3PL-take.PERF 3SG 3PL-go true   place
         'Let us take it (the body) to the place of truth'.

In (21a) and (21b), we can realise the sense of joyful life associated with living in the cemetery/grave. This seems to have some basis from the perspectives of Christian and Islamic doctoring, as both religions trust that the grave is the initial point where the deceased begins good, joyful and true everlasting existence with God in Heaven[15]. Describing GRAVE AS PLACE OF TRUTH as in (21b) can also imply that the deceased lives at the cemetery/grave alone, with no other people who may be hypocrites or betrayers.

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[15] This is not to say that the Nzema do not believe and practise an African traditional religion; rather, majority of the people these days practice Islam and Christianity.

5.6. Metaphoric conceptualisation of coffin

The Nzema traditionally refer to coffin as *funli ɛlɛka* 'corpse box'. In death related discourse, however, they seek to swerve this direct referent by resorting to figurative terms in order not to "revive" the fear, agony and discomfort that had already overwhelmed the bereaved family and other mourners. We focus on this cultural conception in the following discussion.

5.6.1. COFFIN is HOUSE/TREE OR WOOD

The coffin is likened to *sua* 'house' and *baka* 'tree/wood'. Let us take the expressions in (22):

(22) a. *Bɛva   ye sua ne   bɛ-ra.*   (from Exct2, Sp1)
        3PL-bring.PERF 3SG house DEF 3PL-come.PERF
        'They have brought his (its) house'.

     b. *Bɛ-do   ye baka   nu.*   (from Exct1, Sp1 & Exct4, Sp1)
        3PL-put.PERF 3SG wood/tree   inside
        'They have put it (the body) into a wood'.

In (22a), the metaphoric mapping seems tangible in the sense that coffin is usually a four-sided rectangular figure, resembling the normal shape of a house. It is also conceptualised based on the fact that the body will be laid in the coffin (a house in this case), and that is where it will "sleep" forever, just as living beings sleep in their houses/rooms. In (22b), metonymy plays a crucial role in facilitating our conceptualisation. Here, coffin is referred to as a wood, since it is traditionally made out of a tree (although contemporary coffins are sometimes made of glass and other ornamental materials).

5.7. Metaphoric conceptualisation of corpse

When someone passes on, the Nzema believe that the person's spirit still lives in and around the household, especially when burial ceremony has not yet taken place. Thus, an explicit pronouncement of *funli* 'corpse' is tried to be prevented so that people do not directly recognise that they live with a fearful unusual spirit. Below is how the Nzema people perceive the corpse according to the data.

5.7.1. CORPSE is A THING

As may pertain to many other African cultures, Nzema speakers try to circumvent reference to *funli* 'corpse'. They see the deceased body as waste, something unwanted as indicated in (23):

(23) *Kɛkala   yɛ-do   deɛ   ne   baka   nu.*   (from Exct1, Sp1)
      now   3PL-put.PERF thing DEF wood/tree inside
      'Now we have put the thing into a wood/tree'.

In (23), corpse is commonly conceptualised as *deɛ ne* 'the thing'. In Nzema discourse, *deɛ* 'thing' can refer to something positive or beautiful which a speaker consciously decides not to mention. It also connotes something that is filthy and/or unmentionable. More importantly, in this context, the dead is dehumanised. Thus, corpse is described as *deɛ* because the person loses his/her precious life, value and reputation. He/she becomes useless, no longer beneficial to the living and so must be thrown away (buried).

5.8. Metaphoric conceptualisation of ghost

It is also noted that the disembodied souls of the deceased can trigger people to experience fear. The Nzema, therefore, refer to such souls as spirits, which seem to evoke less fear. Consider the discussion that follows:

5.8.1. GHOST is SPIRIT

Traditionally, the Nzema refer to the soul of a dead person as *nwomenle* 'ghost'. This soul is actually invisible and believed to be an inhabitant of the cemetery/grave, which already evokes some sort of fear. The speakers thus suitably call it *ɛkɛla* 'spirit' as in example (24):

(24) *Egya   ɛ-va   wɔ   ɛkɛla   ɛ-zie   boɛ.*   (from Exct1, Sp4)
      father EMPH-take 2SG spirit EMPH-keep well
      'God should accept your spirit and keep it safely'.

In (24), we observe that the fearful *nwomenle* 'ghost' is not mentioned. Referent is rather made to *ɛkɛla* 'spirit' since both deal with the concept of invisibility. Though both *nwomenle* 'ghost' and *ɛkɛla* 'spirit' are abstract entities, the Nzema prefer the mentioning of 'spirit' to 'ghost'. This is because they attach fear to 'ghost' which is believed to exist as a result of death. Therefore, the most crucial reason for making reference to "spirit" is to ensure non-threatened communication.

6. Conclusion

In accordance with the assumptions of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and Cultural Conceptualisation (CC), this article has examined the "language of death" among the Nzema. It was the aim of the article to appraise metaphorical euphemisms as an effective politeness strategy in communication. The article

highlighted how speakers of Nzema deploy such convenient words to nullify certain expressions that are deemed inconvenient in the context of death discourse.

The article revealed that the issue of end of life in the Nzema society has been a sensitive cultural concept that requires every competent speaker to carefully resort to appropriate linguistic choices. We have found out that DEATH and its related concepts, though not absolutely prohibited, are not supposed to be discussed straightforward without a means to cover up or reduce the discomfort and shock that they might evoke. It is evident that metaphors constitute a potent source of figurative reference to the tabooed subject, DEATH. The article demonstrates that the Nzema make use of many metaphor-oriented euphemisms to "strip off" the shock and pains associated with overt pronouncement of DEATH and its related concepts. It is shown, for instance, that the Nzema conceptualise DEATH as RETIREMENT, DEATH as SUBTRACTION, DEATH as TURNING TO FACE THE WALL, DEATH as ENDLESS SLEEP, DEATH as LYING ON ONE'S LEFT HAND.

We saw BEREAVEMENT as LIVING IN DARKNESS, BEREAVEMENT as BEING MISSING AT THE CROSSROADS and BEREAVEMENT as SOMETHING FALLING INTO ONE'S EYE. We also saw BURIAL as HIDING, BURIAL as PRESERVING and BURIAL as SOWING A SEED. COFFIN was conceptualised as HOUSE FOR AN INDIVIDUAL. The CEMETERY/GRAVE was seen as BETTER PLACE and PLACE OF REST. CORPSE is A THING among others.

As in many diverse communities, DEATH as a phenomenon and its related concepts are deemed sacred in the Nzema society, and so in any communicative encounter that involves these phenomena, the Nzema endeavour to circumvent their linguistic choices to avoid direct reference to such concepts. The Nzema try to provide some consolation or relief to the bereaved family. Therefore, it is observed that these metaphor-based euphemistic expressions are deployed largely during funeral rites in order not to reactivate mourners' or bereaved families' sorrows and discomforts.

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Appendix

The following excerpts represent the information recorded from funeral grounds and other social setting/events where people engaged in death related discourses in some communities in Nzemaland (Ghana).

Excerpt 1.

Ethnographic context: During Nyamenlewɔkɛ's funeral

Date: 13.07.2020

Venue: At the community centre, Yɛdiyɛsele (Nzema East Municipal)

SPEAKER 1: *Bɛnlea yɛ nzi ɛke bɛmaa yɛ na **kɛkala yɛdo deɛ ne baka nu, yɛfa ye yɛahɔwula ɛleka kpalɛ yɛara**. Kale ne mɔɔ fa ye ahɔ la ɛra dɛbadɛba*. 'Now we **have put the thing (the body) into a wood/tree**, we are going **to hide it at a better place and be back**; the ambulance that is supposed to take the body has been here for a while'.

SPEAKER 2: *Yoo, bɛhɔ na bɛara ɛ, akee bɛse ɔle aloa mbɔleɛ, ye ɛdeɛ ɛdwu zo ɔti ye **Nyamenle ɛdo ɛsalɛ ɛvɛlɛ ye***. 'Ok, go and be back, after all they say that it is inevitable, so his time has come and **God has invited him**'.

SPEAKER 3: *Kɛkala mɔɔ **bɛhɔvu me diema ne bɛvea la**, debie biala ɛwie* 'now that **you have already gone to hide my brother's body**, everything has ended'.

SPEAKER 4: *Aaa! Selɛ kpalɛ mɔɔ nea ɔ mra, wɔmaa **yɛminli nwɔnda**; amgba noko wɔmaa **baka kpole ɛbu** ooo, na nienwu yɛɛ nloma bala a? Egya ɛva wɔ ɛkɛla ezie boɛ.* 'Aaa! A caring father who always fends for his children, you have caused us **to be missing at the cross-roads**; truly, **a big tree has fallen/uprooted**; where will the birds then perch? **God should accept your soul/spirit and keep it safely**'.

Excerpt 2.

Ethnographic context: During Papa Sagyei's funeral

Date: 07.08.2021

Venue: At the Victoria park, Axim (Nzema East Municipal)

SPEAKER 1: *Maanle ɛvɛlɛ boɛ, kɛkala nrenyia ne **mɔɔ ɛhakyi ɔ nye ɛzi bane la** amra ne mɔ **ɛva ye sua ne ɛra**.* 'Attention, please! Now, the children of the man **who has turned to face the wall** have **brought his house** to the general public to see it'.

SPEAKER 2: ***Adenle ɛhye mɔɔ awie kɔ a ɔmba ko la**, awie biala bahɔ bie ɔti sa awie ɛdeɛ si zɛhae a bɛmaa yɛ muala yɛkpa yɛgua na yɛboa **abusua ne mɔɔ debie ɛdɔ bɛ nye la*** 'For this **journey that one can never return**, everybody will surely embark on it one day, so when it happens to someone, let us all do well to help **the family members who have gotten something fallen into their eyes**'.

Excerpt 3.

Ethnographic context: During Hayanata's one week celebration (prior to final funeral rite)

Date: 04.06.2021

Venue: At a family house, Yɛdiyɛsele (Nzema East Municipal)

SPEAKER 1: *Ngya ahye mmɔ ahye oo, eza yɛ muala yɛ gyakɔ. Kɛ mɔɔ yɛ muala yɛze mɔɔ ɛzi la kɛ yɛ diema nee yɛ debie biala **lale a yeandwoazo** la, mera mebarabiza bɛ ahye nwonlomɔ ye.* 'Ladies and gentlemen, greetings to everyone, and accept my condolences once again. As we all know that **our sister fell asleep and did not wake**, I have come this morning to greet and mourn with you people'.

SPEAKER 2: *Yɛɛyɛ wɔ mo somaa. Hayanata mɔ **yemaa awozinli ɛva yɛ o**. Kɛkala yɛnnwu ɛleka mɔɔ yɛsie yɛ nwo a.* 'Okay, thank you very much for sympathising with us. As for Hayanata, she has caused us **to really live in darkness**; we do not even know what to do now'.

Excerpt 4.

Ethnographic context: During Manza's funeral

Date: 26.08.2020

Venue: At the community centre, Awiebo (Ɛlɛmbɛlɛ District)

SEAKER 1: *Yɛ Nzema maamɛla nee maamulɛ kile kɛ saa awie ati bɔ aze a ɔwɔ kɛ yɛnea **yɛfa ye yɛkɔsie ɛleka kpalɛ** wɔ ye bɔvolɛ ne asa nu. Kɛkala **bɛdo ye baka nu** bɛwie ɔti*

bɛmaa yɛva ye yɛhɔ nɔhalɛ ɛleka. 'As our tradition demands, **we have to keep/preserve any deceased body at a good place**. Now it (the body) **has been placed in the tree/wood**, so **let us take it to the place of truth**'.

SPEAKER: 2 *Amgba sonla amra bɛkyɛ wɔ azɛlɛ ye azo. Mɔɔ mgbavolɛ ye mɔ wolole ɛke kɛlala la yemɔ a* ***bɛhɔlua me diema ye bɛra la***. *Kɛkala mɔ ye* ***azɛlɛ ye azo gyimalilɛ muala ɛra awieleɛ***; *Ɛhɛɛ*, ***yewie ye gyima muala di***. *Zɔhane ala yɛɛ awie ko biala ɔdaye ɔbahɔ a*. 'Mankind never came to stay longer in this world. **They have gone to plant it (my sister)** so soon. Now all **her responsibilities on this earth have ended**; indeed, **she has completed all her works**. Everybody will go the same way'.

Excerpt 5.

Ethnographic context: During Egya Kodwo's funeral

Date: 22.11.2020

Venue: At the community centre, Asasetelɛ (Ɛlɛmbɛlɛ District)

SPEAKER 1: *Yɛ muala yɛwɔ sua ye azo yɛɛ ɛkenle yɛdele kɛ* ***nrenyiakpa ati ɛbɔ aze a***. *Ɛnɛ a bɛyɛ ye ɛzɛne a, ɛnee maa yɛrayɛ moalɛ yɛɛ asɛ yɛrado bɛ a*. 'We had all been here when we learnt that **the man's head has hit the ground**, today marks his final funeral rite, and that is why we are here today to provide some support'.

SPEAKER 2: *Ɔle zɔ, yɛdayɛ yɛwɔ azule nzi nehane yɛɛ yɛdele amaneɛ ne kɛ* ***yeha ɛleka bie*** *a. Ɔzile zɛhae la alɔvolɛ dɔɔnwo rayɛle yɛ moalɛ, ɛdawo noko mo samaa. Kodwo mɔ* ***yedu ye nɔhalɛ adenle***, *yenwu ye ɛdeɛ nye zo, yeha yɛmɛ mɔɔ kɛkala yɛde aze la*. 'It is in order, as you have rightly said. We were also overseas when we heard that **he has got missing somewhere**. When it happened so, many people came to sympathise with us and supported in diverse ways. Thank you also for your concern. As for Kodwo **he has already made his faithful journey**, so it is left with those of us who are now alive'.

SPEAKER 3: *Ao! ɔti amgba ɛnɛ* ***sonla to ɔ nye a ɔnrɛnwu nrenyia Kodwo ko***, *yɛra na yɛbahɔ noko amgba*. 'Ao! So **one can never see him with naked eyes anymore**, we came to this world and shall surely return'.

Excerpt 6.

