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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF SHAYKH ADAM'S 'ATTRIBUTIVE NAME' ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AMONG YORÙBÁ-MUSLIM SCHOLARS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to assess the creative effect of the attributive name 'al-Ilori' in Shaykh Adam's personal name on the evolution of naming style among Yorùbá-Muslim Scholars in Nigeria with focus on Kwara State. The study further investigates the impact of the naming style on the lexicon of Yorùbá language. Most of Shaykh Adam's works and research studies on him were in Arabic language and as a result, translations by scholars of Arabic language and oral interview with some lecturers in the Arabic Department of the University of Ilorin were used. Surveys and analysis of Yorùbá Muslim names in Nigeria were employed with a view to pointing out that Shaykh Adam's naming style is becoming a trend among Yorùbá-Muslim Scholars in Nigeria. The paper compares the meaning of *nisbah* as attributive name, in Arabic language with the definitions of the existing types of personal names. The paper concludes that personal name is a unique identity that everybody must guide in order to become a point of good reference like Shaykh Adam Abdullahi Al-Ilori. There is the need to extend the existing list of the types of personal names to include the personal name that this paper examined.

Introduction

Language is the chief means by which human being communicate¹. It is elastic, generative and re-creative in the sense that the meaning of the existing words in a language is capable of extension. These linguistic characteristics are enhanced through morphological processes that languages employ to create new words from existing ones. Many previous studies have shown how Arabic language has enriched Yorùbá². None, to the best of our knowledge shows that name formation in Arabic called *nisbah* can also be used to enrich Yorùbá language except that Muslims. In this paper, the impact of the attributive name, 'Al-Ilori' in the personal name of Shaykh Adam Abdullahi on the evolution of naming style among Yoruba – Muslim Scholars in Nigeria is examined. The meaning of *nisbah* as attributive name, in Arabic language is juxtaposed with the definitions of types of personal names in the English language. It was observed that the list needs to be extended to cater for this unique name that many Yoruba-Muslim Scholars are using to beef up their naming styles. One of the findings of the study is that the use of the naming style by the Yoruba-Muslim Scholars has a lot of communicative values, because through the names, we can identify their family lineage and religious ideological leanings. The present paper focuses on name because of the importance of personal name across the globe and in line with a Yorùbá adage that says: *Orúko eni ni ijanu eni*, which means A person's name is his/her guide".

Preliminary Considerations Personal Names

Anthroponymy, according to Fornalczyk³, is the study of the names of human beings and it encompasses personal names and group names. *The World Book Encyclopedia* talks about personal name in this way:

"Practically everyone since the beginning of history has had a name (...) almost all names have meanings. Early people bestowed a name with a definite consciousness of its meaning (...). Most people have a given name and family name. Many also have a middle name, and some have a nickname".

It is clear from the above that all languages have particular personal names, some of which are deeply rooted in the culture of the speakers of the specific language. It is interesting to note that some personal names have specific connotations. For example, in the Persian culture, Hatam Taaei, the name of a very generous man in Iranian stories, is a symbol of generosity. Names in the Arab culture are also symbolic and it is the symbolism that actually informs the choice of the names by non-Arab Muslims in Nigeria and many parts of the world.

Personal names in some cases can reveal some information by themselves. This means that personal names have communicative values. The Columbia Encyclopedia states that "English surnames developed in the late Middle Ages and, apart from patronymics (Adams, Jefferson), have a variety of origins; they come from places (Lincoln, Garfield) from trades (Tyler, Taylor), from personal traits (Stout, Black), and from the calendar (Noël, May)." In this respect, Mike Campbell⁴ states that most surnames fall into four categories: a) they are derived from given names such as Johnson, and Williams; b) they refer to the person's occupation like Clark, and Wright; c) they are derived from the location where the bearer lives; d) surnames can be derived from nicknames such as White, Young.

Wikipedia categorizes personal names into human personal names and non-human personal names. *Wikipedia* defines human personal name in the following way:

"A personal name is the proper name identifying individual person, and usually comprises a given name bestowed at birth or at a young age. It is nearly universal for a human to have a name; the rare exceptions occur in the cases of mentally disturbed parents, or feral children growing up in isolation."

