A Pragmatic Analysis of Selected Nicknames Used by Yoruba Brides for In-Laws

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Abstract

Names are generally used for identification in all human society. It has been observed by scholars working in this field that names perform more functions than ordinary means of identification. Following Austin (1967) speech act theory, it is observed that names perform some illocutionary acts which can help us maintain a peaceful cohabitation in our society. This work examined the use of nicknames by Yoruba brides for their in-laws.

We analyzed those nicknames using pragmatic theories. The data was gathered within Ibadan and Akure metropolis and their remote settlements. Oral interview was used to compliment the intuitive knowledge of the researchers. Twenty-one (21) nicknames were selected for this study.

Our findings revealed that, these nicknames are used for eulogizing, respecting and insulting/chastising. We therefore concluded that these nicknames be encouraged especially in the face of modernization that is eroding our culture and tradition of respect and appreciation.

Key words: Nicknames; In-law; Bride; Yoruba; Culture and tradition

INTRODUCTION

Culture of any race will definitely include their ways of life which involves, naming, marriage, dress, food and so on. In this work, we shall be exploring two aspects of the Yoruba culture. They are the aspects of naming and marriage in the Yoruba setting. Yoruba has a strict honorific culture which reflects not only in their language but also in every aspect of their culture and life style. This also reflects in their family setting. In Yoruba setting, a newly wedded woman is not expected to call her in-laws by their direct names, hence the introduction of nicknames by the bride for the in-laws. These names have some contextual meaning that goes beyond the surface meaning. There are some illocutionary acts perform by these names. The giver also has some intention and inferences she is expecting from the people. These cannot be known unless a special attention is given to them. There are also some mutual contextual beliefs of the Yoruba people of those names. This work deals with the analysis of these nicknames pragmatically.

Although, the name given is a sign of respect, however, it has more meaning attached. Any bride that flouts the culture of nicknaming is perceived as arrogant and will definitely be discriminated against or tagged as arrogant. Although, modernization has its toll on this culture, yet it is still being strictly observed in a typical Yoruba setting such as in the rural area, and places like Ibadan, Oyo and so on.

This was made possible then, because of the culture of polygamy and extended family in the Yoruba setting. It was made easy when people were living together as one in a big family house and possibly tend the same farm. This is not fully in operation as a result of the growing culture of "me and my family". This work aims at exploring the meaning of this names and bring out the reasons why we need to revive this culture of nicknaming, because, they are not just a means of identifying people but also

perform some illocutionary acts and have some pragmatic implications in the society.

1. NAME IN YORUBA LAND

According to United Kingdom name guide (2006), Yoruba has what is known as personal names which they chose for their meaning and may give more information about the name bearer. There are many Yoruba names that are compound name. This is usually the name of the progenitor of the compound or they may be named after the deity of the family. For example a person born into a royal family may be given such name as Adebayo. The "Ade" in the name symbolises the crown of the king. Among Yorubas, women usually drop their father's name and take the name of the husband's family name upon marriage. The children will usually take their father's name. This is premised on the belief that the children belong to the father. Personal names also reflect the circumstances that surround the birth of the child. This also goes to the case of animal. Their names also reflect the circumstance that surrounds their adoption.

It is imperative to state at this juncture that long names in Yoruba names are usually abbreviated. For example; Babatunde usually shortened as "Tunde". Some Yoruba names are also not gender specific while some are. Names like kehinde, Toyinetc are not gender specific while names like "Yetunde," Bayo and so on are gender specific.

2. NICKNAME

Nickname is a name added or given to or substituted for the proper name of an individual that is familiar or place or thing. This is done for affection (praise) or ridicule. Nickname may be based on individual's lifestyle, physical appearance, character or title. According to, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English nickname is a familiar, invented given name for a person or thing used instead of the actual name of the person or thing. It is a kind of name that describes a person's characteristics and attributes. In other words, nicknames generally depict an informal and/or humorous characteristic, personality and appearance of a person. A nickname is sometimes considered desirable, symbolising a form of acceptance, but can often be a form of ridicule.