Ethnographic context: During Egya Bile's funeral

Date: 16.10.2020

Venue: At the durbar park, Mgbɔtɛba (Dwɔmɔlɔ Municipal)

SPEAKER 1: *Maanle ɛvɛlɛ boɛ o! Yɛ muala yɛdi daselɛ kɛ ahenle mɔɔ* ***ɛla ye bɛne zo*** *mɔɔ ɔti yɛyia ɛke kɛkala la ɛnee le awie mɔɔ sonle bolɛ maa yɛ maanle ye a. Yeboa maanle ye wɔ ndenle ngakyile dɔɔnwo azo. Ɛhye ati yɛlɛsɛlɛ kɛ awie biala ɛbɔ mɔdenle ɛradua ye ezukoa ɔmaa ɔyɛ ahomeka*. 'Attention, please! As we are all aware, the man who **has now slept on the left hand**, and for which purpose we gathered here, has been very influential and supportive in this community in many ways. Therefore, we humbly entreat everybody

to come and donate towards his final funeral rite'.

SPEAKER 2: *Mɔɔ wɔha la le nɔhalɛ bɔkɔɔ, nrenyiakpa ne ɛnee le sonla mɔɔ anwo ka maanle kpole kpalɛ a, ɔti saa ɛnɛ* **Gyanemanza asa ɛdɔ ɔ nwo zo** *a ɛnee ɔhyia kɛ yɛ muala yɛkɛhakye ye gyima kpalɛ ne na yɛkɛmaa ye ɛzɛne ne kɛyɛ kɛnlɛma*. 'You are right, we bear witness that the man was a prominent person, so if **Gyanemanza has conquered him (laid hands on him)** this time, then it is necessary for us to recognise his good deeds and contribute to making his funeral a success'.

Excerpt 7.

Ethnographic context: During Ahube's funeral

Date: 23.03.2021

Venue: At the community centre, Kabenlasuazo (Dwɔmɔlɔ Municipal)

SPEAKER 1: *Zɛhae ɛzɛne ye nee yɛ ɛzɛne ko ɛyia nu. Kɛyɛ siane ko mɔɔ ɛze la yɛɛ bɛvɛlɛle me kɛ* **me awozoa raalɛ ko ɔdaye yeho yedɔ** *a. Eza ɛnɛ kenle nsa yɛkade a ɛnee ɔkile kɛ yɛ busuanli ko noko ɔdaye* **yevi nu**. *Ɛhye ati mebazɛlɛ adenle na meahɔ, mengyakyi bɛ aze*. 'This very funeral coincides with one of the funeral rites I need to attend in my own family. About a month ago, I was informed that **one of my nieces fought and fell (lost a fight)**. I am also told that **one of our family members has left**. For this reason, I would like to seek permission and attend the next funeral'.

SPEAKER 2: *Yoo, adenle la nu. Ɔhyia kɛ ɛkɛhɔnlea ɛ nzi nehane noko. Ɛnɛ mekɛ ye mɔɔ sonla ɛhakyi akɔlɛ mɔɔ ɛte kɛ bɛse* **awie ɛhɔ ye ɛkɛla nzi** *a ɔngyɛ biala bieko doa ye la*. 'Okay, permission granted, you need also to go and see what is happening at your end. These days mankind has become a fowl, **one person returns to his/her soul** today and the next day another person follows suit'.

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Convergence of form and content between indigenous and Christian songs and beliefs of the Yoruba in southwestern Nigeria

Abstract

Beginning and the development of Yoruba written poetry was believed to be influenced by the Christian songs and hymns. However, this study demonstrates the impact of Yoruba traditional poetry and beliefs in the development of local Christian religion and beliefs in the present time. Relevant data on both Christian and indigenous Yoruba beliefs were sampled through observation as well as extracted from written texts such as songs, hymns and poems in the Yoruba language. On the basis of the ethnographic and empirical materials and texts examined, the study found out that there are many parallel elements relating to form and content in traditional Yoruba and contemporary Christian songs and beliefs. It is stated that the Yoruba religious poetry and songs are valuable cultural elements in contemporary time and actively participate in propagating the Christian beliefs in the Yoruba society. This study concludes that impact of Yoruba religious poetry and beliefs is felt on the Christian religion in the contemporary time just as the Christian religious songs contributed to the development of Yoruba poetry in the past.

Keywords: poetry, culture, religion, hymns, song, Christianity, Yoruba religion

1. Introduction

Poetry is an aspect of literature mostly expressed in short lines or verses. It can be in different structures such as in stanzas or in any other units established in

historical development. Poetry can also be in songs mode, may or may not be accompanied by musical instruments and dance. Language of poetry is unique in tones, meters, stress, rhythms, sounds among others. It can be in oral and written forms with various contents such as religious poetry where religious ideologies are basically the contents and themes of the poems as in the case of this study. Among the Yoruba[1], oral poetry was prominent long before the written form. That poetry covered mainly divinities, praise poetry, invocation, and incantation poetry, among many others. One of the ways written poetry was launched or developed among the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria is by the adoption of the Christian hymns[2]. However, this study investigates into how the indigenous Yoruba poetry[3] has been adopted by the Christian Yoruba[4] to propagate their belief in the present time.

Among the Yorùbá people of south-western Nigeria, "life is meaningless" without the God – *Olódùmarè*[5] 'the Supreme Being'. However, after the propagation of foreign religions among the Yoruba, especially Christianity, the indigenous culture and religion was demeaned to such extend that the Yoruba people were described as "peculiar heathen", "refined heathen" and "so deluded and blinded" (Clarke 1972: 276-278). Religious instruction at Sunday church services did not include teaching of the Yoruba language and culture. The result was the imposition of foreign culture on the Africans and the active rejection of African culture, as "religion itself is largely culture-bound" (Iṣọla 2010: 36). One of the criticisms in African culture today is manifested in the rate of religious intolerance between foreign religions and indigenous religions. It is worth the trouble to demonstrate the cultural and religious interrelationships between the two belief systems as possessing equivalent religious concepts and elements.

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[1] Members of the Yoruba ethnic group are predominantly located in Southwestern in Nigeria. However, Yoruba are found also in other countries of the world such as Cuba, Benin Republic, Togo, Brazil, Jamaica and Trinidad. Yoruba is also a name of the language.

[2] Christian hymns are composed songs rendered in Christian services. Some Christian songs are also expressed in a chorus form.

[3] These are poems, especially those in sung mode, that are associated with the peoples' religions and beliefs. In the past, those songs and poems were performed orally. However, most of them have been in a written form and were documented in various cultural life artefacts of the Yoruba.

[4] These are the indigenous people converted to Christian religion.

[5] *Olódùmarè* 'the Supreme Being' "is conceived as the original source of all life and of all the resources of life, the father of mankind and of things, who covers everything he has created with his divine providence" (Mulago 1999: 130).

2. Aim and scope of the study

The aim of this study is to establish the relevance of Yoruba traditional religious poetry and songs in the propagation of Christian beliefs in the present time. The objectives of the study are to contrast the Yoruba religious poetry and songs with the Yoruba Christian songs to establish the adaptations and interrelationships and to account for religious confluence between the Christian and Yoruba indigenous beliefs in the past and present in various forms. The time scope of this study is the past – before and during the advent of foreign religions and Western education to south-western Nigeria – up to the present time. Africans generally, and the Yoruba in particular, place more emphasis on "two-dimensional concept of time, namely a dynamic present and a long past. The future in this cyclic concept of time is greatly devalued. Events merely come and go. The past receives the main emphasis" (Oosthnizen 1999: 42). Even though Africans generally, and the Yoruba in particular, think about future in addition to the past and present, however, it is believed that past and present give birth to future and that the future can only be predicted. That is, what has happened and is happening can be empirically accounted for.

3. Methodology

Songs and poetry are cultural elements that can be well understood by different approaches. For this study a cultural approach is adopted. Unlike the other critical approaches, cultural criticism (or cultural studies) does not offer a single way of analyzing literature. No central methodology is associated with cultural studies. The term "cultural studies" refers to a relatively recent interdisciplinary field of academic inquiry. This field borrows methodologies from other approaches to analyze a wide variety of cultural products and practices. A single approach will miss too much; it will overlook important aspects of culture not perceptible to that particular angle of vision. A multiple approach will pick up an insight here – a piece of knowledge and more of culture will enter into the inquiry (Kennedy & Gioia 2007: 665-666).

The opinion above demonstrates that cultural approach paves way for swapping of cultural ideas across various cultural elements. Cultural materials or elements can be analyzed from different perspectives. This means that there is no one way in which the meaning relates to the cultural material. One of the major cultural elements is religion. Every society is known with unique systems of living, including their belief system about the spiritual beings. Since culture evinces different aspects of people's life, cultural studies encompasses anthropology,

sociology, history, religion, and social science disciplines. It investigates how a phenomenon relates to matters of ideology, nationality, ethnicity, social class, and gender (Famuwagun 2016).

There are two different views about how the traditional religion can be protected by African culture. The holistic approach canvasses that African religion should be at the center of culture. The second school of thought sees religion as an important aspect of culture that should be respected "but not necessarily espoused" (Iṣọla 2010: 37). What is pertinent is the imperativeness of indigenous culture and religion on the activities of the people. How God and various religious concepts can adequately be comprehended or understood within the rubrics of culture.

Relevant data – songs and poems relating to religion and beliefs of Christian Yoruba and Yoruba practicing the indigenous religion were carefully sampled and analyzed in contexts, contents, structures, forms and meanings to account for their relevance in the past and present time.

4. Historical overview of the Yoruba poetry (oral and written)

Among the Yoruba, before the advent of literacy, orality was the only means of communication. This is a situation, where poems are "stored in the memory and then spoken, recited, chanted or sung on specific occasions" (Akporobaro 2001: 35). Large volumes of the Yoruba poetry are associated with indigenous Yoruba religion. Whatever they do "is to be seen in their religious systems" (Clarke 1972: 276). Therefore, it may be in order to classify Yoruba oral poetry into two main streams: religious and non-religious.

Oral poetry performance is an innate activity among the Yoruba. This is because some of their religious activities are performed in a poetic mode. This makes oral poetry generational. That is: "*àjẹbí àti iṣẹ́ ìran dé ìran ni ewì alohùn bí rárà tàbí ìjálá sísun jẹ́ fún àwọn apohùn*" (Àjàyí 2001: 139) which means: 'Oral poetry is innate and a profession is passed on from one generation to another in poems such as *rárà* or *ìjálá* for the oral artist'. This opinion shows that an act of oral poetry is handed down from one generation to another through Yoruba indigenous religion. Among them, *rárà* includes poetry associated with *Èṣù*, the Yoruba divinity of justice, whereas *ìjálá* refers to poetry associated with *Ògún*, the Yoruba divinity of iron and war.

The emergence of oral poetry among the Yoruba is believed to be initiated through *Ifá*, the divinity of divination and wisdom. It is established that "*láti ìgbà*

tí Ọ̀rúnmìlà ti bẹ̀rẹ̀ síí fi ohùn orin ka Odù Ifá, ó dájú pé láti ìgbà náà ni ewì ti bẹ̀rẹ̀ ni ilẹ̀ Yoruba" (Oyelaran & Adewọle 2007: 36) which means: 'It is certain that the time *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* has been adopting sung mode to recite *Ifá* verses marks the beginning of poetry among the Yoruba'. *Ọ̀rúnmìla,* is the *Ifá* progenitor. It is observed from the above statement that poetry is associated with song. It can also be established from the statement above that Yoruba poetry evolves from the knowledge of *Ifá*. This can be true because, on the one hand, without *Ifá* "the importance of the other Yoruba gods would diminish" (Abimbọla 1976: 9)., while on the other hand, "*Ifá* is Yoruba culture in its true dynamic and traditional sense" (Abimbọla 1977a: 14).

Pieces of non-religious poetry are as numerous as the activities of the Yoruba people. This can be universal – poetry which cut across all the Yoruba communities and the community-based poetry that is localized in scope. Oral poetry such as *ọfọ̀,* the Yoruba incantation and *oríkì* and *orílẹ̀*, the praise poetry or panegyrics and totem belong to universal oral poetry. Among the community-based poetry are *èfè*, a satire poem among the Ẹ̀gbádò community of Ògùn State of Nigeria and *àṣamọ̀*, commonly performed among the Èkìtì communities of Èkìtì State of Nigeria. Some oral poetry are gender-bound while some are gender-neutral. For example, *èfè* is performed by the male gender while *aṣamọ̀* is performed by both males and females (Ọlabimtan 1988: x).

In oral poetry, because of its association with the society, the religion, language and the oral artist belong to the society. The poet and the poems depend on the society. The oral artists usually expressed the voice of his society which was largely ruled by customs in which the element of individual judgment and initiative was small since the society itself was conservative in its outlook and tended towards the stereotyping of attitudes, behavior, practices, and even ways of thinking (Olabimtan 1981: 157).

In oral performance, an artist speaks from the community or society. He/she is seen as a community spokesperson. The situation is, however, different with the Yoruba society undergoing the process of adaptation as a result of literacy. The adaptation and survival of orality into the world of print is itself a rich and significant, and remains powerful in spite of repeated predictions of its demise. It has developed the idea of the author as a legal owner of words on the page. This is bound up with many other developments (Matterson & Jones 2000: 94).

In this situation, there is a shift of the society from absolutely being in custody of all the materials in poetry. Poets are free of developing and employing their ideas and language into poetry. While the community can be regarded as the

author in an oral performance, the poet has the sole authorship in written poetry. However, the language used, including the poet, are assets of the society.

