Reflection of Discourse Assignments in the Configuration of Yorùbá Personal Names

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Abstract

Using the Speech Act Theory as propounded by Austin (1962) and articulated in Searle (1969), Cole (1975), Traugott and Pratt(1980:229), among others, the paper expatiates on how the speech act configurations are instantiated through the Yoruba name words. The configured Yoruba name- texts used as data for the study are made possible through the nature of lexical complexity and loaded socio-semantic capacities inherent in the name-words. The objective of the study, therefore, is with a view to casting an in-dept look at what pragmatic roles the Yoruba names could perform, apart from their mere banal usage as tags for identifying the individuals. The article primarily outlines the general characteristics of speech acts in discourse and also discusses the structural contents of Yoruba names in order to determine the extent of their participation in the various name words in the language discourse. The primary sources were the names collected from the Voters Registration Cards obtained from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Offices in the South- western geo-political zone of Nigeria, where speakers of the Yoruba language originated. The data was supplemented by the introspection of the author as a native speaker of the language, oral interviews and library sources. The study found that the characterisation of speech acts could be gleaned from the socio-cultural foundations which underlie the fabrication of the name-words as they license gratitude, questioning ,solitude ,condolence ,apology, reports, denial, summon, declaration, etc. in their pragmatic imports .It is therefore concluded that the Yoruba Personal Names(YPNs) can be pragmatically differentiated from the personal names in the western cultural contexts on the bases that YPNs posses packaged-information which make them able to perform hosts of discourse roles in communication ,apart from their being a template of sentence and an encyclopaedia where one can glean the Yoruba view-points on ethical values ,beliefs and history, cultural identities, genealogy ,fauna and floral.

Keywords: *Names, Speech, Yoruba, Culture, Values, Language*

1. Introduction

One of the most remarkable linguistic insights offered by the Yoruba Personal Names (YPNs) is that they are loaded semantic words whose synthesis attest to the discourse roles that are similarly performed by other speech acts configurations(like sentences and other textual modes) in the language. In certain earlier works for example[1], attempts were made to argue that YPNs transcend mere identification tags and that the Yoruba names were capable of being used to effect other sociolinguistic functions. The observation was precipitated upon three grounds. One: there is no monosyllabic Yoruba name in the language; even the abridged names still retain a minimum of two syllables and therefore make them capable of bearing arrays of meanings. Issues that are vital and fundamental to the Yoruba communicative experience are lexicalized and couched in their name-words.

Two, there are certain socio-cultural inhibitions which put some restrictions[2] on trivialities or none-culturally motivated words from participating in naming system among the Yoruba of south western Nigeria. Issues that are regarded as unimportant are not involved. The degree of what counts is context and time bound. The implication of this is that not all the words in the language can be used as personal names. And three, based on the first factor, the abridged sentential name–words are either proverbial expressions or other aphorism- based names which had equally become couched over the years and had therefore become part of the language vocabulary. So, they keep changing as each spectrum of the language analysis changes. A host of them therefore represents cases of vestige of diachchrony in the language vocabulary. It is however observed that the reports of the features of such changes in YPNs are yet to be critically reported in the language literature[3]. As it were, the scanty aspects so far reported only focussed the cosmic factors of the Yoruba names as part of the enduring cultural heritage of the people .It was also argued that the names Yoruba people bear may endear or castigate a particular individual based on the societal negative stigma that might have been attached to such name either as a result of the religio-cultural factor or the past socio-political experience of the people. Naming among the people, therefore, can also be employed as a factor to establish series of differentiating capabilities in the linguo-cultural and contemporary political systems.

The issues involved in the YPNs are so complex and sophisticated that their analysis could provide a template for the identification of class structure among the people, racial identity, philosophy, societal ethics, probable line of migration, origin and their genealogy. In other words, the Yoruba people could be dialectally identified within the contexts of other societies on the bases of their beliefs in their names and the meanings attached to the type of names they bear. As it will soon be demonstrated, the Yoruba names, within the context of African setting serve as a container which carries the meaning components of the people's dialectic views and culture. But the preceding expositions are mere cosmic considerations which bear less direct importance to the pragmatic contexts which are the focus of the present study.