Nicknames are usually given to, not picked by the recipient. However, some occasionally chose their nicknames. It may be given among contemporaries. For example young boys and girls give nickname most of the time to ridicule or make jest of their colleagues. These ones are not usually welcomed by the recipients. Brides also give nickname to their in-laws, to praise, ridicule or to chastise. The thrust of this work is to examine the nicknames given by the bride to their in-laws pragmatically.

Adebileje (2012) states, that as much as the use of nicknames for in-laws is part and parcel of the Yoruba culture as far as marriage is concerned, some other African tribes like the Akans of Ghana consider the use of nicknames verbal taboos and so do not use them because they cause conflicts. Thus, the use of nicknames involving the description of people's physical structure like complexion, height or size, or a person's behaviour is prohibited. Adebileje (2012) states further that in the Yoruba culture, especially among the Ijesatribe; nicknames are prevalent and are actually preferred because they conceal peoples' real names from the evil ones who may want to cast some evil spell on people's real names. Such names as "Adagun-odo" (stagnant river) "Aro-mo-laran" (somebody who wraps babies with velvet material) "*Eja-lo-ni-bu*" (the fish owns the sea) are nicknames depicting great wealth but have been retained as actual family names. This simply means that in ijesa land and some other Yoruba land where nickname is used to conceal proper name, nickname serves as a means of protection.

3. MARRIAGE AMONG THE YORUBA PEOPLE

According to Omobola (2013, p.139),

> The traditional marriage of the Yoruba is an essential institution in their culture. Marriage for the Yoruba man or woman is a necessity. It is a social union or legal contract between individuals that creates kinship in Yoruba culture. It is an institution in which interpersonal relationships, usually intimate and sexual, are acknowledged in a variety of ways, depending on the culture or subculture in which it is found. In the institutional families, marriage is a functional partnership rather than a romantic relationship. For a man or a woman who is matured enough to get married and still remain single is against the norms of the Yoruba.

Men get married even when they are impotent in order to save either their immediate relatives, as well as to get someone to look after their domestic establishment (Fadipe, 1970). According to the Yoruba belief, marriage is not a union between a man and a woman; however it is a union between the family of the bride and the groom. No wonder the Yoruba believed that it is better to marry a bad bride than to have a bad in-law. Consequently, it is believed that when you marry a man, you have married his entire family, hence the need to accord the member of the family due respect.

In the Yoruba setting, there are steps to be taken in taking a wife. A man and a woman don't just move to each other in marriage. Premarital sex and child outside wedlock are also a taboo in the culture. There is strict punishment for sex before marriage. Yoruba cherish virginity in marriage.

Babatunde (1992) itemizes six important steps that lead to the traditional Yoruba marriage. They are, the

time for seeking a potential spouse (Igbaifojusode); the approval of the oracle-divinity (Ifaf'ore); in other words, 'Ifa has spoken well', the release of the voice of the young woman (Isihun); the request for the young woman's hand in marriage (Itoro); the creation of the affinal bond (Idana); and the transfer of the wife to the husband's lineage (Igbeyawo). In a typical Yoruba marriage ceremony, the above steps must be adhered to in order to have not only a blessed but an accepted marriage.

The culture of polygamy is also permissible in the Yoruba culture. Polygamy is a marriage system where a person has more than one spouse. However, the culture of gay is a taboo to the Yoruba culture. The polygamous culture in the Yoruba setting is simply a system where a man can have more than one wife. The culture of polygamy is influenced majorly because of the profession of the Yoruba which is majorly farming. It is believed that having more wives and children will render more helping hands on the field. Having more than one wife in the Yoruba setting is also a sign of wealth. According to Fadipe (1970), while the wife might have only one living husband, a man could have as many wives as his means would allow. The belief underlying this custom is that, the Creator, in His wisdom, has made it so.