The transformation of Yoruba oral poetry into written poetry arises from the advent of the European Christian missionaries in Yoruba nation. Even though the missionaries' main objective was not to take the Yoruba language into the path of writing, however, such action was found to be expedient for the propagation of the Gospel. As earlier explained, literacy was absent among the Yoruba people before the advent of the missionaries. Therefore, "credit must be given to the early missionaries for reducing the Yoruba language into writing, analyzing its grammar and through translations and compositions, lying the foundation for its literature" (Awoniyi 1978: 144-145). Christian missionary work was instrumental to the development of Yoruba language to written form. The advent of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) brought different changes to the religion and language of the Yoruba. As a result of this, it is difficult to talk about the development of Yoruba language without the influence of the Christian missions. With literacy knowledge brought by the Christian missions to the Yoruba communities, the Yoruba people, following indigenous religion, converted to Christianity and gained an opportunity to receive Western education. One of the prominent Yoruba who became a Christian was Samuel Ajayi Crowther. He was a native of nowadays Nigeria who acquired education in Freetown, the capital of Sierra-Leone. He was a resettled slave ordained as a priest by the CMS in 1843. With the aid of education, he wrote and published some works that influenced the development of the Yoruba language such as *A grammar of the Yoruba language* (1843). "This was soon followed by a primer (1949), a grammar (1852), and a translation of the Bible (1867); all were published by S.A. Crowther and the CMS could thus be credited with the founding of a written literature for Yoruba. Other prominent names in the development of Yoruba Studies at that time were C.A. Gollmer, H. Kilham, T. King, J. Raban and H. Townsend" (Akinlabi & Adeniyi 2007: 32).

As a result of introduction of literacy among the Yoruba, magazines and news-papers were launched through which opinions and ideas were expressed. Sixteen of such newspapers were identified and listed by Ogunṣina (2001: 193). It was also noticed that some of the newspapers and magazines' coverage were limited to certain communities. Newspapers such as *Ìwé Ìròyìn Èkó* 'The Lagos Newspaper' (est. 1888) with E.M. Thomas as the Editor, *Ìwé Èkó* 'Lagos Paper' (est. 1891) and *Nigbà tí ọwọ́ bá dilè* 'In Leisure Hours' (est. 1910) with the CMS as the editor covered Lagos communities. Again, it is observed that Christian missionaries had impact on printing poetry and other Yoruba literary texts. The few educated Yoruba were able to publish their ideas and findings. Since 1896,

Adetimikan Obasa began to collect Yoruba philosophical thoughts, which were published as a book in 1927. The development of the Yoruba poetry from oral to written form paved way for poetry to reach wider audience, inspire creativity and generate documentation. As a result of this advantage, we are able to discover first known Yoruba written piece of poetry as *Ìgbà Arò àti Igbà Ayọ̀* 'The time of mourning and the time of joy' (1860), written by Ọlabimtan in memory of Francis Allen. Therefore, "there is no doubt that the emergence of many Yoruba newspapers and non-religious books was an indication of the rising literacy status of the Yoruba language" (Awoniyi 1978: 75). It is observed that literacy was a catalyst of transforming Yoruba oral poetry, and thus the society, into adherents of written (or printed) tradition.

The role of the British colonial government, and later the Nigerian government, in education also had effect on the development of Yoruba literature, in which poetry was not left out. The government was in charge of school curricular, selection of relevant texts, and discovering of poets and writers. In Nigerian context, the government serves as motivator and regulator of literatures to be adopted in public schools. For example, it was observed "following the establishment of Yoruba literature Committee[6] and the emergence of local authors, that the situation improved. The immediate function of the committee was to produce, as quickly as possible, a series of books in Yoruba" (Awoniyi 1978: 75). Different groups were also formed to complement individual efforts in promoting Yoruba written poetry. In the present times, the development of both oral and written poetry cannot be overemphasized. There are crisscrossing relationships between the two. Therefore, both oral and written poetry are dependent on each other.

5. Data presentation

Yoruba written poetry was reduced into writing through Christian songs and hymns as a simple form of adaptation. Ọlábímtán's findings of 1860 revealed that the first known Yoruba written poem entitled *Ìgbà arò àti Ayọ̀* 'Time of sorrow and joy' that was published in 1859 can be regarded as the maiden edition of Yoruba written poetry as earlier explained. He opines about the first Yoruba poetry that:

Lóòótọ́, èdè Yoruba ni wọn fi kọ ọ́, sùgbọ́n típẹ́ típẹ́ ni ìhun àti ìmọ̀ ìjìnlẹ̀ èrò inú rẹ̀ so mọ́ Bíbélì àti orin àwọn ọmọlẹ́yìn Krisiti. Ìgbékalẹ̀ ìlà kọ̀ọ̀kan nínú ewì náà bá orin tí a mọ̀ sí

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6 I.e. Western Region Literature Committee established in 1952.

'Common Metre' (CM) mu…bẹ́ẹ̀ ni àtidìde pẹ̀lú ìdàgbàsókè lítíresọ̀ àpilẹ̀kọ Yoruba kò sẹ̀yìn Bíbélì àti ẹ̀sìn ọmọlẹ́yìn Kirisiti ní ilẹ̀ Yoruba ní ìbẹ̀rẹ̀ pẹ̀pẹ̀

(Ogunṣina 2001: 194-195)

"It is true, it was written in Yoruba language, however its structure and philosophy is related to the Bible and the hymn of the Christian believers. The structures of each of the lines of the poem follow the pattern known as "Common Metre" (CM) and that the beginning and development of Yoruba literature is the Bible and the Christian religion".

This opinion clearly shows the role of the Christian songs in the development of written Yoruba poetry. That is "the advent of Christian missionary and Western education has helped in reducing the Yoruba into writing which makes Yoruba poetry to be documented" (Ojo 2016: 54).

This presentation is to demonstrate how Christian religious songs influenced the composition of Yoruba written poems and how the Yoruba indigenous religious songs (as well as some other non-religious songs) influenced the composition of contemporary Yoruba Christian songs. Songs are translated and grouped thematically, according to the topics discussed later.

5.1. Correlation in terms of meter and syllable structure

These are data samples relating to *Ìbejì* and *Ifá* songs adapted in meter and syllable structures to Christian songs in Yoruba.

(1)   a.   *Wa bá mi gbé! Alẹ́ fẹ́rẹ̀ lẹ́ tán*
            'Abide with me, fast falls the eventide'

            Òkùnkùn ṣù; Olúwa bá mi gbé
            'The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.'

            Bí olùrànlọ́wọ́ míràn bá yẹ̀
            'When other helpers fail, and comforts flee'

            Ìránwọ́ aláìní wá bá mi gbé
            'Help of the helpless, O abides with me.'

                              (The Apostolic Church Hymn 797 as translated)

      b.   *Ẹ̀yin ará Èkó àtẹ́kún rẹ̀ ẹ*
            'People of Lagos and its environments'

            Mo yọ̀ fún yín, mo tún yọ̀ fúnra mi
            'I rejoice with you and myself'

            Ní ti pájagunmólú tàjò bò
            'That the victorious warrior came from battle front.'

'Àní Mákọ̀lì olóore ilẹ̀ wa.'
'That is, Macaulay, the benefactor of our land.'

<div align="right">(Ogunṣina 2001: 194-195)</div>

(2) a. *Bẹ́ tí ń wí ló máa rí*
'It is sanctioned as you are saying.'

Bẹ́ tí ń wí ló máa rí
'It is sanctioned as you are saying.'

Ohun ẹ wí ò, arò̀ á rò mọ
'What you have said is sanctioned by the authority of *arò̀*,'

Bẹ́ tí ń wí ló máa rí
'It is sanctioned as you are saying.'

<div align="right">(Yoruba poem on engagement program)</div>

 b. *Wẹ́rẹ́ ló bá mi ṣe é*
'He accomplished it for me easily.'

Wẹ́rẹ́ ló bá mi ṣe é
'He accomplished it for me easily.'

Ohun táyé rò pé kò ṣe é ṣe
'What the world thought is impossible.'

Wẹ́rẹ́ ló bá mi ṣe é
'He accomplished it for me easily.'

<div align="right">(Christian song adapted from Yoruba indigenous song)</div>

(3) a. *Epo mbẹ, ẹ̀wà mbẹ o*
'There is red-oil, there are beans.'

Epo mbẹ, ẹ̀wà mbẹ o
'There is red-oil, there are beans.'

Àyà mi kò já, o ní 'ye
'I am not afraid at all.'

Àyà mi kò já,
'I am not afraid'

Lati bi'bejì
'To give birth to twins.'

Epo mbẹ, ẹ̀wà mbẹ o
'There is red-oil, there are beans.'

<div align="right">(Daramọla & Jeje 1967: 281)</div>

 b. *Àwa ó ṣorò ilé wa o*
'We shall celebrate our family rite.'

Àwa ó ṣorò ilé wa o
'We shall celebrate our family rite.'

Ìgbàgbọ́ ò pe…Ó yee
'Christianity does not… You got it.'

Ìgbàgbọ́ kò pe káwa ma ṣọrò
'Christianity does not forbid.'

Àwa ó ṣọrò ilé wa o
'We shall celebrate our family rite .'

c.   *Àwa ó yin bàbá lógo o*
'We are going to praise farther.'

Àwa ó yin bàbá lógo o
'We are going to praise farther.'

Kò mà ní rè wá, ó yee
'We shall not be tired…, oh yes,'

Kò mà ní rè wá láti yin Jesu
'We shall not be tired to praise Jesus.'

Àwa ó yin bàbá lógo o
'We are going to give praise farther.'
                            (common Christian song collected during the fieldwork)

(4)   a.   *Bàbáláwo, mo wá bèbè*
'*Ifá* priest, I have come to plead'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

Bàbáláwo, mo wá bèbè
'*Ifá* priest, I have come to plead'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

Oògùn t'ó ṣe fún mi lẹ́rẹ̀kàn
'The charm he prepared for me the other time'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

T'ó ní ng má mọ́'wọ́ kan 'nu
'That I was told not to touch mouth with hand'

Alugbinrin.
'*Alugbinrin*'

T'ó ní ng má mà mẹ́sẹ̀ kan nu
'That I was told not to touch mouth with legs'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

Gbòrìgbò l'ó yọ mí tèrè
'I had a slippery leg on the floor'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

Mo f'ọwọ́ ba 'bẹ̀, mo mú ba 'nu
'I touched the place and my mouth'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

Mo bo 'jú wo 'kùn, ó yó kẹndu
'I looked at my tummy so big'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

Babaláwo, mo wá bẹ̀bẹ̀
'*Ifá* priest, I have come to plead'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

Babaláwo, mo wá bẹ̀bẹ̀
'*Ifá* priest, I have come to plead'

Alugbinrin
'*Alugbinrin.*'

<div align="right">(Babalọla 1973: 81)</div>

b. *Baba mi lọ́run mo wá bẹ̀bẹ̀*
'My father in heaven, I have come to plead'

Baba rere
'A good father.'

Baba mi lọrun mo wá bẹ̀bẹ̀
'My father in heaven, I have come to plead'

Baba rere
'A good father.'

Ìkìlọ̀ tó ṣe ni Kalfari
'The warning he gave at Calvary'

Baba rere
'A good father.'

T'ó ní n má mọ̀ bá láwo ṣe
'That he warned me not to have anything to do with *Ifá* priest'

Baba rere
'A good father.'

T'ó ni n má mò bọ́lópèlè ṣe
'That he warned me not to have anything to do with *Ọpèlè* diviner'

Baba rere
'A good father.'

Ìjì ayé yìí ló pò̩ lápò̩ jù
'It is the unbearable overwhelming storms of this world'

Baba rere
'A good father.'

Mo sáré mo tọ aláwo lọ
'I ran to the *Ifá* priest for rescue'

Baba rere
'A good father.'

Wọ́n ní n mépo o, ki n máta si
'I was told to sacrifice with red oil in addition with pepper'

 Baba rere
'A good father.'

Wọ́n ní n mádìyẹ kí n masọ funfun
'I was told to sacrifice with hen and white cloth'

Baba rere…
'A good father…'

(an adapted Christian song collected during the fieldwork)

5.2. Correlation in terms of content and themes

The following examples relate to Yoruba indigenous religious poems and songs and Yoruba Christian songs, canvassing the same beliefs. In some poems both Yoruba and Christian beliefs are perceived to have the same content, themes or subject-matter and meanings. Such content and themes evince equivalence in religious mediators between Christianity and indigenous Yoruba religion and the beliefs in death and resurrection after death.

(5)   a.   *Eni rere kọjá lọ sí apá kejì odò*
              'A good person has crossed to the other side of the river'

              Ó di iwájú Olódùmarè Baba
              'Till the presence of the *Olódùmarè* the farther'

              Kí á tó fojú gánní ara wa
              'Before we see each other physically.'

              Sùn 're o! Eni rere sùn 're o
              'Sleep well! Good person sleep well.'

              (Daramọla & Jejé 1967: 155-156)

b.   *Títí àjíǹde yíó fi dé*
'Until the Easter glory light the skies,'

T'áwọn òkú n'nú Jesu y'ó jìnde
'Until the dead in Jesus shall arise,'

Tí Jésù y'ó wá nínú ògo rè
'And He shall come, but not in lowly guise,'

Sùn-re! Sùn-re! Sùn-re!
'Goodnight! Goodnight! Goodnight!'

(The Apostolic Church Hymn 775 as translated)

c.   *A ó pàdé létí odò*
'Shall we gather at the river'

T''ẹsẹ̀ aṅgélì ti tẹ̀
'Where bright angel feet have trod'

T'ó mọ́ gara bí krisitali
'With its crystal tide forever'

Lábé ìtẹ́ Ọlọrun
'Flowing by the throne of God'

(The Apostolic Church Hymn 164 as translated)

(6)   *Ìgbàlà kò sí lọ́dọ̀ ẹlòmíràn*
'There is no salvation with anyone else.'

Ìgbàlà kò sí lọ́dọ̀ ẹnìkànkan
'There is no salvation with anybody else.'

Lọdọ̀ Jésù
'In Jesus'

Nikan nìgbàlà wà
'Alone there is salvation.'

(Christian song collected during the fieldwork)

(7)   *Jésù ló tó ní gbà*
'It is only Jesus who can save.'

Kò s''Óriṣà
'There is no Òrìsà.'

Òrìṣà kan ò lè gba'ni là
'No Òrìsà can save.'

Kò s''Óriṣà
'There is no Òrìsà.'

(Christian song collected during the fieldwork)

(8)   *Kèǹfèrí, ẹ wá wo'gbàlà*
        'The unbelievers come and see salvation'

        E wo iṣẹ́ Olúwa
        'See the work of God.'

        Kèǹfèrí, ẹ wá wo'gbàlà
        'The unbelievers come and see salvation.'
                                                        (Adeoye 1985: 49)

(9)   *Ayé la bá fá*
        'We met *Ifá* in the world.'