Besides, it needs be stressed from the outset that a substantial number of these names encode almost all the lexical properties of a sentence. Those whose structures do not overtly reflect sentential forms, however, can be said to have been either clipped or abridged to enable them qualify for the vocative expression which the name –words are supposed to serve. In addition, the apparent lexical format of names remains so with a view to obeying the length restriction principles which the name- words should also entail. These various restrictions are copiously expressed in Ekundayo (1977). More-over, the sentential structures in names have undergone the word boundary erasure in the process of their being lexicalised and reduced to word-forms. It is also contended that the sentential properties inherent in them are the basic backgrounds for their being used as ingredients of discourse formulation. More -over, it needs be noted that not all the YPNs are equally fruitful as lexical discourse because some names are tokens of metaphoric expressions .On the other hand, those names whose lexical configurations do not participate in the discourse role assignment as being discussed merely represent the cultural treasure of the people. Example of such names is those referred to as metaphoric names[4].

Based on the preceding assertions therefore, it is very apposite to outline the systemic structures of the YPN forms and subsequently attempt a classification. Such an endeavour would make sense with the subsequent broad review of earlier works on YPNs in general.

2. Review of Earlier Works

Scholarly articles have been written over the years on the various aspects of anthropo-onomestrics (the study of naming systems and practices) across the cultures and peoples of Africa. One intriguing factor about these plethora of studies is that there are many discernible issues in African names which make them stand out compared to what obtains in other cultural contexts outside the shores of Africa.(cf Ansu-Kyemerh (2000), Essien (1986),Ubahakwe(1982), among others.).It is also argued that African names epitomised the linguistic and cosmic views about the people. They therefore regard the bearer of a particular name as being potentially able to evince the characteristics contained in the discourse encodings of their names.

For example, Oyeleye (1985:137)impressively opines that 'in African society, a man's individuality is often summed up in the proper or personal names he bears '.He goes further to illustrates his arguments with a number of characters found in some African literary works written in English. Speaking in the same vein, Oluikpe (2004:283) works on the Igbo Personal Names within the framework of a Generalised Pragmatic Interpretation where he contends that many Igbo cultural identities run into one another in terms of the word-views articulated in them. Odebode (1985:199) also does a sociolinguistic analysis of Yoruba names and comes to the conclusion that names 'are indexes to characters and naming is part and parcel of African heritage' in the sense that the linguistic formats and the religio-cultural beliefs in names are transmitted from one generation to the other. Essien (1983:124) however, contends that naming among the Ibiobio and Yoruba could be likened to each other because they are similar in very many respects especially in their reference to cultural significance, psychological influence, and   religious affiliation. Succinctly put, home condition is an essential consideration for giving a particular name to a child. Other scholarly works include Ekundayo (1976) and (1977) which are based on the analytical syntactic approaches using the Yoruba name structures to posit that lexical insertion is still possible in syntax even after transformation, thereby providing sufficient background to question the Chomskyian (1965) Lexical Insertion Theory. Akinnaso (1980) and Abiodun (1996) independently provide critical insights into the sociolinguistic structures of the Yoruba personal names. These myriads articles therefore provide some vintage information on the analysis of African names within the contexts of sociolinguistics and cultural values. Furthermore, Adéniyi (1997) and Ògúnwálé (2003), attempt to expatiate the morphological structures of the Yoruba names and found that despite their composite structures, their tokens in the language do achieve both lexical and sentential status .The first reason which make this to be so is that the language employs the linguistic repertoires mechanism of morpho-syntax to derive the particular class of Yoruba sentential nominal which the name -words encode. Babalọlá and Àlàbá (2003) is also very insightful because they shed light on the lexicology of the Yoruba personal names thus using the name forms to provide a lens through which the word- forms of the language could be determined.