Adebileje (2012, p.182) states thus:

A married man in the traditional Yoruba family setting lives with his parents and siblings still. The typical traditional Yoruba compound contains a large patriarchal extended family. The head of the family is usually the most senior male member, and the men are normally polygamous, with each wife having a separate room. Therefore, the new bride relates with the whole extended family members every day and she addresses them honorifically, even the youngest of them. Among the Yoruba tribe in West Africa, brides are not expected to call their in-laws by names.

Consequently, the bride coined names to be given to the in-laws at her discretion. The name may be according to their physical appearance or behaviour. Majorly, the nicknames follow the physical appearance of the bearer. These names perform some illocutionary act as propounded by Austin (1962), they have intention and inference presupposition, Mutual Contextual Belief (MCB). In this work we shall examine these pragmatic phenomenon and others.

4. REVIEW OF RELATED WORKS

Odebode's (2012) study attempts a speech act analysis of names given to pets particularly by women in polygamous homes among the Yoruba, a popular ethnic group in Nigeria. Twenty-five names were selected for the study. The names were given in-depth analysis based on the theory of Speech Act by Austin (1962). The study indicates that the invented pet names, apart from their initial illocutionary function of insulting, perform certain

other functions in their context of usage. Through naming or nicknaming, it is possible to direct, inform, advise and perform different discourse acts. It is also possible to take turns indirectly through naming such that one pet name elicits for another which serves as a reply to the previous. Finally, it is discovered that pet naming is a very significant communicative tool which is largely used by participants in polygamous homes in Africa as instruments of vengeance and protests.

Abel (2004) studies the nicknames of American Civil War Generals. He discovers that the nicknames given to the warlords stem from a number of qualities. These include biographical antecedents (e.g. ethnicity, pre-war profession), physical appearance (e.g. hair, height), affection (first names, last names), character (aggressiveness, dependability), internal motivation (childhood, wordplay) and unknown origin.

The aim of Adebileje (2012) is to describe the socio-semantic characteristics of twelve selected nicknames used by Yoruba brides for their in-laws. The data for the study was collected through observation, structured interview and review of literature. The collected nicknames were described and classified according to Halliday's theory of context in order to get contextual meanings of the selected nicknames. The author's comparison of lexical and contextual meanings of the nicknames was provided based on the cultural background of Yoruba brides and results revealed that 58% of selected nicknames coined by brides compliment in-laws, 17% are derogatory and 25% assume the dual functions of being compliments and insults. In addition, the work shows that nicknames' meanings reveal the type of relationship that exists between the bride and her in-laws as the surface meanings of nicknames sometimes may not be the same as the meanings intended by the bride. The author recommends that this culture in Yoruba marriage should be encouraged among modern Yoruba youths who seem to have neglected it.

These works are good insight and brilliant contribution to the present research. However, while Odebode's work deals with pet's name, the present work deals with human nicknames in the Yoruba polygamous family. Abel's work studies nicknames among American Civil War Generals whereas our work is on the nicknames given by the bride to their in-laws. Adebileje's work is similar to this work because it also studies nicknames given by Yoruba brides for their in-laws. However, the work was on socio-semantic analysis. It deals with contextual meaning alone. The present work goes further to examine the illocutionary act that these names perform. We also examine the intention of the bride as well as what people infer from the name. We as well look at the implicature and presupposition of these names and examine the Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCB) of Yoruba about these names. These are the ways this work seeks to contribute to the world of knowledge.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There have been several efforts made by scholars in an attempt to develop theories of pragmatics which help us to analyse utterances pragmatically. The elements and the theories they propounded are credible insight today in the analysis of language pragmatically. Some of the theories and elements of pragmatics that we will examine which will be adopted for this analysis are Speech Act theory of J. L. Austin (1962), context, presupposition, implicature, intention, inference and mutual contextual beliefs (MCB). This is to enable us go beyond the contextual meaning for which Adebileje (2012) had subjected the nicknames. We will examine part of the element and theories as follows:

According to Osisanwo (2003, p.60), Speech Acts can simply be said to be any utterance or the types of actions we perform with our words (Austin, 1962). It is implied in the speech act context that assumption is the minimal unit of human communication, not a sentence or other expression, but rather the performance of certain kinds of acts, such as making statements, asking questions, giving orders, describing, apologizing, making a promise, thanking somebody, making an offer, congratulating, appreciation, insulting, chastising, eulogizing etc. are speech acts.