        Ayé la bá Mọlè[7]
        'We met the divinities in the world.'

        Òsángangan nìgbàgbọ́ wọlé dé
        'It was late in the day Christianity came.'
                                (a Yoruba indigenous song collected during the fieldwork)

(10)   *Mọ́ dójú tì mí o Jésù Olúwa*
        'Do not put me to shame, Lord Jesus.'

        Mọ́ dójú tì mí o Jésù Olúwa
        'Do not put me to shame, Lord Jesus.'

        Mo l'Égúngún nílé n ò 'gúngún
        'I have *Egúngún* deity at home, I didn't worship *Egúngún* deity.'

        Mo tẹ̀lé o léyìn n ò bọ̀riṣà…
        'I followed you at the expense of *Òrìṣà*…'

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[7] This song is wrongly expressed. For example, the word is *Imọlè* or *Mọlè* 'divinities' as against *Ìmòle* or *Mòle* 'Islam'. The error has equally been copied in the written text:

        Ayé la bá 'Fá
        'We met Ifá in the world.'
        Ayé la bá 'Mòle
        'We met Islam in the world.'
        Òsán gangan nìgbàgbọ́ wọlé dé
        'It was on the day that Christianity arrived.'

                                        (Abimbọla 1999: 52)

The field research conducted revealed that both Christianity and Islam came later into the Yoruba communities. To corroborate it with the empirical data, Mustapha et. al. opine that "iran Yoruba *kọ̀ọ̀kan ló ní èsìn kan pàtó tí wọ́n máa ń sìn kí èsìn àjèjì Kristi àti Islam tó gbòde kan*" (1986: 119) which means: 'Every Yoruba family had one indigenous way of worship before Christianity and Islam came as popular religions'. The two religions are both foreign. The divinities and *Ifá* are the indigenous forms of religious worship.

Mọ́ dójú tì mí o Jésù Olúwa
'Do not put me to shame, Lord Jesus.'
(A Yoruba indigenous song collected during the fieldwork)

(11) *Ọlọ́run dídán, Ọlọ́run dídán*
'God the perfect one, God the perfect one,'

Ọlọ́run dídán, Ọlọ́run funfun
'God the perfect one, God the white one,'

Ọlọ́run baba Ọlọ́run Èlà
'God the farther the *Èlà* divinity.'

O nínú fúnfun, ó níwà funfun
'He has a pure mind and character...'
(A Yoruba indigenous song collected during a Christian Sunday service)

5.3. Direct copying

The following examples present a form of literary adaptation by imitating a political Yoruba song by the Yoruba Christians, without any modification.

(12) *Kí lè ń f'Ọba pè?*
'What are you comparing king with?'

Ọba o, Ọba aláṣẹ, Ọba
'Oh king, the one with an authoritative power, the king,'

Ọba tó-tó bí aró
'Oh king, the one with words of command,'

Ọba o, Ọba aláṣẹ, Ọba
'Oh king, the one with an authoritative power, the king,'

Ọba rè-rè bí osùn
'King, the one with order of command.'
(a Yoruba indigenous political song collected during a Christian Sunday service)

5.4. Lexical substitution

Lexical substitution is a phenomenon of substituting a word in Yoruba song with a keyword in the Christian context.

(13) a *Ọmọ ni yóó jogún o*
'Children shall inherit'

Aṣọ iyì *tí mo ra*
'**Precious cloth** that I bought.'

Ọmọ ni yóó jogún o
'Children shall inherit'

Iṣẹ́ ọwọ́ mi
'The work of my hand.'
                    (a Yoruba indigenous funeral song collected during fieldwork)

b   *Ọmọ ni yóó jogún* o
'Children shall inherit'

Bíbélì *tí mo ra*
'Bible that I bought.'

Ọmọ ni yóó jogún o
'Children shall inherit'

Iṣẹ́ ọwọ́ mi
'The work of my hand.'
                    (a Christian funeral song collected during fieldwork)

6. Analysis and discussion

6.1. Adaptation by syllable structure and tune shaped by the level of tones

One of the ways by which Yoruba written poetry was instituted and documented is by adaptation of Christian songs and hymns into a poetic mode; meaning that song or music are interrelated. The relationship "goes far beyond the stylistic requirements of songs. It has been established that poems are often adapted as songs and for thousands of years, poetry has been closely allied with songs" (DiYanni 1990: 545). The relationship between song or music and poetry makes adoption or adaptation of poems to song possible. This also makes the overall perception of Yoruba music to be founded upon poetry (Euba 1975). Adaptation can be realized in two forms: partial and total adaptation. In total adaptation there is a complete adaptation of the patterns, as well as correlation referring to tones, sounds and rhythms.

Religion is one of the cultural means through which poetry and song or music are encoded. Two types of religious poetry have been identified: narrative and lyrics. However, this study is concerned with the lyrics, which is associated with "brevity, melody, and emotional intensity. The music of lyrics makes them memorable, and their brevity contributes to the intensity of their emotional expressions, originally designed to be dung to a musical accomplishment" (DiYanni 1990: 545). Attributes of *lyrics* as a form of poetry expressed by DiYanni (1990)

makes song and poetry relevant in this regard. As a result of this, song mode helps in coping, adapting, as well as providing the easiest way of adaptation from "old" source to the new.

Although, there are different tunes to sing the song in (1), the common tune that is universal or general to various Christian organizations is used in this study.

Yoruba is a tonal language, operating with low (`), high (´) and mid tones. Every vowel or nasal syllable carries a tone. Symbols used to indicate tones are placed on vowels in Yoruba, but only for high and mid tones. When a tone is not indicated on a vowel or a nasal syllable it is a mid-tone. Tones or their sequence may be also marked with L, H and M symbols, respectively.

The syllables in Christian hymn published to honor Herbert Macaulay in 1925 in *Èkó Àkéte* newspaper are indicated in (1b). The song is curled from (1a) in number of syllables. The title of the original or source hymn is *Wá bá mi gbé* 'Abide with me'. The song is prominent in most of the Christian denominations with different hymn numbers. For example, it is hymn 15 in Anglican Church as against 797 in Apostolic Church, where the number of syllables in the English version varies from 10 and 11 to 12 in one verse[8].

(1a) *Wá/ bá/ mi/ gbé!/ A/lé/ fé/rè/ lé/ tán* = 10 syllables
O/kùn/kùn/ sù;/ O/lú/wa/ bá/ mi/ gbé = 10 syllables
Bí/ o/lù/ràn/ló/wó mi/ran/ bá/ yè = 10 syllables
Ì/ràn/wó/ a/láì/ní/ wá/ bá/ mi/ gbé = 10 syllables

(1b) *È̩/yin/ a/rá/ È̩/kó/ a/té̩/kun/ rè* = 10 syllables
Mo/ yò/ fún/ yín,/ mo/ tún/ yò/ fún/ra/ mi =1 0 syllables
Ní/ ti/ pá/ja/gun/mó/lú/ tà/jò/ bò̩ = 10 syllables
À/ní/ Má/kó̩/lìì/ o/ló/re/ lè̩/ wa = 10 syllables

Since (1b) is adapted from (1a), the number of syllables is the same as indicated above. However, the situation in (2a) and (b) below is the opposite of what is observed in (1a) and (b), which this study is set to unravel.

In (2a) and (2b) Yoruba supplicatory songs and poems are the foundation for the composition of Yoruba Christian thanksgiving songs and poems.

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[8]   A/bi/de/ with/ me/, fast/ falls/ the/ e/ven/ti/de = 12 syllables. But *abide* is two syllables, unless it is modulated by lengthening the [ay] diphthong.

The/ dark/ness/deep/ens;/ Lord/, with/ me/ a/bi/de = 11 syllables
When/ o/ther/ help/ers/ fail/ and/ com/forts/ flee = 10 syllables
Help/ of/ the/ help/less, o/ a/bi/des/ with/ me = 11 syllables

(2a)   *Bẹ́/ tí/ ń/ wí/ lo/ ma/ rí* =7 syllables with tone pattern H/H/H/H/M/M/H
       Bẹ́/ tí/ ń/ wí/ lo/ ma/ rí =7 syllables with tone pattern H/H/H/H/M/M/H
       O/hun/ ẹ/ wí/ ò/, a/rò/ á/ rò/ mọ = 10 syllables with tone pattern   M/M/M/H/L/M/L/H/L/M
       Bẹ́/ tí/ ń/ wí/ lo/ ma/ rí =7 syllables with tone pattern H/H/H/H/M/M/H

(2b)   *Wẹ́/rẹ́/ ló/ bá/ mi/ ṣe/ é* =7 syllables with tone pattern H/H/H/H/M/M/H
       Wẹ́/rẹ́/ ló/ bá/ mi/ ṣe/ é =7 syllables with tone pattern h/H/H/H/M/M/H
       O/hun/ a/yé/ rò/ pé/ kò/ ṣe/ é/ ṣe = 10 syllables with tone pattern   M /M/M/H/L/H/L/H/H/M
       Wẹ́/rẹ́/ ló/ bá/ mi/ ṣe/ é = 7 syllables with tone pattern H/H/H/H/M/M/H

It is observed that the syllable structure and partial tone sequence of Yoruba Christian song in (2b) is adapted from (a), wherein the adapted Yoruba Christian songs follow the same syllable numbers in lines and structures. There is corre-lation of tones in lines 1, 2 and 4, while there is partial tone correlation in line 3. That is, the Yoruba Christians song follows the patterns of the Yoruba poetry. Meaning that knowing the song of Yoruba poetry is implied in mastering the Yoruba Christian song. Generally, in songs "the same tune may be used to render more than one structurally lyrics" (Oyelaran 1975: 706).

As suggested by Oyelaran (1975), what is important is not to be too bothered by the type of line arrangement of a poem but rather "one should simply investigate which factor predominates all other rhythmical features in the poetry of a par-ticular language" (Oyelaran 1975: 711). Yoruba language operates with a syllable tone which makes many poems in the language to be melodious.

Tone patterns in Yoruba make songs or music and poetry to be easily learnt, memorized and sung; which in effect, make the poem melodious. This is the case in (3c), where the melody of Christian song in (3c) is derived from the melody of Yoruba religious poetry in (3a) and (3b). The same syllable, tones and rhythmic relationship can be observed in *Ìbejì* song in (3a), (3b) and (3c). The *Ìbejì*[9] song in (3a) was performed before the colonial era; when the culture of the Yoruba people have been hardly influenced by foreign ideas. The song may be accompanied by dance. However, in (3b), the adaptation of the patterns of syllables, tones, sounds and rhythms of *Ìbejì* song[10] is formed. This was the case during the colonial era, when the Christianity and Islam were introduced in Yorùbá communities. During this period the "missionaries were determined to change indigenous institutions and behavior and thus saw themselves as Chris-

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[9]   This means 'twins'. Twins are regarded as one of the Yoruba primordial divinities.
[10] This is a song relating to the twins. Among the Yoruba people of south-western Nigeria, almost all the divinities have their poems and songs that are performed during different activities.

tian agents of civilization. Africans had to be thought different values, goals, and modes of behavior" (Harris 1972: 202-204). However, the song revealed the extent to which the Yorùbá people were religious. This is indicated in (3b) that succinctly shows that acceptance of foreign religions does not, in any way mean to abhor their own religion. Religiosity of the Yoruba Christian believers makes some to identify with both indigenous religion and Christianity. Abimbọla opines that "I have met people who try to be Christians, Muslims and traditionalists at the same time. The fact is that African [religion – author] does not regard itself, unlike Christianity, as the only way leading to salvation. African traditionalists respect the faith of others as equally authentic and as an experience which they themselves can partake in" (1977b: 59).

Ìbejì song in (3a) is adapted by the Yoruba Christians. The difference is its contents (the wordings or message). The adoption of the tunes and melody between the songs in (3a), (3b) and (3c) indicates the indispensable roles of the Yorùbá cultural and religious values in the contemporary time. For example, although the song demonstrates to praise the Lord tirelessly in Christian mode of praise worship in song, the song was motivated through the inspiration of indigenous religious song of *Ìbejì*, meaning that whoever knows the tunes and rhythms of *Ìbejì* song could easily sing the adapted Christian song in (3c) along, because the song derives its origin from *Ìbejì* song. This establishes the proposal being canvassed in this study that some indigenous religious songs are bedrock or foundation for the foreign religions in propagating their beliefs in the present time. These songs have become part of the life of the Christian community. It has been canvassed that "if the song is successfully carried through, it is most likely to become part of the community's permanent repertoire of song" (Ogunba 1975: 865).

The adaptation in sounds, tones and rhythms of typical African songs in the present day's foreign religious songs, as indicated in *Ifá* poetic song in (4a) and (4b) and (11a), clearly supports this idea. Adaptation of the Yoruba songs among Yoruba Christians is not limited to a Yoruba divinity, but extends to other divinities, as indicated in (4a) and (4b), where *Ifá*[11] song is expressed in folktales mode. Not only the tones and rhythms of the *Ifá* song are adapted, but the contents show the belief in the *Ifá* religion as an alternative religious way of solving human problems. The folktale entitled *Ìjàpá lóyún ìjàngbọ̀n*[12] ('Tortoise had trouble preg-

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[11] The Yoruba deity of wisdom and divination.
[12] Tortoise was instructed by the *Ifá* priest not to touch the mouth with its hand. However, it disobeyed the instruction. The disobedience made the tortoise's stomach to swell up which forced it back to the *Ifá* priest to plead for mercy.

nancy') is adopted to produce Yoruba Christian song in (4b). The song demonstrates that the multiple problems encountered by the Yoruba Christian converts make them to go or fall back to indigenous ways of solving the current problems, even after conversion to Christianity. The song in (4b) reveals that indigenous religion is a reliable religion for solving problems in life.

The implication of this is that Ifá religious song is adapted and accepted by different audience (religious group), such a song becomes part of the group assets. This is the situation with the acceptance of Yoruba indigenous religious songs and poetry by the Yoruba Christians. Acceptance of a poem is informed by the value of the poem, to the "new community" because of the roles such a poem is perceived to play in achieving the group objectives. That is, "our consideration of a poem's value is a measure of its involvement with our lives, with our way of thinking […] we consider the perspectives from which they are written […] we will come to value poems whose content we have lived" (DiYanni 1990: 417). Christian songs following Yoruba cultural patterns and beliefs demonstrate the past cultural system of living associated with the people.