Summarily, the above different scholarly works indicated that the known works on the YPNs can be patterned along the following parameters:

(i)   the classification of the whole gamut of names into either cultural significance, Psychological importance, theophoric account etc;

(ii)   naming formatting i.e. classification of names into patrimony, surname, day-names, etc;

(iii)   the semantic consideration. This is when the semantic effects of names are considered within the vocabulary;

(iv) gender related issues in the naming system;

(v)   the multiplicity of the name- form i.e synonymy in the naming system ; where two names may be considered as a replica of another lexical units;

(vi) dynamism in the name forms and usages, i.e their elasticity in form of their structures and usages (pragmatics).

At varying depths in the literature, discussions on Yoruba names have been factored to address each of the above perspectives at one time or the other without necessarily alluding to their discourse engagements. In the present study however, more lucid and specific attempts will be made to identify which of the category of names align with the discourse paradigms. Therefore, the main contribution of the paper will be to demonstrate how the Yoruba names communicate and encode the socio-cultural activities and thought-beliefs of the people in their day-to-day communication system and harness the issues involved in discourse. Similar attempt had been made on the textual essence of the Akan language where Ansu-Kyemerh (2000:20) explicated those issues he considered remarkable and worthy of been communicated in the language discourse of the Akan people.

However, the huge amount of scholarly works available on Yoruba names not withstanding, none to our knowledge, has focused on the pragma- semantic structures of YPNs within the purview of discourse to demonstrate that a name is a covert epitome of a given discourse encounter ,which in the first instance is psychologically real and consequently turn into an overt token in the realm of speech acts .One major reason for this oversight is perhaps the inability of the earlier works to present the YPNs as having the capacity of pragmatics in their structures as names being sentential in nature and thus able to explore the pragmatic capabilities which can make them be considered as being engaged as a text in speech acts. The presentation of the framework upon which the discussion shall be based is also deemed apposite here.

3. Speech Acts Theory

Although the phenomenon of speech acts was a staple of every day communicative life, but it only became research topics when Austin (1962) posited that in every utterance, a person automatically performed an act . According to Austin therefore, the actions performed by an utterance is called a speech act. Primarily, Speech Acts Theory asserts that in every utterance, an action has been performed and that action is what is known as the speech act .It can be gleaned from the above statement that what a speaker actually performs can be identified either to be a statement relating to an opinion, confirmation or denial of something ,making a prediction or request, asking a question, issuing an order, giving a permission, advice ,making a promise, thanking somebody ,etc. Perhaps for the above stated reasons, speech act theory has been very influential not only within the academic enquiry of linguistics, but also in philosophy, psychology, legal theory ,artificial intelligence, literary theory and many other scholarly disciplines that have to do with communication theory and practice. To that effect therefore, this study will dwell on the complex relation which subsists among the various components of speech acts and semantics ,grammatical mood, speaker-meaning, logically perfect utterances, perlocutions, performatives, presuppositions and implicature. However, the basic knowledge of the principles underlying each of the above stated fields of academic enquiries is assumed in this study. As a result, just a few of them that are considered inevitable to our discussion shall be further explained.

Following the above assertion, the Speech Acts theory is basically divided into three folds: The first aspect is the basic act which is the act of   producing a meaningful linguistic expression. This act is termed locutionary act. The locutionary act is therefore the production of a recognisable

utterance in the language which involves the various levels of language analysis. The second fold is the aspect which entails the reason for the utterance. That is, what act is it capable of performing. This aspect is known as the Illocutionary act. Illocutionary act, as it were, is in the core domain of pragmatics i.e. the ability of the language to achieve a communicative purpose as its logical essence. And the third aspect, known as the perlocutionary act is regarded as the bases of an utterance because depending on the context, the perlocutionary dimension is the speaker's intended effect on the addressee. The principles of speech acts therefore, following Halliday(1973:56), straddle other domains of linguistics to making an utterance achieve and encompass what he terms the field ,tenor and mode. Halliday further opines that these effects are the major determinants for the selection of meaning- options that can be appropriated to the corresponding semantics components.