Since this research is based on names, we need to focus our attention on speech acts. This, we shall discuss in respect to theories of pragmatics according J. L. Austin.

John L. Austin has been widely acclaimed as the father of pragmatics probably due to his excellent and immense contribution to pragmatics in his work *How to do things with words* (1962). He propounded the theory of speech acts which is based on conception that we perform certain actions when we speak, that language also involves performing actions. In short, we perform action with the word. Austin's speech act gives preference to performatives and constatives. He uses the term constatives to refer to utterances that state or report verifiable or falsifiable proposition. While performatives is used to refer to utterances, which are uttered to perform action provided they are uttered in appropriate circumstances. He differentiates between the utterance of an interlocutor and its illocutionary force by propounding locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary act. Locutionary refers to the exact utterance of the speaker. Illocutionary refers to the intention the speaker has in mind when he makes his utterances. This means that illocutionary act is what the speaker intends to communicate to the addressee. Perlocutionary on the other hand, refers to the effect which the utterance has on the hearer. The message that the addressee gets, its interpretation of what the speaker says is referred to as the perlocutionary act.

Asides this, Austin classifies illocutionary act into five categories: verditives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives and expositives.

Verditives are typified by the giving of verdict, as the name implies, by a jury, arbitrator, or umpire. But they need not be found; they may be, for example, an estimate, reckoning, or appraisal. For example, I hereby sentence you to ten years in jail with hard labour. This is a verdict given by a judge in a court of law.

Exercitives are the exercising of powers, rights or influence. Examples are advising, ordering, warning etc. for example; do not kill that goat. This is an advice given to a man that intends to kill a goat.

Commisives are typified by promising or otherwise undertaking; they commit you to do something, also declarations or announcements of intention, which are not promises, and also rather vague things which we may call espousals, as for example siding with for instance, I will give you my child, if you win the competition. The king promises a young man involved in fighting competition in the village. It is committing the king to offer his daughter to the young man after the competition. It is an action of the word.

Bahabitives have to do with attitude and social behaviour. Examples are consoling, congratulating etc. congratulation on your new appointment. When an individual got new appointment, words are used to celebrate the person congratulatory messages.

6. CONTEXT

Context refers to the setting of an utterance, be it physical, social, linguistic, etc. Following Chiluwa (2008), Context is the location of participants in a conversation/discourse. The context of an utterance is very important as it gives more meaning to its interpretation. Some scholars believe that words have meaning irrespective of context. This can be said to be true because the meaning of words are derived when a hearer understands the context of the words. There are different types of context which include physical, psychological, socio-cultural and linguistic contexts.

7. PRESUPPOSITION

Udofot (2004, p.94) defines presupposition as what the speaker assumes his hearer already knows. Presupposition is based on the assumptions which a speaker makes concerning the hearer about their field of discourse. The speaker assumes that he and the hearer are on a mutual ground. Presuppositions are largely either semantic or pragmatic. Semantic presupposition, according to Osisanwo (2003, p.86), is concerned with the logical relations that hold between sentences. In addition to this, semantic presupposition is part of sentence meaning. For example, "**Muhammadu Buhari** is the President of Nigeria". The presupposition here is that:

a) There is someone called **Muhammadu Buhari**.

b) There is a president in Nigeria.

Pragmatic presupposition, on the other hand has to do with those beliefs and assumptions which the speaker takes for granted about the hearer, probably due to the fact that, they share some common beliefs and background, some information that he believes the hearer should know already. Osisanwo (2003, p.86) cited this example:

"Plain clothes security men stopped the wedding party."

The presupposition here is that:

a) A wedding party was going on.

b) Something serious must have happened.