To the Yoruba people *Ifá* and other divinities have been in existence, guiding peoples' ways of life with developments. This belief is expressed in song (9). It is observed that "foreign religion and modern trends have not been able to relegate traditional religion to the status of a thing of the past. The religion is as relevant and meaningful to a good number of the Yoruba Muslims and Christians alike in contemporary Yorubaland as it was in the pre-Islamic and Christian era" (Abimbọla 1999: 58).

Some of the songs examined are realized as form of poetry where "the tones, moods and voices of the lyric poems are as variable and as complexly intertwined a human feeling, thought, and imagination allow" (DiYanni 1990: 545). In examples (1-4) in the data above there is adoption of the same number of syllables, following the same tunes and melody. This is a situation "in which the poet establishes a pattern of a certain number of syllables to a line" (Kennedy & Gioia 2007: 119).

6.2. Contrastive analysis of indigenous Yoruba and Christian beliefs

The Yoruba poems in (5) evidence their belief about the dead; while Christian hymns in (5b) and (5c) demonstrate the Christian belief about the dead. The Christian hymns in Yoruba and Yoruba poetry as well as their beliefs system can

be related. That is, there is a synergy or a nexus around their contents and themes. In both Yoruba and Christian beliefs, it can be established that the dead are believed to have crossed to the other side of the river, the dead shall appear before the throne of God – the *Olódùmarè* in Yoruba traditional belief, the dead and the living shall see each other physically on resurrection day and the dead is not dead, but "sleeps". The belief of the Yoruba about the dead "sleeping" is supported by their reference to the dead as the one 'sleeping' or 'slumbering' – *olóògbé*. That is, the Yoruba call the dead *olóògbé,* meaning roughly 'the late one'. One can establish a parallel in the belief of the Christians and the followers of the Yoruba indigenous religion by the songs and poems. The poems and songs are prominent in use during Christian wake-keep and the Yoruba poem about the dead as encapsulated in the examples (5a-c). The Christians believe in resurrection, a situation where, the dead rise again. This belief is also in the Yoruba belief, meaning that "*kì í ṣe ìgbà tí àwọn ẹlẹ́sìn Muṣùlùmí tàbí ẹlẹ́sìn Kristi kó èṣìn wọn dé ni Yorùba ti gbàgbọ́ pé àjíǹde ǹ bẹ*" which means 'it is not when the Muslim and Christians brought their religions that Yoruba believe in resurrection' (Arómọláran & Mustapha 1976: 56).

The Yoruba Christian songs in (6-8) demonstrate some misconceptions about Yoruba beliefs by the Christian believers; thinking that there is no parallel or confluence in the beliefs of the two religions. For example, like in many other religions, the Yoruba believe that there are mediators, messengers of God, the *Olódùmare*, called *Òrìṣà*. *Òrìṣà* are "national and heroic symbols as well as divine messengers" (Abimbọla 1977b: 54). However, the advent of Christianity and Islam to the Yoruba societies abhors the believe that the *òrìṣà* qualify as saviors, divine messengers and mediators. The belief of the Christian religion, on the contrary, is expressed in songs (6) and (7). To the Christians "It is only Jesus who can save" and "Jesus is the Lord". On the counterpart, the Yoruba belief in the *òrìṣà* as their saviors is expressed in their names and naming system. Names such as *Ifágbàmílà* '*Ifá* saved me' and *Orògbàmí* '*Orò* saved me' express the belief in eternity and the belief in salvation through *òrìṣà*. Christian song in (8) demonstrates that the Yoruba people following the indigenous beliefs are regarded as *kèǹfèrí* 'the unbelievers'. It is a misconception and ignorance on the part of the foreign religions to regard the Yoruba as unbelievers or "heathen". The ignorance is occasioned by "*àwọn Kìrìstíẹnì àti Mùṣùlùmí kò ṣe ìwádìí tí ó jinlẹ̀ gidigidi nípa èṣìn àti ìgbàgbọ́ àwọn Yoruba ki wọ́n tó má pè wọ́n ní kèǹfèrí*" (Adeoye 1985: 50) which means 'The Christians and the Muslims did not research critically into the religion and belief of the Yoruba before they regard them to be unbelievers'. The content of the song in example (9) demonstrates that before the advent of

foreign religions, the Yoruba had their belief rooted in 'the only one God' – *Olọ́run kan ṣoṣo* (Adeoye 1985: 50). *Ìrẹtẹ̀-Ogbè*[13] corpus says that:

> Religion is about haven,
> Heaven is unknown,
> The unknown creates fear,
> The spirituality torment seeks solution religion.

> (Salami 2002: iv)

This opinion shows that religion teaches about Heaven. Heaven is a universal phenomenon, therefore, it is unfounded for a religion to claim the monopoly of Heaven. The Yoruba believe that living in the world is a "journey", Heaven is the "home". This opinion buttresses the belief expressed in a Yoruba proverb: *Ayé lojà, ọ̀run nilé* 'The world is a marketplace, Heaven is home'. That is "The Yoruba concept of existence transcends the time when the individual is on earth. It goes beyond the period" (Abimbọla 1975: 417). Yoruba religion and beliefs are well founded and grounded in philosophical ideas or thoughts.

The Yoruba song in example (10) reflects the opinions of the Yoruba Christian converts in the early period. The song reflects the idea that even though the Yoruba Christian converts have accepted the new religion, however, their indigenous ways of worship have not been discarded. The belief of Africans generally and the Yoruba in particular "supersedes the one-dimensional approach of the modernist worldview" (Oosthnizen 1999: 38). This situation whereby Africans strongly hold on to their indigenous beliefs subsists till the present time. One can also aver from the song that the traditional religious songs influence in one way or the other the foreign religious songs. It is so because, in a way, "tradition establishes a relation between past and present" (Munoz 2003: xvii). The mutual relationship between the past and the present could result "in the assimilation, adaptation and accommodation, of aspects of other peoples' cultures. The end product could be cultural refinement, advancement or development" (Unoh 1986: 3).

The Yoruba Christian song in (11) makes reference to *Èlà* divinity, the one with pure mind and character. Among the Yoruba, some of the attributes of *Èlà* are: "the spirit of truth, rightness, and amicable living, working on earth to create and promote order, happiness, and understanding among the inhabitants of the earth" (Simpson 1980: 17). Equivalence is made between *Èlà* and Jesus in the

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[13] One of the minor *Odù Ifá* corpora. It is also called *Ìrẹ̀tẹ̀gbè*.

song. Èlà is regarded as Àyánfé Ọmọ 'The chosen child' (Adeoye 1985: 237). The resemblance between Èlà and Jesus Christ in Yoruba religion can further be substantiated with Biblical reference. For example, Mathew (17:5); Luke (9:6) says: "And the voice came out of the cloud, saying: 'This is My Son, whom I have chosen, listen to Him'".

6.3. Adaptation by copying indigenous Yoruba poetry into Christian context

Yoruba political song in (12) is an example of an imitation of indigenous song embedded into Christian religious context. The original song is used for acknowledging the unchallenging and authoritative power of the Yoruba king. This song is, however, adopted by contemporary Yoruba Christians to acknowledge the power of God or Jesus Christ as a king. The song is in a copied form and adopted without any modification. That is, unlike the previously presented songs where there were adaptations in tones, syllable, melody or structure but differences in content, this song is adopted both in content and meaning. The difference lies in the context and place of song performance. That is, while the song is rendered by the Yoruba mostly in a palace or at a political event where the presence of the king is acknowledged, it is however, rendered by the Yoruba Christians mostly in churches and during Christian religious events, acknowledging the spiritual power and presence of Jesus Christ (God). This song was excerpted from political context – the source, and moved on to religious context – the variant way of interpreting its lyrics.

6.4. Adaptation by lexical substitution in indigenous and Christian religious poetry of Yoruba

In (13a) and (13b) there are lexical items that are substituted with each other in the process of adaptation. Such lexical interchange or replacement can result in semantic shift or variation. The change of semantic field results in the change of contextual field. The performance context of Yoruba poem in (13a) is a funeral event; where cloth is one of the heritages for the children of the deceased. For the song in the adapted Christian form, the context is a Yoruba Christian funeral. Aṣọ iyì 'precious cloth' well understood in the Yoruba indigenous cultural context is substituted with bíbélì 'Bible' adjoined to the Christian religion.

All the Yoruba songs in adapted Christian form which were examined in this study are sung in modern times. "Modernity", including the new belief systems introduced by the foreign religions has not been able to "depose" the indigenous

Yoruba culture and religion but rather started to use it as a media for propagating foreign religious missions. Opinion of Olupọna further buttresses on this observation when he says: "it is in the area of resilience and change that African traditional religion has demonstrated its most important contribution to contemporary knowledge. African traditional religion has been quite receptive to change. For example, its encounter with the two monotheistic religions which have come to Africa, Christianity and Islam, as well as with modernity, has transformed the religion and triggered various kinds of responses to the encounter" (1999: 31). Olupọna says that while some scholars think that "changes in the traditional worldview are due to the presence of Christianity and Islam" (1999: 31), Horton's opinion proofs the contrary: "Horton argues that this conclusion is wrong and suggests that traditional religion was already actively responding to ongoing social change at the time of contact with other religions" (Olupọna 1999: 31). The adaptation of Yoruba religious songs by the foreign religions undertaken by this study further buttresses the argument of Horton. The missionaries that brought and thought or imposed new belief systems on Africans seemed to have forgotten that "in primitive society culture and civilization are peculiarly interdependent and inseparable. This harmony is destroyed when an alien technology is imposed on them. It destroys the media through which their native culture expressed itself. Occasionally, this may happen through the direct introduction of an alien culture possessing higher prestige, as, for example, through missionaries, but generally the native is able to resist this impact" (Maciver & Page 1950: 577). Although there are dominant forces of the foreign religions imposed on the indigenous culture and religions, the indigenous cultural modes of propagating culture, such as songs and system of beliefs, are potent media through which African cultural values are appreciated till today. The cultural and religious emancipation of the Yoruba is a product of "Independent African Churches in which biblical and African worldviews are combined in meaningful ways to the converts" (Olupọna 1999: 31).

Despite the level of civilization and modern (technology and scientific) developments, African cultural and religious values cannot be overemphasized. Such impact and influence are not limited to the past, but also felt in the present times. It is observed that "a belief is normally defined as its worth. This is why it seems that values actually permeate every aspect of human life […] Some social values, especially in African society, cannot exactly be separated from religious, moral, political values and so on" (Idang 2015: 4). The important roles of culture as manifested in contemporary Yoruba poetry has been demonstrated in this study.

It has been observed that religion is intended to "water" culture, "sanitize" it, to make cultural life more stable. I conclude: you can change your religion, and espouse a foreign one, but you cannot change your culture. The truth is that if your culture has not socialized you into acceptable standards of right and wrong, if you have not internalize those humane qualities of integrity, honesty, transparency, accountability through your own culture, there will be no foundation on which any religion can build. "Being born again" really means going back to your God-given culture to learn to be a good person (Iṣọla 2009: 108).

The criticism against the African cultures and religions generally, and Yoruba religion and beliefs in particular, cannot be sustained in the present times. That is, the belief and assumptions that "African culture and civilization was barren, empty, backward, unproductive, and unconductive for any intellectual stimulations. Africa is no historical part of the world, it has not movement or development to exhibit" (Ajayi 2005: 6). This supports the opinion that with the coming of the European Christian Missions, and the Muslim intrusion into Yorubaland, "the main features of Yoruba culture have certainly survived, but there can be no doubt at all that a certain blending, a certain accommodation of the old and new, have had to be arranged" (Uya 1986: 24).

7. Conclusion

This study concludes that there is synergy between the indigenous Yoruba songs and Christian Yoruba songs, as well as between their beliefs. This is mediated by syllable structure, tunes shaped by the level of tones, contents and themes, direct copying and lexical substitution. The nexus is informed as a result of a new transformation and reformation whereby the former – the Yoruba indigenous songs, poetry and belief system are integrated to the present – the contemporary Christian Yoruba religious songs and belief system. The contemporary Yoruba Christian songs, poetry and beliefs can be described as a "re-creation of the past within a rational process of re-traditionalization" (Munoz 2003: xvi). The process of development of the present from the past is a transitional one, "transitional societies would become modern, once the process of substitution is completed" (Munoz 2003: xvi). References to *Ìbejì, Egúngún, Ifá, Èlà* divinities in the contemporary Yoruba Christian songs and in churches during services, as demonstrated in this study, attest to the transformation process going on between the two systems of beliefs.

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Stefan Strelcyn and his archival recordings of oral tradition of Ethiopia made in 1957/58 (including four Amharic love songs)

Abstract

Stefan Strelcyn – a Polish scholar whose achievements were acknowledged by the Emperor Haile Selassie I in 1967 with a Haile Selassie Award for Ethiopian Studies – initiated African studies at the University of Warsaw. His main field of scholarly activity covered cataloguing manuscripts in various European library collections as well as studying traditional Ethiopian medicine and medicinal plants. However, during his field trip to Ethiopia in 1957/58 he recorded 26 tapes of various examples of Ethiopian orature in Ethiopic classical Ge'ez language and five other languages of Ethiopia: Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, Gurage, and Harari. These recordings have been recently digitized. The first attempt to present their content, as well as a sample translation and literary analysis of four Amharic love poems recorded by Stefan Strelcyn, is undertaken in this article.