However, among the three domains of speech acts identified above, the most used and discussed in the literature is the illocutionary acts. Traugott and Pratt (1980:229ff) therefore identifies six types of illocutionary acts which they consider the most fundamental:

1.   Representatives: statements and assertions which may describe, predict, insist, tell, etc.
2.   Expressives express only the speaker 'psychological attitude towards the state of some affairs by congratulating, thanking, commiserating and so on.
3.   Verdictives deal with judgment acts such as estimating, ranking, evaluating, accessing, etc
4.   Directives get the addressee to doing something, e. g, by commanding, asking, etc
5.   Commissives commit the speaker to doing something, e.g. vowing, promising, ,etc
6.   Declarations are illocutionary acts that bring about the state of affairs they refer to, such as blessing, firing, baptizing, bidding, passing jail terms, arresting, marrying, etc

Later, the above six dimensions of speech acts are further categorised into other different categories. This prompted Searle (1969), as reported in Farinde (2009) ,to sum up Austin(1962) into just five categories on the bases that Austin's classifications run into one another. Much later, in (1974) and (1979) Searle's classification was also criticised as not been straightforward enough because it left the classifications of speech acts to be too variegated. As a result, the adapted version of Allan (1986) and Osisanwo (2003) reported in Farinde (2009) shall be adopted in this study. We shall however delay our use of the illustration till section [6] when we shall be able to discuss our data analysis.

We must however hasten to stress from the outset that the pragmatic effects of names, though very actual, effective and enduring, are nevertheless instantaneous as other form of texts. Besides, the socio-cultural contents and contexts of YPNs need be sufficiently underscored before on can appreciate their discourse roles. This perhaps explains the reason why it is less discussed in the literature whereas as it will be argued here, each name is a body of text in its own right. Now, let us provide an overview of what the YPNs look like.

4. The Structure of YPNs

Also in an earlier study[5], attempt was made to demonstrate that Yoruba name-forms could be generated from two basic syntactic rules as given in [1]

 [1]   (a) Nominal   ->   name
     (b)Sentence   ->   name
The above configuration can be illustrated by YPNs in [2] below:

[2]   (a) Nominal :

(i)   Òjó-name of a male child born with part of the umbilical cord wound round his neck at birth.
(ii)   Àjàyí- name of a male child born with his face turned downwards at birth
        (iii)   Èkó –a place /personal name (another name for Lagos)
(iv)   Ọláolú (Ọlá + Olú) which is N +N .This can also be reduced to *Ọlá(affluence)*+Olú(*lord*) i.e. affluence which comes from the lord

[3]   Sentence:

(i)   Oyèéṣòro-the contest for the chieftaincy title was (could be) difficult
(ii)   Ọdẹtúndé-the hunter- god has come into the family again.
(iii)   Bámiṣayé –assist/join me to mend my life.

The corpus in [2] and [3] suggest that the morphological structures of the Yoruba names can be broadly reduced to mono-morphemic and poly –morphemic types. I also further observe that the poly-morphemic name- forms (as in 3 i-iii) can further be subdivided into complex; under which we have full sentential types (Cf 3(i) and 3 (ii) .The structure can also be phrasal like 3(iii).Yet there are compound types like what we have in (3) (iv) .The preceding descriptions are also captured in figure [A] below:

Figure A
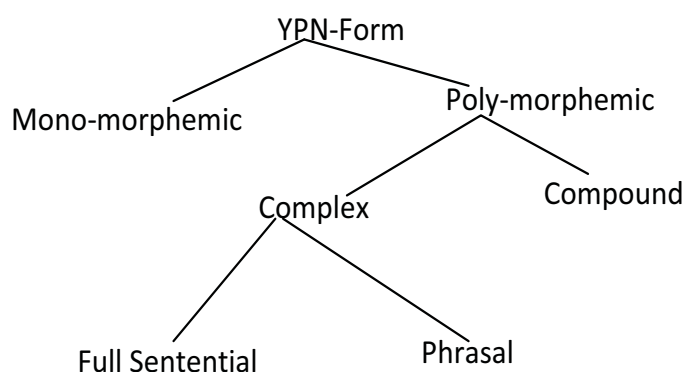
As it will be shown in the data, this study is concerned with the complex word forms which subsumes the full sentential and phrasal types of names. The claim agrees with Obieng (2001:114) that '' structurally ,African names range from single words ,phrases and sentences '' It is upon this bases that the analysis of discourse encounters are being expressed in the paragraphs that follow.