8. IMPLICATURE

Implicature was developed by H. P. Grice (1975) to refer to what a speaker can imply, suggests or means, as different from what he/she literally says. Implicature is pragmatic aspects of meaning of an utterance, produced in a specific context which is shared by the speaker/hearer. There are two types of implicatures: conventional and conversational implicature. Conventional implicature usually refers to circularity generally known grammatical meaning. It has to do with words which portray certain implicature, based on usage, devoid of context. A conventional implicature draws out the same meaning regardless of the context of use and is usually achieved through the use of conjunctions. Usually, the meaning of words in a conventional implicature determines what it implies and the conjunctions are used to separate the propositions in a conventional implicature. In the example, "Mary is poor but she is an honest person". It is implicated that it is rare for people to be poor and honest. Here, the conjunction 'but' makes the implicature possible.

Conversational implicature, on the other hand, is concerned with the way we understand an utterance in conversation in accordance with what we expect to hear, Mey (2001, p.46). We can then say that, it is context-dependent. This forms the basis for H. P. Grice's cooperative principle. A conversational implicature is generated when any of the Gricean maxims is flouted.

9. INTENTION

In any communicative situation, Adegbija (1999) says the intention of individual participants is very important in understanding speech acts. Therefore, intention has to do with the target goal that abounds in the mind of the speaker. Different intentions abound in the heart of people whenever they speak and a hearer cannot usually determine a speaker's intention. The intention of a speaker has to do with what the speaker intends, what he has on his mind, pertaining to the utterance he is about to utter. Usually the hearer infers from the speaker's utterances.

Thus, intention and inference work together. According to Ayeni (2011), Intention can change as interaction progresses, because, a speaker has different reasons for making utterances. The intention can also be re-modified because sometimes a speaker changes his mind about what he wants to say.

10. INFERENCE

Chiluwa (2008), states that Inference is the process of working out meaning or the intention of the speaker from the text or utterance available to you. Inference refers to the deductive process through which something is worked out or made explicit in terms of what is spoken or written. To infer is to deduce something from evidence of any linguistic form and inference is produced by the hearer. When a speaker makes an utterance, whatever the hearer makes the utterance, whatever he directly receives from the utterance is what he infers. This takes the hearer through the level of literal meaning to the underlying meaning of the utterance. For an inference to take place, the hearer has to be familiar with the socio-cultural background of the speaker. An example is given in Saeed (2009, p.212) as follows:

a) Did you give Mary the money?

b) I'm waiting for her now.

The inference here is: "B" did not give Mary the money.

11. MUTUAL CONTEXTUAL BELIEFS (MCBS)

When human beings communicate or interact, there are certain beliefs or assumptions which they already have about the subject being discussed. Such assumption or beliefs are called contextual beliefs (Osisanwo, 2003, p.89). When interlocutors have a shared knowledge about certain information in the context, they tend to overlook that information and go directly to the discourse at hand, assuming that the hearer has the same knowledge they have. This is the case of Mutual Contextual Belief. Contextual beliefs operate at the level of language and level of situation. The level of language makes meaning effective when interlocutors have access to the same language. Since the two of them share the knowledge of language, certain basic assumptions should exist between them to facilitate a smooth flow of interaction.

At the level of situation, assumptions depend on the participants, shared codes and experiences. It is at this level that dialects of a language, level of experiences of participants, etc. come in. The experiences people have about the world on the basis of the shared assumptions at the situation level. Situation encompasses the shared knowledge of the topic of discourse, the referents and references, the socio-cultural and situational experiences.

All these depend on the present situation to effective communication.

11.1 Methodology

Three methods were used for the collection of data for this research, interview, personal introspection and consultation of literature. The researchers are Yoruba by birth. This makes the personal introspection possible. However, to ensure authenticity of the data, interviews were also conducted. Aged women were interviewed within Ibadan and Akure metropolis. One of the researchers is a woman who has some in-laws that she nicknamed. This also affords us the opportunity to elicit the data properly. In addition to this we consulted existing literature on nicknames. Twenty one (21) nicknames were selected for this analysis.

The instruments used for data collection are tape recorder and writing materials. The writing materials included pen and paper for proper documentation. The data was subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

11.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

The table below shall be used to show the gloss of the nicknames, the illocutionary acts and the quality of the in-laws that it reflects.