Key words: Stefan Strelcyn, Ethiopian studies, orature, Amharic love songs

1. Introduction

Stefan Strelcyn grew out of a traditional school of Ethiopian Studies oriented at Amhara-Tigray culture[1] deeply rooted in the tradition of religious writings in ancient Ethiopic language – Ge'ez[2]. His main accomplishments included cataloguing of the Ethiopian manuscripts in various European library collections[3], as well as research into traditional healing involving plants and magical prayers. That is why rather than studying scriptures, containing official translations of religious writings, he took interest in manuscripts holding notes of the *debteras*[4] – Ethiopian Church healers[5]. These manuscripts contained prayers and charms used by them every day to heal all known diseases of body and mind – every aspect of that fascinated the scholar. However, the scope of Stefan Strelcyn's interests was broader and included other cultures and languages spoken in the area. It transpires through the recordings he made during his research visit to Ethiopia in 1957/58, preserved on twenty-six tapes deposited at the Department of African Languages and Cultures' Library. This legacy of Stefan Strelcyn, the initiator and founder of academic research into African cultures at the University of Warsaw, has not been studied since the middle of previous century when it was documented. The tapes contain recordings of traditional oral performances by various ethnic groups inhabiting the Ethiopian highlands. The current article concentrates

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[1] Ethiopia is a multicultural country with over 80 nations living within its boundaries. For centuries, though, two ethnic groups dominated the Ethiopian Empire – Amhara and Tigray, which gave rise to a leading role of Amhara-Tigray culture.

[2] Christianity influenced Ethiopian culture from the beginning of our era – it became a state religion in the early 4th century. Thus, religious literature in Ethiopic classical Ge'ez language became one of the main attributes of the Ethiopian civilization.

[3] I.a. *Catalogue des manuscripts éthiopiennes (Collection Griaule)*, Paris 1954; *Catalogue of the Ethiopian manuscripts in the British Library acquired since the year 1877*, London 1978.

[4] Ethiopia has its own writing system used for all the Semitic languages spoken on its territory, like Amharic, Tigrinya or Gurage. However, Ethiopic script transliteration remains a challenging issue, as there is no single system best suited for all languages. Instead, each language has its own system for transliterating the Ethiopian terms. For the transliteration of the Amharic writings, including the songs' lyrics, I chose the BGN/PCGN 1967 System designed for use in Romanizing names written in the Ethiopic script approved jointly by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) and the Permanent Committee on Geographic Names (PCGN) for British Official Use. It was justified, in my opinion, by its closest relation to the original Amharic version. Transliteration used in this article does not take into account gemination (or doubling of consonants). Most of the proper names have not been transliterated, instead I used their well-known versions.

[5] *Debteras* are unordained Ethiopian monks, whose roles in Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church are multifaceted, see Kaufman-Shelemay (1992).

on description of the content of the recordings with particular attention given to Amharic songs, which represent one particular genre of Ethiopian orature, the love songs. The whole body of recordings includes various examples of Amharic, Gurage, Harari, Tigrinya, and Oromo folk songs and tales, as well as the Ge'ez religious chants and *k'inē* poetry created during church celebrations by the *debteras*. The most substantial is the material in Amharic, containing *azmarī* songs performed by male and female singers, as well as other folk songs sung on different occasions among the Amhara people. Several hours of Ethiopian orature preserved on tapes by Stefan Strelcyn prove the interest of this promi-nent scholar in the development of Ethiopian studies, not only in its traditional manuscript-oriented scope, but also in much wider context. At the time when the Polish scholar conducted his research, relatively small number of researchers (i.a. Cerulli (1922), Cohen (1924), Eadie (1924), Littmann (1925), Gebre Mesk'el (1949/50, 1955/56), Welde K'irk'os (1955/56)) paid attention to oral tradition transmitted in Ethiopia in the form of songs composed and performed during various celebrations, those private that take place within family or small commu-nity, as well as those involving society as a whole, like numerous in Ethiopia re-ligious feasts and festivals. Most of the academics interested in Ethiopian culture studied artifacts connected with Christianity, like religious scriptures in classical Ethiopic language Ge'ez. It is for that reason this country situated on African continent became known for its written heritage.

Historically, however, Ethiopian culture belongs to cultures in which written word existed side by side with that transmitted orally. Literacy and orality coexisted in Ethiopia for nearly two millennia as the country is known to have its unique writing system from the beginning of our era[6].

2. Stefan Strelcyn's field trip to Ethiopia

Stefan Strelcyn became interested in Ethiopia during his stay in Paris where he studied just after World War II under supervision of a remarkable personality – Marcel Cohen. This great Semitist, interested particularly in Ethiopian studies, became a Master to several young scholars[7], whose thirst for knowledge and quest for truth led them to uncovering hidden treasures of Ethiopian civilization with its links to the modern world. They were to make big impact on Ethiopian studies in the future and Stefan Strelcyn was one of them.

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[6] For more information on the issue of orality and literacy in Ethiopia refer to Rubinkowska--Anioł and Wołk-Sore (2014).

[7] I.a. Déborah Lifchitz, Bernard Velat, Maxime Rodinson, Joseph Tubiana and Wolf Leslau.

Upon completing his studies in France, the Polish scholar found himself in October 1950 back in his homeland, where he was offered a post at the University of Warsaw. His commitment to building new foundations for the Polish scientific research and education system, largely devastated during the war, was very fruitful. He was entrusted with a mission of founding a Chair of Semitic Studies as a part of the existing Oriental Institute. Moreover, in 1952, he became a member of the Committee of Oriental Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences and from 1953 headed the Oriental Manuscripts Workshop of the Polish Academy of Sciences. For his scientific and organizational achievements Stefan Strelcyn was honoured with the highest Polish civilian awards: the Golden Cross of Merit and the Knight's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta.

After more than ten years of his Ethiopian studies, the Polish scholar was sent by the Polish Academy of Sciences on his first scientific journey to Ethiopia. It lasted three months, from 16th December 1957 to 13th March 1958. Here is how he remembered his first impressions on landing in Addis Ababa:

I arrived in Ethiopia for the first time in December 1957. I don't need to tell you in what state of mind I set off and the emotion with which I took my first steps in this Promised Land, the land of my manuscripts (Wołk-Sore 2016: 92).

While in Ethiopia, he based himself in the capital Addis-Ababa and made trips to Gonder, Asmara and Massawa (Eritrea), as well as to some towns scattered around Addis Ababa like Debre Zeit, Hagere Heywet and Woliso. He visited the village of Majete, situated on the road from Addis Ababa to Asmara. Detailed account of his trip can be found in the publication of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Strelcyn 1959, available also in French-language version) in which he described fully his preparations, aims, and accomplishments. The aims included linguistic and ethnographic research focused on local beliefs and practices merged with the long-present in Ethiopia Christianity. Strelcyn concentrated on deeply rooted traditional medicine which included using plants and prayers by the *debteras*[8]. During his stay in Ethiopia, the Polish scholar traced information on the subject and collected manuscripts holding magic prayers as well as recipes of herbal remedies used for medicinal purposes. He also recorded church chanting in Ethiopic classical Ge'ez language with instances of *k'inē* poetry composed during religious celebrations as well as some healing sessions involving spirits.

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[8]   Stefan Strelcyn's published works in this subject included: *Médicine et plantes d'Éthiopie* (1968) and *Prières magiques éthiopiennes pour délier les charmes (mäftɘhe šɘray)* (1955).

3. Archival recordings

The recordings were made on Agfa Magnettonband Type C 1000m tape, the first type of high-fidelity magnetic tape invented in 1935 in Germany by the chemists from BASF Company which revolutionized the world of recording and playing back the sound. It was possible to evaluate the content of the tapes only when they were digitized by specialists from the Phonographic Collection of the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences[9] – the oldest Sound Archive of traditional music in Poland. It specializes in digitalizing and archiving sound and audio-visual recordings, with over 100 thousand of recordings of Polish artistic folk heritage deposited there. Digital version of the high quality WAVE files allows to fully appreciate the unique flavour of the recordings just as they were registered over 60 years ago.

The recorded material is vast and valuable – especially the recordings of church celebrations containing improvised poetry and rituals, which were registered live and not listened to ever since. Analysing them requires knowledge and skills surpassing those available to the author of this article, who specializes in Amharic language and literature. That is why the songs in Amharic, which also are quite numerous, captured my attention, among them many tracks performed by the *azmarī* – traditional Ethiopian singers. It was (and still is) their profession to sing solo or in pairs during all sorts of secular festivities like names-giving, promotions, weddings or funerals, to name but a few. The character of the *azmarī* performances is mostly improvised, hence contextual analysis is vital in case of their examination.

Apart from that, there are quite a few Amharic songs of which some are sung solo, others in antiphonal mode by men, women as well as children. Their leading topic concentrates around love. There are also well known popular songs sung during feasts and festivals, like *Abebaye hoy* performed during Ethiopian New Year celebrations. Some of them are fine examples of Ethiopian poetry, which was accompanied by music and performed on various occasions. In oral cultures, the most important form of orature is poetry accompanied by music in such a way that verbal and musical parts are interwoven and co-dependent (Finnegan 2012: 6-7). It is in poetry that real genius of the people who create it can be seen. This is why uncovering deeper meaning of various indigenous examples of poetry can be so significant to understanding distant cultures.

3.1. Oral Amharic poetry

In Ethiopian traditional societies poetry is intended for singing up to the extent that the two, poetry and music, are inseparable. By the researchers from the Euro-American cultural sphere this kind of sung poetry belonged to folklore and therefore lyrical songs were often categorized as folk songs[10]. The Western scholars, who initially defined folklore as lower culture lacking artistic qualities, as opposed to the higher cultural dimension of literary works, gradually, over the years of contextual research on African oratures initiated by Ruth Finnegan – a pioneer in this field – began to acknowledge and appreciate their beauty and importance. As for the indigenous scholars, they always considered oral poetry as creative and similar to other branches of fine arts, like painting, but using voice instead of paint, brush, and canvas. Birhanu Gebeyehu in his book on Amharic poetry (2006/7) describes it straightforwardly pointing to the homeostasis between several elements of verbal-musical performance: music, voice, words, and body movements. He also draws readers' attention to the very source of poetical acts – emotional stimulation. The aim of such performance is to evoke similar emotions in its participants.

Poetry is music. The art of poetry originates from *zimarē* and *ingurguro* (both denoting chanting to express emotions of joy or sorrow – intonation, lamentation), *ts'elot* 'prayer' and *mihala* 'pledge', *shilela* 'war song' and *fukera* 'boasting', *lik'so* 'dirge' and *tebselsilot* 'contemplation'. Music provides coherence to style and art of vocal images. Vocal images are supported by verbal images, or substituted by them; they become *mezmur* 'canticle' – as early scholars called them[11]. When vocal images, supported by verbal images are translated into body movements they are called dance or swing (Gebeyehu 2006/7: 19).

Amharic poetry, *git'im*, was (and still is in many parts of Ethiopia) composed and performed on various occasions accompanied by typically Ethiopian musical instruments: *begena* 'a ten-stringed lyre' believed to be a God-given holy instrument (Kebede 1975: 145), *krar* 'a five or six stringed lyre' or *masenk'o* 'a single stringed, bowed fiddle'. Lyrics cover a wide range of themes depending on the

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[10] Eadie (1924: 244) includes two very long examples of love poetry containing metaphors similar to those recorded by Stefan Strelcyn. He comments on them as follows: "Pieces 8 and 9 are the common songs of the bazaar with no intrinsic merit as poetry, and only included as examples of their kind".

[11] In the recent book by Thomas C. Oden (2017) the ancient roots of the singing and chanting practice are described as well as the deep role of mezmur in its culture-shaping capacity in Ethiopia.

occasion: songs to offer praise or blessings, work songs, love and wedding songs, laments, lullabies, war and boasting chants, elegies or religious meditations. As songs are the means for communication within the society, the poets use various techniques like telling a story, talking about love, describing a person, lamenting a situation or boasting about victory.

In most instances of Ethiopian poetry, rhetorical figure of "wax and gold" is employed, with its roots in Ge'ez religious poetry *k'inē* composed during church celebrations to express adoration, praise, and thanksgiving to God. Its essence lies in creating verses with two-level meaning, one overt and the other one hidden. The apparent meaning is wax, which after melting reveals gold, the hidden, deeper sense. The words constituting both levels are syntactically interwoven using analogy, metaphor or metonymy, through which the entire meaning of the poem becomes clear. Using this stylistic figure in Ethiopian poetry is likened to the work of goldsmith, who pours molten gold into a clay mold. In the process, wax used to make the mold melts away and gold takes shape of wax. Oral poetry of Africa is often seen as a craftwork[12] that requires special skills, quite comparable to other kinds of craftsmanship. Similarly in Ethiopia, the art of *k'inē* is taught in traditional church schools. The skill in this kind of rhetoric was and still is much appreciated not only in religious context.

Research into Ethiopian orature has not yet resulted in a systematical classification. Attempts undertaken by Ethiopian scholars produced results available in publications on the subject, such as those of Fekade Azeze, who wrote a textbook introducing oral literature to Ethiopian students (1999), as well as Getie Gelaye, who studied Amharic oral poetry of East Gojam (2001). The latter defines six main genres of Ethiopian poetry, basing his classification on the occasions when the particular works are being transmitted. He indicates that poetry and songs are deeply interwoven into the lives of the rural people (Gelaye 1999: 125). The six genres are: *zefen* 'songs', *k'erarto* and *fukera* – 'war chants' and 'boasting recitals', *ingurguro* 'lamentations', *yelek'so git'im* 'dirges', *tarīkawī git'im* 'historical poetry' and *wek'tawī git'im* 'contemporary poetry'. Songs are divided further into work songs, wedding songs, children's songs, love songs, religious songs, and praise songs (Gelaye 1999: 129).

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[12] The title of Ruth Finnegan's book on African poetry *Doing things with words in Africa* also expresses the dynamism of creating poems, pointing to their character of applied art in various cultures of this vast continent.

4. Amharic love songs

Although all the songs recorded by Stefan Strelcyn were sung without accompaniment, their melodic line is very important. We can only assume how they were recorded. The lack of accompaniment indicates that the recordings were made not necessarily in natural circumstances on the particular occasion. Some of them appear on tapes in several versions with better and poorer quality of the sound. In most cases, the name of the performer is revealed. All this information leads to a conclusion that the songs were sung especially so that the Polish scholar could record them.

I am going to present here four love poems, all of which are fine examples of dodecasyllabic verse with twelve syllables, six on each side of the *caesura*[13]. This type of verse is very popular in Amharic love poetry (Leslau 1990: 158). In the Ethiopian rhythmic meter system it is called *yewel* or *denbenya bēt*, which means 'regular' (Gebeyehu 2006/7: 245).