5. Highlighting the Illocutionary Acts in Discourse

The rest of this study shall be hinged on the fact that discussion on discourse is multifaceted. Our understanding of the field is that linguists generally opine that it has to do with language in use, thereby making its coverage a wide phenomenon. Linguists therefore posit further that either as a spoken or a written form, discourse is a process which is socially motivated and could be

constructive and dynamic in structure and form. In other words, discourse science is agreed to be a set of social practices' which produces and constructs afresh particular social-discursive practices constrained or encouraged by more macro movements in the over aching social information' Candlin(1997:ix).This later premises harbour the YPNs as a constructive and dynamic text[6] .

   Therefore, the detailed membership of the interpersonal illocutionary acts contained in Allan (1986) are given below as paradigm for the analysis of the study. It is also important to emphasize that speech acts have to do with actions performed either overtly or covertly. It therefore means that items in the membership/illustration columns below are those whose predicates have to do with actions-the essence of speech acts.

Subgroup	*Membership/ Illustration.*
[4] (a) Assertives	Performative assertive verbs Affirm,assert,avow,declare
(b) Informatives	Performative informative verbs:tell,announce report, testify
(c) Retrodictives	Performative retrodictive verbs:recount,report
(d) Concessives	Performative concessive verbs :agree accent grant concede
(e) Dissentives	Performative dissentive verbs: Offer, disagree disent,reject
(f) Suppositives	Performative suppositive verbs: assume suppose, stipulate postulate
(g) Constantative verdicts	Performative constantatative verdict verbs: judge, hold, approve, find
[5] Predictives	Performative predictive verbs :Forecast, prophesy, predict
[6] Commissives	
(a) Promises	Perfomative promising verbs : swear, vow, promising, guarantee
(b) Offers	erformative offering verbs : offer, propose, volunteer
[7] Acknowledgements	
(a) Apologies	apologise
(b) Condolences	condole, console
(c) congratulation	congratulate
(d) Greetings	greet
(e) Thanks	thank
(f) Farewell	
[8] Directives	
(a) Requestives	Requestives Performative verbs :solicit ,summon, petition ask
(b) Questions	Questioning performative verbs :ask query,question,inquire
(c) Requirements	Requiring performative verbs :Order ,command, demand require
(d) Prohibitives	Prohibitive performative verbs:Forbid ,prohibit, restrict, enjoin
[9] Interpersonal Authoritatives	
(a) Permissives	Permissive performative verbs :,licence,sanction,release
(b) Advisories	Advisory performative verbs: Councel, caution, warn, advice,

The detailed illustration of the aspects of speech acts effects as identified in Osisanwo (2003) above, notwithstanding, the present discussion will only highlight those names which encode those discourse encounters italicized in the above paragraph for ease of reference.

6. The YPNs as Speech Acts

Next, we discuss how the Yorùbá name -words reflect and   discharge the speech acts functions in the language. In doing this, our approach shall be to look for the name- words which are capable of licensing the   semantic imports outlined in section [5]above. The speech acts highlighted in [1] to [6] above are taken one after the other to illustrate the reflections which they cast on YPNs words.