Table 1
Showing Nicknames, Gloss, Illocutionary Acts and Qualities They Reflect

S/N	Nicknames	Gloss	Illocutionary acts	Qualities
1	Ojúloge	Beauty is in the face	Eulogizing/insulting	Physical appearance
2	Ọkọ-Ìyàwó	Husband of wife	Respecting	Affection
3	Akọ́wè	Literate person	Eulogizing	Profession
4	Dúdúyẹmí	Blackness fits me	Eulogizing	Physical appearance
5	Ìbàdíàrán	Buttock fits cloth	Eulogizing	Physical appearance
6	Ìdí-Ìlèkè	Buttock fits bead	Eulogizing	Physical appearance
7	Alówónlé	Somebody that has money at home	Eulogizing	Character
8	Adúbíàrán	As black as velvet materials1	Eulogizing	Physical appearance
9	Ayílukọ	Roll to husband	Eulogizing/ insulting	Physical appearance
10	Ìyáákọmí	My husband mother	Respecting	Affection
11	Bàbáá-Ọkọ-mí	My husband father	Respecting	Affection
12	Òrénte	Small in stature	Eulogizing/ insulting	Physical appearance
13	Ọpẹ́lẹ́ngẹ́	Tall and slim	Eulogizing/ insulting	Physical appearance
14	Èjíwùmí	I love the diastema in your teeth	Eulogizing	Physical appearance
15	Àgòrò	Tall and lanky man	Eulogizing/ insulting	Physical appearance
16	Àrúpẹ̀	Very short person	Insulting	Physical appearance
17	Adúmáadán	Black and shinning	Eulogizing	Physical appearance
18	Akúrúyẹjó	Short and good at dancing	Eulogizing/insulting	Physical appearance
19	Agúnléjìká	Tall and plum	Eulogizing	Physical appearance
20	Awẹ́lẹ́wà	Small and beautiful	Eulogizing	Physical appearance
21	Agùntásọọlò	Tall and fitting in dressing	Eulogizing/ respecting	Physical appearance

From the table above, it would be observed that eulogizing has preponderance with 10 data, eulogizing and insulting has 6, and followed by respecting with 3, insulting alone has just 1 and eulogizing and respecting also has 1 datum. This breakdown goes to tell us that the nickname is mostly used to eulogise the in-law in order to make them feel important and appreciated. In the same vein, under the quality that the nicknames reflect the in-laws, we identify 4 qualities in general. They are physical appearance, affection, profession and character. Out of the four qualities, nicknames that extol the physical appearance of the data stand at 76.2% while 14.3% represents affection. However, nicknames making references to professional and character stand at 4.8% respectively. This tells us that the nickname mostly alludes the physical appearance of in-laws.

Basically, three illocutionary acts have been identified in the twenty one nicknames selected for this work. The illocutionary act identified are; eulogizing, insulting/ chastising and respecting. It is worthy of note that there are some that are not really insult but are meant to chastise. Those that are referred to as derogatory by Adebileje (2012) may not necessarily mean to be insulted or derogatory. It may mean to chastise the in-law to be responsible by getting married especially when they are of marriageable age. This is also a way of showing love in Yoruba land by telling somebody to go and "settle down" (having his/her own family). It is imperative to also state at this juncture that there is no nickname used for in-laws by the bride that is particularly dedicated to insult, but the

insult will arise when there is a misunderstanding. This is in tandem with Yoruba adage that says "ìjàl'ódé l'orin d'òwe". That as it is when there is a quarrel that song turns to insult. This is simply to tell us that there is no selected nickname that is naturally targeted as insult at the outset, yet they perform that illocutionary act of insulting when misunderstanding arises. Consequently, overlapping of illocutionary act is inevitable. We have an overlapping between eulogizing and respecting and eulogizing and insulting. In the same vein, it should be understood that though not all the nicknames are meant to offer respect, yet some are literarily meant to show respect. These ones are naturally used for those that are older than the husband of the bride in the family. Among such names are; Ìyáákọmí (female) and Bàbáá-Ọkọ-mí (male).