Based on *Wikipedia*, some humans give individual non-human - animals and plants names, usually of endearment. For instance, the names of pets and sporting animals are often the same as human names. Nevertheless, this can be offensive and disrespectful to the person of the same name in some cultures such as the Chinese and the Iranian cultures. In Arab culture however, a person can be called in association with his special pet to which he is endeared as we have in Abu Hurayrah, which literary means, 'the father of cat'. This is neither offensive nor derogatory but culturally approved. Among Yoruba in the Southwestern Nigeria, animals receive names that are sometimes

reflective of the owners' world view or culture. For instance, cats, goats and dogs that are usually used as domestic animals are called 'Suuru'; 'Orelope', 'Olohuntoowo' and most times these animals respond when called by such names.

Definitions of types of Personal Names

In order to delimit the object of this study, the researcher attempts to juxtapose the definition of the different types of personal name in the list below with the communicative value of Shaykh Adam's attributive name, 'Al- Ilori'. Campbell classifies and defines personal names as follows:

Number	Type of Personal Name	Definition
1	Given name	A given name is a name that is assumed by a person at or after birth. As opposed to a family name, it is generally not inherited.
2	First name Or Christian name	In Europe and North America, where the given name precedes the family name, given names are called first names or forenames.
3	Praenomen	The praenomen (plural praenomina) was the ancient Roman given name. With a nomen and a cognomen it formed a complete Roman name. In Roman documents the praenomen was often abbreviated to one or two letters.
4	Middle name	In the English-speaking world, the middle name is a secondary given name. When the full name is presented, it is placed between the first name and the surname. People can have more than one middle name, though it is unusual to have none. Many people include their middle name as an initial in their usual name, for example George W. Bush. Others prefer their middle name and use it instead of their first name.
5	Family name or last name or surname	It is a name passed from one generation to the next. In many cultures a woman adopts her husband's family name when they are married.

6	Nomen	The nomen (plural nomina) was the Roman gens's (that is clan's) name. In the typical Roman name it was preceded by the praenomen and followed by the cognomen
7	Cognomen	The cognomen (plural cognomina) was one of the three parts of the typical Roman name. It followed the praenomen and nomen. Originally cognomina were nicknames, but by the time of the Roman Empire they were inherited from father to son. Thus the cognomen in combination with the nomen functioned as a surname, breaking families into smaller groups than just the nomen alone.
8	Nickname	A nickname is a substitute for a person's real name. It may be used because it is more familiar, more descriptive, or shorter than the real name. For example, Sue is the nickname of Susan.
9	Agnomen	The agnomen (plural agnomina) formed an additional part of some Roman names, usually following the cognomen. Usually they were nicknames acquired at some point during the lifetime, but, rarely, some agnomina were inherited.
10	Pet name	A pet name of a given name is a short and/or affectionate form. Often they are only used by friends and relatives.

11	Diminutive	It is the same as a pet name. They can be formed through various methods in different languages. Two of most typical ways in English are presented here: a) are those that are short forms of the original name, very often from the first syllable or sound of the name. For example, Alex is from Alexander; b) they can also be obtained by adding a suffix, to the original name or short form of a name. In English, the -y/-ie suffix make diminutives such as, Debbie, Charlie, Johnny, and Abby.
12	Byname	A byname is a secondary name used to further identify a person. They were often nicknames (for example Erik the Red) or patronyms (for example John, son of William). Bynames can be considered surnames when they are inherited from one generation to the next.
13	Generation name	The generation name is used by some Chinese and Korean families. It is a name given to all newborns of the same generation of an extended family.
14	Patronym	A patronym (or patronymic) is a name derived from the name of the father or another paternal ancestor. Some surnames are patronymic in origin, like Peterson = "Peter's son". Some cultures, such as Iceland, use uninherited patronyms instead of surnames.
15	Matronym	A matronym (also matronymic) is a name derived from the name of the mother or another maternal ancestor.
16	Filiation	A filiation attached to a name describes the bearer's paternal descent. The complete Roman name sometimes had a filiation.

Table 1: Types of Personal names

(Adapted from <http://www.behindthename.com/glossary/view/name>)

It is important to stress that not all types of personal names exist in all languages. Moreover, the concept 'nisbah' in Arabic language is used to derive 'Al-Ilori' from the

prefix 'Al-' + 'Ilorin'. It should be noted that unlike other previous Arabic loanwords in Yorùbá language, the creation of 'Al-Ilori' is unique in many respects. The major observation in this paper is that the addition of 'al-Ilori' to Shaykh Adam's name shows that the existing classification below does not cater for the inclusion of this unique name which is already generating more of its kind. Hence, it is proposed that a type called 'attributive name' should be added to the list to allow the inclusion of the name and the subsequent derivations following the pattern such as 'Al-Fulani', 'Al-Gamawi', 'Al-Busayri', 'Al-Adabi', 'Al-Iseyiwiyyah', 'Al-Ilesa', etc. in view of the fact that the name has helped to enrich naming system among Yorùbá Muslim Scholars. This is discussed in a later section.