6.1 The Constantative YPNs

By constantatives, we mean those YPNs whose predicates are performative and affirmative. The identified name- words encode assertion, declaration, or affirmation in their pragmatic and semantic imports .It must be noted, however, according to Allan (1986), that Speech Acts may be classified into interpersonal illocutionary which means that the interaction between speaker and hearer may be at individual level on the one hand or encode declarative illocutionary acts on the other. It therefore means that the hearer's interaction is not necessarily required personally before this particular speech act could take effect. It therefore follows that we need to present the context of each discourse in order to make the discussion on them adequately explicit .

The samples of YPNs below offer some illustrations:

[10] (i) Ọmọ́délé (the Real)Child has entered the family(house)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE- A unisex name. The hope of the family and their expectation on the child are heightened and overtly expressed. The name signifies an   affirmation, an answer. Although there could be other children before the child, this   new arrival is deemed very remarkably prestigious. Another name which can express similar condition is **Ayò̱mídé**(My bountiful joy has arrived).

(ii)   Ayò̱bámi(Joy/Happiness has come over me)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE-The name, usually the parents, are making a declaration, reporting on their mood concerning the arrival of the child. The unparallel joy/esteem of having a child is also fully expressed in **Olúfúnminíyì** (The Lord has endowed me with a prestige. **Ọmọniyì** *(Childness is tantamount to prestige)*

(iii)   *Fátúnmiṣe* (Ifa oracle has revitalized me)
CONTEXT OF DICOURSE-The parents considered themselves to be in the state of disarray/despair/disorder before the arrival of this child. They had the feeling that there was a gap. The name is therefore being used to declare that the Ifa oracle god has obliged to reposition them and reorder all that had gone wrong before. A similar feeling is expressed in ***Fátúngàṣe**= (Ifá oracle* has re-organized the court-yard/compound with the arrival of this child)

(iv)   *Ẹ̀bẹ̀mídayò̱* (My plea has turned into joyfulness)

CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A unisex name. The family is declaring/ reporting that the hitherto pleas (made to the family ancestral god) has now turned into joyfulness.   A similar declaration is made in ***Tèmítópé*** *(*My lots are worthy of gratitude) and   ***Babáfẹ́mi*** (The fore-father/God loves me)

(v)   *Fákáyòꞏdé* (Ifa oracle brings forth myriad of joyfulness)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A masculine name, the arrival of the male child coincides   with   series instances of other joyful events being recorded in the family in   the   family   circle   of   recent.   The name could also mark the beginning of a new era in the family life as depicted in ***Motúnráyò*** (I now see yet another joyful event)
From the preceding data, it would be observed that specific information are packaged in names and consequently communicated in different moods and attentions .Moreover, in most cases, the text does not make reference to any specific type of event i.e. the reason is not overtly expressed .They are found to either report ,announce ,assume or assert in their pragmatic contexts.

6.2   Predictive YPNs.

The names identified as encoding performative verbs are those whose semantic imports forecast, prophesy or predict future events. The events are expected to happen either to the child directly or to happen circumstantially within the environment into which the child bearing the name is born. That is, the environment in question can be physical or psychological. The following excerpts offer relevant illustrations:

[11]   (i) *Abídogun* (Born before the commencement of war)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE .The birth of this male child precedes the outbreak of war. As a result, the name is like a diary. Also*, Abídogun* suggests that the child is born into a warrior family and by the name, he is being initiated into the family which presupposes that he is expected to be a smart fighter in future.

(ii)   *Múrewá/Múrebò* (Brings forth goodness)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A unisex name. The birth of this child is expected to usher   in   good happenings/events into the family. A similar name having the effect of prophesy into the live of the child/family is ***Akóredé*** (Brings forth goodness) The   goodness may or may not have taken place, yet it is assumed that it will eventually take place.

(iii)   *Ṣẹ̀hìndèmí* (Be my heir).
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. The parents of the male- child is forecasting that the child will be their successor in later years –a wish, supplication. A similar good   prophecy is cast on the child bearing **Bóyèró** (Stand with the chieftaincy) and ***Bámitálẹ́*** (Live with me till old age).