The first short lyrical piece, performed by Mengesha Werk'neh, contains only five lines and belongs to a special kind of what appears to have its roots in well established religious Ge'ez poetry genre called *melki.* The essence of this kind of poetry lies in praising the body parts of holy persons and saints to express appreciation and devotion to God. The description of a woman presented below is secular in its expression but the protagonist certainly displays comparable devotion to the charming lady, whom he portrays.

Excerpt 1.

anget-wa birilē // wedk'-o 'm-ī-seber-ew
'Neck-her carafe // having-fallen which-shatters'

ayn-wa at'bīya kokeb // yem-ī-werewer-ew
'Eye-her morning-star // which-shoots'

ginbar-wa mestawet// yem-ī-yat'berebr-ew
'Forehead-her mirror// which-dazzles'

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terekez-wa lomī // wiha t'eb yem-ī-l-ew
'Heel-her lime // water which-sprinkles'

yīchī nat sēt weyzero // des des yem-ti-l-ew
'This is a lady // delightful which-is'

des des yem-ti-l-ew
'delightful which-is'

Although the picture is sketchy and not very detailed, it is rich in poetic metaphors and metonymy that include "wax and gold". Placed in a cultural context, they uncover a unique beauty of an Amhara woman referring not only to her outer but also inner qualities. It starts from a description of her neck, which is long, slender and fragile – just like that of a carafe. This metaphor contains "gold" in it as in idiomatic speech the expression *angete sebara* 'of broken neck' means a 'straight-hearted, discreet and humble person' (Aklilu & Worku 1995/6: 157). In the second verse her eyes are compared to a morning star, which appears on the sky only for a short while to disappear at dawn. Such a vanishing sight is praised in women. One cannot catch a glimpse of her eyes let alone admire their beauty. Her forehead (*ginbar*) is likened to a mirror reflecting midday sun (*jenber*). Subsequently, her heels are likened to a lime[14], a common metaphor or rather a fixed expression in Amharic poetry[15]. In traditional Christian Amhara culture a dress code requires that women wear long sleeves and skirts so only the heels are visible – they can be very attractive when they are juicy like a lime. Lime also has a special sexual meaning among the Amhara people as women would throw a lime at a man who catches their eye. In the last verse, an expression *sēt weyzero* is used to add a final touch to the description. As *weyzero* is a term in Amharic reserved for married women, it denotes a decent lady who knows her value and is full of charm. The above portrayal is full of appreciation, praise and devotion towards what seems to be a mature lady, possibly a wife.

Her neck like a carafe that breaks having fallen,
Her eyes like a morning star that fades before dawn,
Her forehead like a mirror that dazzles at noon,
Her heels like a lemon that drips with juice,

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[14] *Citrus aurantifolia* L.
[15] Such a comparison is used in a poem preserved in writing by Eadie (1924: 255), as well as by Girma Beyene in his song *Inē neny bay man nesh...* from the album "Ethiopiques 30: Mistakes on purpose" (2017). It was also included in the collection of Amharic idioms by Aklilu and Worku (1995/6: 27).

This is a lady that is so delightful,
That is so delightful[16].

Mikael Fasil sings the next song and its outline is rather different – it tells a story about love. The girl, who evoked strong feelings and emotions in the protagonist, is young and not yet married as he speaks of her using a word *lij* meaning 'a child'. It is obvious that Cupid's arrow struck him and he expresses his feelings in the following way:

Excerpt 2.

ye-genet abeba // yem-ti-mesy-ī lij-i – yi-germ-al
'of-paradise flower // which-you.F-resemble girl – it is interesting'

fik'ri-sh lib-ē-n mark-o // wesed-ew ke-dej-i – yi-germ-al
'love-your heart-my-ACC having-captured // took-away from-door-my – it is interesting'

k-anchī-m i-wed-alew // welaj inat-ish-in – yi-germ-al
'Of-you.F-as-well I-like // parent mother-your.F-ACC – it is interesting'

ye-bahir k'et'ēma // y-as-mesel-u-sh-in – yi-germ-al
'sea reed // made-you.F-resemble – it is interesting'

sew-och s-ī-ch'awet-u // ch'ewata ay-amre-ny – yi-germ-al
'people when-they-talk // conversation doesn't-please-me – it is interesting'

k'uch' biy-ē 'wil-al-ew // fik'r-ish iy-a-sere-ny – yi-germ-al
'sitting-I spend-day // love-your.F while-tied-me – it is interesting'

k-adis-aba inch'et // k-and girar wedīh – yi-germ-al
'from-Addis-Ababa wood // from-one acacia hither – it is interesting'

fik'ir b-anchī yi-rga // yi-demdem ingid-ih – yi-germ-al
'love in-you.F let-it-rest // let-it-stop hereafter – it is interesting'

min-im nigus b-ī-hon // bale-serawīt-i – yi-germ-al
'whoever king if-it-was // with-army – it is interesting'

min-im p'ap'as b-ī-hon // bale-negarīt-i – yi-germ-al
'whoever patriarch if-it-was // with-talking-drum – it is interesting'

yem-ī-reta-w ye-le-m // fik'ir ina mot-i – yi-germ-al
'which-concurs there-is-not // love and death – it is interesting'

This is an example of sublime poetry with metaphors evoking images of faraway lands as well as universal concepts. Its structure resembles a sonnet containing

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[16] I provide the closest word-to-word translation of the poems. It is far from being a literary translation.

11 lines, divided into two parts. The opening part is an octave consisting of a pair of quadrains, in which the protagonist describes his condition of being in love. The concluding three lines – a tercet – give a wider context of his circumstances offering some consolation. The first four lines illustrate beauty of a girl – she is likened to a "flower of paradise". Praise is given to the girl's mother, thanks to whom she resembles a reed – a plant connected with water, the source of life, growing on lakeshores or at water wells – slim, strong, and supple. In the second quadrain, the protagonist explains why he cannot involve in mundane tasks and nothing amuses him as he is tied by affection to that girl. He desires it were his last and only love. The final three lines refer to universal notion of power of love and death, with which no one is capable of competing. Even the most powerful people of the world, like the kings and patriarchs, using all their authority cannot prevent either of them. In this poem there are two more interesting features. First are the rhymes, which follow the pattern: AA BB CC DD EEE, not very common in Amharic poetry. The other thing I would like to point to is the word *yigermal* which appears at the end of each line. It serves as a refrain. It can be translated 'it is strange, interesting, amazing'. This kind of a refrain could be the answer of auditorium listening to the story as it is followed by the repetition of the hemistich for better understanding and remembering. This hypothesis fits very well with oral way of transmitting poetry where listeners take active part in the performance.

Oh girl, you look like a paradise flower – it is amazing.
Your love has taken my heart a prisoner – it is amazing.
It is your mother, I love and admire – it is amazing.
She made you resemble a water lily – it is amazing.
When people chat, I don't feel like talking – it is amazing.
Tangled in your love, I sit idle and lonely – it is amazing.
Like acacia tree of Addis Ababa suburb – it is amazing.
My love journey has reached its harbour – it is amazing.
Be it a king mighty with his whole army – it is amazing.
Be it a patriarch with his talking drums – it is amazing.
There is no one to concur love and death – it is amazing.

The last two poems sung by Mekebeb Gebeyehu contain twelve lines each. The first one, *Birtukwanē*, is a well-known ballad that appeared on many records of Ethiopian popular music singers like those of Ketema Mekonnen, Telahun Gesese, Muluken Melese or Kuku Sebsibe, to mention but a few. The lyrics of each version differ considerably, but the melodic line is the same and is based

on one of the four traditional musical scales[17], *batī*. The lyrics of the version preserved by Stefan Strelcyn tell a story of a girl, whose name could be Birtukwan. It is a name of a popular fruit – a type of orange – which was brought to Ethiopia from Portugal by Jesuit missionaries in 16th or 17th century[18]. It is a custom in Ethiopia that female names denote precious things, goods or qualities, like *Almaz* 'diamond', *Ts'ehay* 'Sun' or *Fik'ir* 'love'. The same situation happens to be with *Birtukwan* 'orange' – the fruit was sweet and precious as it came from afar and the word denoting it became a female name. This word, which is a refrain of the song, can also serve as a term 'sweet, honey, darling' used to address any girl or woman. It is a common characteristic of oral cultures, and especially that of Ethiopia, that words have many possible meanings – not only one attached to them. It gives a poem, or any speech in fact, a unique flavour of multidimensional interpretation.

Excerpt 3.

yachī lij wefir-a // be-k'emīs-wa mola-ch – birtukwan-ē
'that girl having-put-on-weight // in-dress-her she-filled'

ye-zīya-n ye-wet'at lij // anjet iye-bela-ch
'of-that of-young boy // guts while-she-eats'

inat-na abat-ish // siga new irm-achew – birtukwan-ē
'mother-and father-your.F // meat is taboo-for them'

anjet ti-bey-ale-sh // anchī-ma lij-achew
'guts you.F-eat // you.F child-their'

inde-min abat-ē // inde-min li-hun-i – birtukwan-ē
'how father-my // how shall-I-become'

zemed-och-ē hulu // t'el-u-bi-ny anchī-n-i
'relatives-my all // dissuade-me you.F-ACC'

semay dem mesele // l-ī-nega lēlīt-u – birtukwan-ē
'skies blood resembled // dawn-becomes night'

ch'ink'-i-new t'ib-i-new // k-anchī me-leyet-u
'hardship-is distress-is // from-you.F separation'

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[17] The musical scale of traditional secular Amharic music is called k'inyit and the other three are *tizita*, *ambasel*, *anchī hoy* (Powne 1968: 47; Kimberlin 1976: 75-78) – each one is believed to have a distinguished pattern of intervals, although this issue recently became a subject of intense debate, see: Abate (2009), Weisser & Falceto (2013).

[18] Hence the sound of the word *birtukwan* resembles the name of the country, Portugal. In fact, it is *Citrus sinensis* L. or 'sweet orange' known also as burtuqaal in Arabic, *porto-kali* in Greek or *portakal* in Turkish.

aynish-in ayn-ē lay // arge-sh-iw b-ī-sebir – birtukwan-ē
'eyes-your.F eye-my on// cast-you.F until-it-crush'

ahun be-min danya // ti-kefey-ī neber
'now by-what judge // would-have-paid-you.F'

imbway kolel bil-a // aref-ech be-dej-ē – birtukwan-ē
'citrus-fruit having-rolled // stopped at-door-my'

b-ayn y-aye-hu-wat inji // mech neka-hu-wat be-j-ē
'with-eye I-saw-her but // never touched-her with-hand-my'

The lyrics refer to desire and sexual infatuation, but as in Amhara culture this subject is not to be discussed publicly, so the narrative is carried out in a mysterious way. It has witty elements in it, which is a common feature in orature (Miruka 1999: 79) aimed at amusing the public and helping to focus their attention. The first line is humorous as it talks about a girl, who, having put on weight became plump (and desirable?). It may just as well mean that she has changed from a child into a woman. She aroused feelings of a young boy, as it is conveyed in Amharic with idiomatic expression 'to eat somebody's guts' meaning to 'make somebody concerned, compassionate or miserable'. He addresses her saying that her parents consider it a taboo to eat (human) flesh but nevertheless she chose to 'eat his guts', a sarcasm interpreting idiomatic expression literally. His relatives discourage him from the involvement with the girl but he says that when the sky resembles blood at dawn it is hard for him to part with her (after spending a night together? maybe in his dreams?). He accuses her of starting the flirt by looking boldly in his eyes, the fact any arbiter would admit. The closing two lines tell about an inedible citrus fruit, *imbwuay*[19], which rolled and stopped at the protagonist's door, which he saw with his eyes but never touched with his hands. As I mentioned before, there is a custom in Ethiopia that girls can throw a lime fruit towards a boy to tell him they are interested in him. In this case it is not a lime but a fruit which is not edible. The last line may suggest that the story told could be about a missed opportunity and the involvement with the girl a product of the boy's imagination. Thus, his desire remained unfulfilled.

That girl gained weight to fill up her dress, Birtukwanē
And she is eating the guts of that young boy.
For your father and mother meat is taboo, Birtukwanē
But you, despite being their child, chose to eat guts.
How shall I behave, my father, Birtukwanē

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[19] *Solanum incanum* L.

All my family dissuade me from you.
When sky resembles blood, at dawn, Birtukwanē
It is difficult for me to part with you.
It is you who crushed me with your eyes, Birtukwanē
Any arbiter would acknowledge it.
Imbway rolled pass my doorway, Birtukwanē
I saw it with my eyes but never touched it with my hand.

The last ballad is a *tizita*, a very popular type of a song in Ethiopia, which can be translated as 'remembrance, recollection'. It is usually sad, reflective, and nostalgic. The protagonist describes the time of *kiremt*, the rainy season, when people suffer due to cold weather, natural disasters like floods, diseases, and scarcity of food. All inhabitants try to prepare for the months of July and August to avoid illnesses, hunger or even death. They make sure their house is strong enough to survive *kiremt* and they have enough food as well as someone close to heart to spend this challenging time with. The protagonist did not manage to built 'a shelter for his heart' – a figurative expression to say that he was all alone when the rainy season came and that is how he depicts his situation:

Excerpt 4.

hamlē nasē[20] *met'-a // hulet wer kiremt-i*
'July August came // two months of rainy season'

le-lib-ē m-aref-īya // bēt s-al-sera-le-t-i
'for-heart-my shelter // home I-did-not-make-for-it'

t-amim-ē t-amim-ē // hulet wer kiremt-i
'I-have-been-ill // two months of rainy season'

indēt be-meskerem // be-abeba-w li-mut-i
'how in September // in-bloom may-I-die'

y-abay wiha molt-o // yi-hēd-al boy le-boy
'Blue Nile waters overflowing// go in-all-directions'

minew be-hilm-ē met'a-sh // dena ay-dele-sh-im wey
'why in-dream you.F-came // well are-not-you.F if'

inde-min inde-min // yi-neg-al lēlīt-u
'how how // becomes-day night'

nifas iye-meta-w // kosh iy-ale bēt-u
'wind while-hits-it // creaks house-the'

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[20] The word *nasē* here is a shortened version of *nehasē*, the name of the 12th month in Ethiopian calendar – the November.

selasa t'irs-och-ish // ke-wetet y-a-net'-u
'thirty teeth-your.F // than-milk whiter'

al-as-tenya-ny al-u // lēlīt iye-met'-u
'do-not-let-sleep-me // night while-they-come'

ye-reget-sh-iw merēt // tiz ale-ny dinber-u
'of-which-you.F-tread ground // I-remember border-the'

ye-nē-na y-anch bicha // fik'r-achin m-ama-ru
'mine-and yours.F only // love-ours being-beautiful'

He suffered from illness and was ready to die. But then, having reflected on his situation, he remembered that always after rain the sun comes out. So he poses a rhetorical question: how one can die in the month of Meskerem[21] while everything is in bloom? The Blue Nile torrent flooded the neighbourhood when the girl he loved came to him in a dream. And again, he asked her rhetorically: are you not well? While the night was turning into a day and blasts of wind made his house creak, she kept coming in his dreams smiling with her 30 teeth whiter than milk. This inspired him to recall the last time he saw her and he remembered the beauty of their love, which presumably he lost for some reason (maybe death?). But this recollection made him survive the rainy season. As for the form of this poem, it is a series of couplets with the rhymes AAAA BB CCCC DD.