We can show this categorization on a frequency table as follows:

Table 2
Showing Illocutionary Acts and Their Frequency

S/N	Illocutionary acts	Frequency
1	Eulogizing	10
2	Insulting	1
3	Respecting	3
4	Eulogizing and insulting	6
5	Eulogizing and respecting	1

11.3 Eulogizing

The nicknames that perform this illocutionary act, such as; Ìbàdíàrán, Ìdí-Ìlèkè, Adúbíàrán and so on, are the nicknames that are used to praise or appreciate the in-law based on their physical appearance or character. We shall consider them under the following; context, presupposition, implicature, intention, inference and the mutual contextual beliefs (MCBs) of the people.

The perlocutionary act is effective because the bearers feel good whenever they are called. The in-laws understand the importance of the name and appreciate it. They feel good when answering such names. They understand the import of the name and therefore respond to it joyfully whenever they are called and reciprocate the gesture. The participants are the in-law (name bearer), the bride (name giver) and the society/family where the culture is held. The socio-cultural belief here is that bride should respect her in-laws. Psychologically, the in-laws feel good.

The names have semantic presupposition because the meaning of the names can be deduced by just hearing it. They do not necessarily require any contextual interpretation. The reason for this is not far-fetch because the names mostly reflect physical characteristics of the in-law. While some have conversational implicature, such asAkọ́wè which may be interpreted to mean that the in-law is educated. Others like Ojúloge have conventional implicature because their meaning is deduced at sight.

The intention of the bride is to show respect to the in-law as demanded by the tradition. Yoruba has a tradition that demands the bride respects her in-laws. The brides respect this so as not to be seen as an arrogant bride. This makes the bride to be generally accepted by the family. The in-laws also gladly accept these names and respect the bride in turn as demanded by the tradition. The hearer deduces from the names that the bearer is an in-law while the giver is a bride. The hearer also deduces that the bride shows respect and that there is harmonious relation in the family, because this also dictates and shows peaceful co-existence in the family. The mutual contextual belief is that, the participants acknowledge and respect the culture of respect for in-laws in the Yoruba family setting. The participants appreciate the role that nicknaming plays in the Yoruba family setting especially between bride and her in-laws.

11.4 Insulting/Chastising

From the foregoing, names under this illocutionary act are not naturally designed to be insulting, abusive or derogatory; they rather turn to be so when there is misunderstanding between the bride and the in-law, no wonder they sometimes pass as eulogy in most cases. However, we like to also state here that these names may not necessarily be insulting or derogatory as insinuated by Adebileje (2012), they may mean to chastise. Chastisement may come to a man or woman of marriageable age, especially when the bride is feeling uncomfortable with the presence of third party in their family and she felt that the in-law should go and have his/her own family. Some of such names include but not limited to; Ayílukọ, Òrénte, Ọ̀pélẹ́ngẹ́, Àgòrò, Àrúpẹ̀ etc..

The speech act here is effective such that the participants understand the message. It is imperative to know that the intonation with which they are pronounced when it is insulting differs from the tone when they are meant to eulogise. However, the participants understand and comprehend the tone. It makes the in-law to adjust and address whatever the bride complains or want at that period. The participants here are the bride, in-law and the society where the name is given. The socio-cultural belief here is that within Yoruba cultural context, a man or woman can be insulted or chastised through their names.

The presupposition is pragmatic because the bride takes for granted the knowledge of other participants. She assumes that they understand the meaning she intended. The Meaning depends on the context for the interpretation. The tone also dictates the interpretation of the name too; otherwise the meaning will be misinterpreted. The intention of the bride is to express her displeasure with the in-law. When the intention is to insult, the bride expresses it in a derogatory manner, likewise when it is meant to chastise. She invariably wants the in-law and other family member to know that she is not happy with that particular in-law.