Short Biography of Shaykh Adam Al- Ilori

Sheikh Adam 'al-Ilori' is an erudite scholar who liberates the learning of Arabic language and Islamic Studies from the shackles of complex traditional system and encourages its propagation and development⁵. He states further while quoting Olágúnjú, that:

He is an erudite energetic Scholar who does not only liberate the teaching of Arabic and Islamic studies from the yoke of complex traditional system, but also gave a great impetus to the propagation and development of Islam in Nigeria in general and Yorùbá land in particular

Shaykh Adam Abdullah 'Al-Ilori' was born in Wasa town in Zougu, Dahomey (now Republic of Benin) in 1917. His mother hails from Dindi district in Zougu while the father, Abdul-Baqi is a native of Ilorin, Nigeria. He was educated under the muslim traditional system where he studied the reading of al Qur'an under the watchful eyes of his father. At age seven, he was a regular observer of prayers and had memorized a great number of the Quranic chapters. He also learnt the rudimentary knowledge of the Quran and some chapters in jurisprudence. It must be emphasized that He was under the watchful eye and guide of his father for eleven years in Dahomey before they returned to Ilorin in 1928 and lived there for five years before being moved to Ibadan and later to Lagos.

Overview of the Naming Tradition among Muslims in Nigeria

S/N	City / Town's names	Individual's Personal Names		
1	Buhari	Muhammadu Buhari		
2	Kano	Aminu Kano		
3	Shagari	Shehu Shagari		
4	Zaria	Sani Zaria		
5	Tukur	Bamanga Tukur		
6	Hadeja	Aliyu Hadeja		
7	Katsina	Hassan Katsina		
8	Gumi	Abdullahi Gumi		
9	Dutse	Hassan Dutse		
10	Kwankwaso	Musa Kwankwaso		

Table 2: Muslims in Northern Nigeria (Hausa)

S/N	House/ Compound Name	Person's Personal Name		
1	Aláàyá	Abdus-Sabur Aláàyá		
2	Alagbede	Isa Alagbede		
3	Idiagbon	Tunde Idiagbon		
4	Gambari	Farog Gambari		
5	Fulani	Lawal Balogun Fulani		
6	Ajikobi	Yusuf Ajikobi		
7	Àbòtó	Salman Àbòtó		
8	Jimbà	Hassan Jimbà		
9	Ajetumobi	Musa Ajetumobi		
10	Agbarigidoma	Usman Agbarigidoma		
11	Alasinrin	Hussai Alasinrin		
12	Elelu	Issa Elelu		
13	Èlètu	Mohammed Èlètu		

Table 3: Some names among Yoruba- Muslim Scholars in Ilorin

Impact of Shaykh Adam's 'attributive name' on naming among Yorùbá- Muslims in Nigeria

The contribution of Muslim scholars to the propagation of Islam has been well documented in the literature. There are numerous works in Arabic language that appraise the linguistic expertise of shaykh Adam Abdullahi 'Al-Ilori', but most of these works are written in Arabic which create a barrier of access to the speakers of other languages hence, there is no work yet written in English that specifically address the role of his creative naming style in language development as it is intended in this paper. The work in English that benefits this study is Abdul-Salam 1985. The naming style by shaykh Adam Al-ilori has indeed inspired many Yorùbá Muslim Scholars to the extent that apart from using the city names as shaykh Adam did, some scholars identified with their individual house hold lineage. For example names such as, al-gamawiyah, al-gegelewíyah abound. Another concern in this study is the meaning of the prefix al- and the suffix -wiyyah. In Arabic language al- means 'the' as in the al-Quran, al-kitab, as-sabur etc. However, as creatively used by the Shaykh 'al-' means 'of' or 'native of'. One of the aesthetics of language is the fact that it can be used/ to paint picture/ creatively.

Conclusion

Personal name is a universal phenomenon. Everyone has a name. Almost all names have meanings. Most people have a given name and family name. Many also have a middle name and some have nicknames. However, the definitions of the existing types of names exclude the type that we examine in this paper and therefore as language is elastic, generative and re-creative the types of names should give room for new forms such as 'Al- Ilori' and the patterns resulting from it. It is our conclusion therefore that 'Al-Ilori' has enrich the naming style among Yorùba-Muslim Scholars in Nigeria and consequently the Yoruba language is enriched in the same way that several loanwords from Arabic did.

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