July, August came, two months of rainy season,
For my heart shelter, I did not make.
I have been ill, two months of rainy season,
How in Meskerem, in flowers shall I die?
Waters of Blue Nile, flow in all directions,
Why did you come in my dreams, are you not well?
Oh how, oh how night becomes day,
The house creaks, as the wind hits it.
Your thirty teeth whiter than milk,
Do not let me sleep as they come at night.
I can remember the ground you stepped on,
Mine and yours only, how beautiful is our love.

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[21] *Meskerem* is a name of September, a month when Ethiopians celebrate New Year. It is a happy time of new hope as the sun comes out and everything is blooming. That is why *Meskerem* is also used as a girl's name giving the poem a hidden meaning.

5. Conclusion

Western scholars for centuries perceived Ethiopian culture through the prism of its literary heritage. Ornamented manuscripts handwritten in Ethiopic language Ge'ez became a symbol of the Ethiopian Christian Empire. And yet, literacy present in Ethiopia from the beginning of our era has not superseded deeply rooted orality of the greater part of Ethiopian society. Literacy and orality existed side by side for centuries as two separate and yet complementary domains. Although Ethiopian literary heritage has been systematically studied by both the Western and Ethiopian scholars, oratures and orality of numerous Ethiopian cultures have not received due attention.

The Polish scholar – Stefan Strelcyn – recorded 26 tapes with several hours of Ethiopian oratures during his field trip in late 1950s. However, his recordings remained unexamined for over sixty years. Only after they were digitized it became possible to study their content. They contain fine examples of Ethiopian poetry of various ethnic groups, including Amhara, Oromo, Gurage, or even Harari. Very interesting are the recordings of Ge'ez religious chants and poetry *k'inē*. Examples of Amharic poetry are also numerous with improvised songs of *azmarī* – the Ethiopian wordsmiths.

To begin the task of describing, transcribing and translating the recorded material I chose four poems presented in this article. They exemplify four different types of one genre of love poetry; at the same time all four of them share similar prosodic features. Their analysis revealed inspiring metaphors, metonymies, comparisons and fixed expressions that were used by the Amharic oral composers in creating poetry sixty years ago. Although it is very difficult for a non-native speaker of Amharic to uncover the hidden meaning, I tried to dig for gold. An interesting quality of the poems is their multidimensionality encoded in the words, which can be understood in more than one way.

Orature in Ethiopia is being collected and preserved now by the Ethiopian as well as foreign scholars. Many Ethiopian universities have folklore departments organizing this greatly required work. Hopefully, it will lead to more thorough and systematic studies of the great variety of orally transmitted works of different ethnic groups in Ethiopia.

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REVIEW

Paul Newman & Roxana Ma Newman. *Hausa Dictionary: Hausa-English / English-Hausa, Kamusun Hausa: Hausa-Ingilishi / Ingilishi-Hausa*. Kano: Bayero University Press 2020, 627 pp. ISBN: 978-978-98446-6-1

Hausa lexicography, in the almost 170 year-old tradition of dictionary-making, has produced several extremely important works that testify to the achievements in research on the Hausa language and are a reflection of the communicative status of the language. The two great dictionaries published in the first half of the 20th century, i.e. Bargery (1934) and Abraham (1962 – first edition in 1947) remain inexhaustible sources of knowledge about vocabulary and phraseology that are thoroughly studied by the Hausa scholars. The last decades were marked by the production of dictionaries that include achievements of theoretical research on the language. Among them one of the most spectacular works is the Hausa-English dictionary by Paul Newman (2007). However, the required grammar competence necessary to use the dictionary is quite high. Therefore, the intended users of the dictionary are Hausa scholars and students at every level. In turn, the monolingual Hausa-Hausa dictionary (Sa'id et al. 2006) is a confirmation of research on the Hausa language conducted by native Hausa researchers and their contribution to lexicographic achievements. One of the fundamentals of this scholarly based tradition is marking tone and vowel length on Hausa words, as opposed to the convention adopted in traditional publications (press, literature) where these features are not marked.

The growing use of Hausa in intercultural communication, including a huge increase in number of Hausa texts published online, creates new challenges for lexicographers such as to produce dictionaries suitable for everyday use by both Hausa and non-Hausa speakers. In this approach, the information on communicative functions of the dictionary entries is particularly important, at the same time grammatical information is provided in an accessible manner. On the other hand, the task of such a dictionary is to popularize a standard norm among

users who have not received education in this language. While Hausa dictionaries were produced most often as bilingual Hausa-English ones, the English-Hausa versions did not provide comprehensive specimens until Ma Newman's dictionary (1990) was published.

The single-volume *Hausa-English / English-Hausa dictionary* by Paul Newman and Roxana Ma Newman combines and updates the content of the earlier two dictionaries and gives them an extended allocation „For everyday use – na Yau da Kullum". The authors who see themselves as the „guardians of Hausa's rich lexicographic tradition" verified and updated the earlier versions using a panel of expert linguists, native speakers of the language. The dictionary respects bilingual convention in the text of Foreword and User's guide sections, which are written both in English and Hausa. A major change from the earlier versions are the target users who switched from the European English-speaking scholars to users from Nigeria and Africa in general. The dictionary was published in Nigeria by Bayero University Press.

The dictionary, consisting of two parts, H(ausa)-E(nglish) and E(nglish)-H(ausa), represents Standard Hausa, although some dialectal forms are also included (noted as *dial.*), mainly in the H-E section, e.g. **nau** (*dial.*) = **nawa**, **metso** *m* (*dial.*) 'stunted goat'. Loanwords from other languages, including from Arabic, which became naturalized in Hausa, are not indicated as such as it used to be customarily done in the previous Hausa dictionaries. There is an extended list of geographical names which are entered as headwords in the H-E part, whereas in the E-H part they are presented as a group in the Appendix. Apart from well established Hausa names of geographical places, such as **Habasha** 'Ethiopia', **Masar** 'Egypt', **Bahar Maliya** 'Red Sea', (Kogin) **Kwara** 'Niger' (river), many names appear for the first time in a dictionary of Hausa in their phonologically established variants. It is stated in the User's guide that the geographical names entered as headwords are „well-established Hausa designations", however, they seem to be selected randomly. Neither Poland nor Ukraine are components of the dictionary entries, whereas both Holland and Netherlands (**Kasar) Holan** as well as North Korea **Koriya ta Arewa** and Cambodia **Kambodiya** are included.

The transcription system used in the dictionary is based on the standard alphabet. The most significant modification in comparison to the Hausa source dictionaries and Hausa lexicographic practices in general is a cease of the academic tradition of marking tones and vowel length. Tones and long vowels are indicated in phonetic transcription when necessary for disambiguation, e.g. the item **baƙi** has three separate entries, [báƙíː] *adj* 'black', [báƙíː] 'letter of the alphabet' and

[bàːƙíː] *pl* of **baƙo** 'guest, visitor'. As the number of minimal pairs differentiated only by tonal pattern is relatively small in Hausa, the communication implications of resigning from the marking of tones in the dictionary entries seem to be insignificant.

As far as organization of entries is concerned, the Hausa words and phrases are indicated in boldface in both parts of the dictionary. In the H-E part, headwords are differentiated into two categories: stems applied only to verbs and other entries represented by full words, both simple words and compounds.

Stems are written out in capital letters. All variants are listed sequentially and provided with an indication of category known as „grades" (marked *v0, v1, v2…..v7*), e.g. TAR- **tara** (-i, -e) *v2* 'intercept, interrupt', **tare** *v4* 'block, ward off', **tarar (da)** *v5* 'catch up'. The system of grouping the grade forms of the same verbs in the same entry under an abstract stem is an innovative system introduced initially in Newman (2007). This system is based on language-specific grammatical competence necessary to benefit from the dictionary which can be problematic for the language learners, especially when the verb form differs from the verb stem, e.g. **ɗiba** 'dip out' is identified under the stem ƊEB- where the forms preceding object **ɗebi**/**ɗebe** are listed. Nevertheless, the authors listed the altered forms separately and cross-referenced them to the stem, therefore ƊIB = ƊEB. Some innovative solutions have been applied in the presentation of the entries, e.g. **nutse** is primarily directed to **nitse** 'sink, submerge down' which is consistently listed under the stem NITS-. A well-established spelling convention of some verbs which contain the diphthong -ai- (confirmed in the texts) has been changed in the dictionary entries to -e-, as in REN- **rena** v1 'align, deprecate; have contempt for, look down on; underestimate'. The verb is better identified in an orthographic norm as **raina** (**rena** 'care for a child' is therefore a realization of another stem REN-). The stem alternation also functions as RAIN- see REN- (but not as a regular change, *vide* DAIN- **daina** *v1* 'quit doing, cease'). Some problems may be created by the morpho-phonological process termed as palatalization. It is well recognized in the language description and is clearly presented through the variant forms of the lexical items, but the users searching for English equivalents of the item **gaji** must be familiar with the grammar rules to choose a meaning belonging to either the stem GAJ- or GAD-. It is a more general point that listing the units belonging to one part of speech is different from other units, which can be problematic for a dictionary defined as "For everyday use". In the E-H part, the verbs are listed independently as headwords with grade numbers assigned to them.

Information about the morphosyntactic categories of verbal nouns is reduced to their lexical representation. Irregular and unpredictable forms are presented as

independent lexical units, therefore **nema** *m* 'seeking, trying', while ɴᴇᴍ- **nema** (-i/-e) *v2* 1. a. 'look for, seek', b. 'try to'. Similarly, **shiga** f 'entry' (ꜱʜɪɢ- **shiga** *v3* 'enter, go in'); **jifa** m 'throwing' (ᴊᴇꜰ- **jefa** (-**i**/-**e**) *v2* 'throw at'). Regular verbal nouns ending with -*wa* are not listed at all.

Nominal items have the forms of their grammatical categories (such as gender and number) listed together with a headword. It is worth adding that the lexico-graphic method of indicating plurals by plural codes only, which was adopted in the Newman's earlier dictionary (2007), was replaced here by presenting the full forms, i.e. **jiki** *m* <**jikuna**> 'body'. Compounds are bold-face entries that are listed in the dictionary as separate entries and transcribed with a hyphen. It concerns both regular genitive phrases (**gidan-abinci** 'restaurant') and verb-based compounds (**ja-gaba** *m* 'guide, leader', **ka-ce-na-ce** *m* 'argument, dispute'). With this convention, **sa hannu** 'sign one's name' (*lit*. 'put hand') is listed as a sub-entry of **sa** 'put, place', whereas **sa-hannu** 'signature' is a separate entry. This is a proposal of data presentation known from the previous two dictionaries (Newman 2007, Ma Newman 1990), but not used elsewhere.

The original graphic design of the book cover is also worth attention. It is stylized as an oriental book-binding and leather-like cover featuring a recurring Hausa decorative motif.

The dictionary is valuable for many groups of users, not only the university students. Comparing to their previous works the authors have made significant changes in the adaptation of academic standards of transcription and ortho-graphic conventions to the needs of the users who are speakers of both Hausa and English. The dictionary will have a normative function in terms of spelling rules and will be conducive to promoting the *standard* norm of the Hausa language. The Hausa learners who have been using Hausa dictionaries for many years may be surprised by the choice of the term *Ingilishi* in the Hausa version of the title (*Hausa-Ingilishi / Ingilishi-Hausa*) as compared to *Turanci* used in "The Hausa illustrated dictionary" (*Kamus na Turanci da Hausa*) by Neil Skinner (1965) and many other publications afterwards. The term *Ingilishi* was recognized by the authors of the discussed dictionary as a primary equivalent of English, although in the previously published separate parts of the dictionary, the term **Tūřancī** was indicated as a basic equivalent for English, while **Ingìlīshì̀** was mentioned as a term for the English language in Hausa used in Niger (Ma Newman 1990). On the other hand, in Newman (2007) the two equivalents of **Tūřancī** are 1. 'Eng-lish language', 2. [Niger] 'French language'. This shows the evolution of the term *Turanci* from the equivalent of 'a white man's language', perceived respectively as English in Nigeria and French in Niger, to any European language. The term

Ingilishi for the English language seems to be more precise in relation to *Turanci* which is ambiguous.

The authors of any Hausa dictionary oriented at contemporary language have to solve the problem of verifying the lexical resources and to decide which items (phrases) should be included in such a dictionary and which should be omitted due to the change in the communication needs of the language in relation to its traditional profile. From this perspective, *The Hausa-English / English-Hausa dictionary* corresponds to the adopted label „For everyday use". However, rapid development of the language creates a new vocabulary which becomes basic means in communication.

If we look at the press articles or especially the language of Hausa literature, some of the terms used there will not be explained in the dictionary, such as *(abinci na) kwalam* 'fast food'; *(halin) ha'ula'i* 'difficult (conditions)' or newly created phrases based on regular phraseological patterns, e.g. *ci gashin kansa* 'be independent', *ci zaɓe* 'win election'. This means that work on expanding the vocabulary of modern Hausa language should be continued in correlation with the contemporary language transformations.

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