The hearer easily deduces from the name that the bride is not happy with the in-law. The bride either wants the in-law to change his/her behaviour or wants him/her to leave the house for his own house. The mutual contextual belief here is that, the participants acknowledge the role that nicknames play in their society. They respond to the intended meaning of the speaker negatively or otherwise. It is imperative to note that this kind of action is so powerful to the extent that it normally bears acrimony in the family. It sometimes causes lots of quarrelling that will require the intervention of the elders in the family/society to settle.

11.5 Respecting

The three nicknames that are used for this purpose are Ọkọ-Ìyàwó, Ìyááḳọmí and Bàbáá-Ọkọ-mí. As mentioned earlier, although all the nicknames are meant to offer respect, yet there are some that literarily meant respect. These ones are naturally used for those that are older than the husband of the bride in the family. They are part of nicknames used by bride in a polygamous family in the Yoruba land.

The perlocutionary act is also effective as the bearer of the name and other member of the family respond to the bride positively. The bride is portrayed as somebody from a good family. She is seen as a bride that has respect for the member of her husband's family. This action strengthens the string of love between the bride and her in-laws. She is generally accepted in the family. If this is sustained, it is automatically extended to the children of the bride. The physical context shows the participants as the bride, the in-laws and the society at large. The socio-cultural belief is that respect must be given to the in-laws by the bride.

The presupposition is semantics as the nickname can be interpreted at the word level without subjecting it into any context. The names simply denote respect for her husband's elders. It should be noted that, there is no rule that says they should be devoted to the husband's seniors but the bride usually employs those ones for them as they will always find another nicknames for the younger ones. The implicature is simply conventional which means showing of respect for the in-laws.

The intention of the bride is to show respect and be valued. She knows that according to the tradition, bride must respect her in-laws and by so doing she will be respected in turn. Her intention therefore is to be valued in the family. The hearer infers from the names that the bride is humble and cultured. She is also respected in turn as respect is reciprocal in the Yoruba setting. The participants share the knowledge of mutual respect in the family. The mutual contextual belief is that brides must honour their in-laws so as to be honoured.

11.6 Findings

Firstly, we are able to see through speech acts that nicknames given by bride in a polygamous family have an underlying meaning apart from what they suggested. The illocutionary and perlocutionary effect enable the interpretation of the locution in this nicknames.

In addition, we discovered three illocutionary acts (eulogizing, respecting and insulting/chastising) which are good for harmonious co-existence. Those that are used to insult or chastise, still have their role in the society to check mate people. Others such as eulogizing and respecting are good for harmonious relationship and peaceful co-existence.

Presuppositions are used to skip what the speaker already knows or what the hearer believes the speaker knows about the topic of discussion. In the research report, there are both semantic and pragmatic presuppositions as found in the data. Implicature is another important element in the research report which is used to pass indirect meanings through nicknames. It is seen that the two types of implicature, conversational and conventional are obvious. Intention has also contributed to the utterance meaning in passing the intended meaning. This is possible with the help of inference. Usually, what the speaker intends is what the hearer tries to infer in the utterance.

Lastly, Mutual Contextual Beliefs, which is the assumption we have about each other before the interaction takes place helps a lot in understanding the situation in which the speaker utters the nickname. This reflects in all the nicknames given by brides.

In conclusion, these elements have been able to explain the nicknames in our analysis, what they mean, the reason why they have been used and the effect their uttering has made on the hearer.

CONCLUSION

We conclude that the use of nicknames be encouraged as it upholds the Yoruba culture and tradition. Through these nicknames, we see that it is possible to eulogise, insult/chastise and respect people especially the in-laws. This, as said earlier sustains harmonious relation and peaceful co-habitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having realized the importance and the roles that these nicknames play in the society, we wish to give the following recommendations.

We want to suggest that the use of these nicknames be encouraged especially in the face of modernization that is eroding our culture and tradition of respect and appreciation. This is because it can be used to uphold our culture and tradition. It is also good because of its roles in the society, eulogizing, respecting and insulting/chastising which are essential tools to sustain our co-habitation. This we believed will help in the enhancement of peaceful co-habitation. Therefore, it should be encouraged.

The nicknames can also serve as a storehouse where indigenous languages can be preserved.

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