(iv)   *Kalèjayé* (Sit down to enjoy life)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: This is an *àbíkú* (born- to- die) name. The parents prays that the child sits tight (stays on) with the family to enjoy life this time around having come and died before. Though not an *àbíkú* name, a similar wish/expectation is cast in ***Ròꞏmádé***(Cleave to the crown)

(v)   *Káfidíyà* (Here comes a succour)

CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A masculine name. The parents are prophesying that the new-born be a succour for the past losses and sufferings. An outburst of protracted feeling of fixation, loss or sufferings. A similar proposition is contained in **Múyiíbò** (Bring this back on return)

6.3 Commissive YPNs.

Certain Yoruba personal names which encode promises, vows, offer, proposition, etc, are subsumed under this category. They are speech acts through which the namer(parents) commits himself or the named to doing something .The following YPNs illustrate our examples:

[12] (i) *(Mo) Kàyísí* (I reckon with this)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. An *àbíkú* name. Much spell is cast on the child probably more than hitherto and perhaps because of his vantage position in the family. The dignity that will be offered and bestowed on the child is promised to be unequalled.

(ii)   *Kájogbólá* (Let us carry the yoke of honour jointly)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE.A masculine name.The name is a proposition asking for a joint commitment of people's participation in different dimension to cooperate in the uplifting of the banner of honour which belongs to the entire family kinship. The new child given this name is being initiated into the family socio-cultural circle.

(iii)   *Abógùn-únró* (Stays with the divinity of iron (Ògún)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A masculine name. This name offers to be a vow that the   child   has offered to stay put with the family divinity of iron (Ògún)A similar offer is contained in the name **Abógùnjókòó** (stay or settle down with the army).

(iv)   *Méèdáyéṣe* (I did not come to live a solitary live)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A unisex name. The name proposes to cooperate with other members of the society .It could also mean a declaration announcing the supports and cooperation of other members of the family. A similar name word is   **Médùbí** (I do not scramble for having (a reputable) birth, which means that I am born   into an enviable family.

(v)   *Fájẹ́mirókùn* (*Ifá* oracle permits me to have beads/chieftains)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A masculine name. The name is making a plea/supplication to eventually be conferred with chieftaincy title. It could as well be a declaration that it was through the assistance of Ifá oracle that the parent of the named was able to be conferred with chieftaincy. Similar names are **Fájẹ́miléyìn** (Ifá oracle   provides   or   allows   heir/inheritance   for   me)   and *Ifájẹ́miníyì* (Ifá oracle allows me to   have prestige).

6.4 YPNs which Encode Acknowledgements

Also found in the stock of YPNs are speech acts which express tokens such as apology, condolences, congratulations, greetings, thanks ,farewell ,etc These are expressions which represent the namer's (societal) outburst of feelings which are felt very important to be remarked. Our examples are:

(i) *Ọládànù* (The honour has become squandered and degenerated)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A masculine name. The namer has been enjoying honour and comfort in the past but all of a sudden, the tide changed. The name is being used to express the down-turn of fortune and register condolence .If the mishap is due to a fault of his, he is being admonished to mend the fence.

(ii) *Ìbírè mílẹ́kún*(The largeness of the family expanse condones me)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A unisex name. The name has once witnessed a period of   grief but the arrival of the child ushered in feelings of condolence/simpathy. The name is registering condolence and acknowledging the essence of family expanse and unity. Another name having a similar context is **Olúrẹ̀mílẹ́kún** (The family Lord condones me) and **Ẹkúndayọ̀** (Grief turns happiness).

(iii) *Moyò sọ́rẹ*(I jump for joy on account of this free-gift)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A unisex name. The birth of this child is with no cost to me, is free. The child is therefore regarded as a gift from God and the next items of name express thankfulness in that regard. .As a result, the namer (usually the parent) jubilates/hails the arrival of the big gift. This fact is further corroborated in the name: **Oorelọmo** (A child is a good turn from God).

(vi)   *Olówólàpémò̩* (Olówó-ni-à-pé-mò̩-) (The rich is destined to be popular)/(It is the rich who has been destined to prosper that we assemble to know(christen)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A masculine name .The name expresses a heart full of exaltation and adorations in form of congratulations. In the same token, the name **Ikúùdọlánù** (Death has not dissipated the family affluence) expresses a similar outburst of feeling of good fortune. The same truth is contained in **Owódámiláre** (money has pronounced judgement in my favour).

(v) *Modúpẹ́ọlá* (I am grateful for the fullness of (family) affluence)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE. A unsex name. The name is an expression of gratitude to God for the blessing of honour bestowed on him. There could be other blessings, but honour of affluence is being singled out in this name as being significant and worthy of note. Another expression of gratitude is contained in **Kúùdọlánù** (Ikú-kò-da-Ọlá-nù= Death has not dissipated the family affluence/honour (after all).

6.5   YPNs Which Encode Directives

This section contains the name-words that contain performative verbs which have to do with: to solicit, summon, petition, ask, questioning, query, inquire, command, demand, forbid, prohibit, restrict, enjoin, etc. A few of these are illustrated in the following examples:

(i) *Jẹ́rimíyè* (Allow me to survive ordeals and enables me to (come to) see the life again)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: A masculine name .A name given after the protracted illness of the parent, giving thanks and adoration to God or the family deity. The next set of names enjoin the child to either live long–**Dúrósinmí** (Stay alive to bury me), be patient, **Mákanjúọlá** (Do not be in a hurry to enjoy honour), solicit **Májẹ̀ékódùnmí** (Do not allow it to hurt me) and **Mádamidọ́lá** (Do not leave me alone to enjoy my honour).

(ii) *Kílàṅkó* (What it is that we are christening)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: An àbíkú, unisex and a rhetorical question name. This is in form of a petition urging the born to die child to stay on and enjoy life. The name removes the usual aura of respects that usually enrobe an African child

(iii) *Bámitálẹ́* (Abide with me till my old age)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: A masculine and àbíkú name that solicits for long life on the part of the born- to- die child who is believed to shuttle the heaven and the earth. This is inform of an appeal. Appeals are also expressed in **Jógunómí** (Allow the warfare to cease fire) and **Jayéọlá** (Enjoy the sweetness of affluence) and **Àṁbẹọlá** (We have been entreating the ancestors of our noble family)

(iv) *Tanímò̠la*(Who knows tomorrow)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: A masculine and rhetorical question name. It expresses the limit of mankind and caution the living to set order into their social fabrics .The semantic import of the name is that the living should also endeavour to assist one another in order to live perfect tranquil life.

6.6 YPNs with *Inter*personal Authority

The name-words that are considered to belong to this category of interpersonal authority are those containing performative verbs whose semantic imports relate to permission, licence, release, proclaim, advice, sanction, etc. We illustrate these performative acts with the followings:

(i) Sọ́nibárẹ̀ (Be watchful while choosing your peers)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: This is a masculine name, giving a warning/advice to exercise wittiness in the choice of associates based on the past experience of the namer. The target audience may be virtual or arbitrary. The parent has once experienced disappointment based on trust, hence the advice. A similar advice is contained in **Bánúsọ** (Hold consultations within yourself).

(ii) Akìwo̠wọ(Ifá priest who recites Ifá divination texts profusely by rote like pouring rain).
 CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: An Ifá- priest name. The name offers a licence to the name proclaiming his dexterity and declaring him an ardent reciter of Ifa verse.

(iii) Bámgbọ́pàá (Help me to hold up the sacred staff (of fertility tortem))
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: A masculine name. The authority of bearing the sacred staff in the cult has been bestowed on the child by being so named. A unique position which singles him out as an individual member - a permission. A similar authority (licence) is being given in **Bámijírò** (Join me in holding consultations)

(iv) *Májẹ̀ékódùnmí* (Do not inflict pains on me)
CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: A masculine name. An apprehension is expressed in the name that the family totem god should not allow the parent (the namer) to regret their actions of ever given the hand of their child into marriage to the other family. This could be a form of issuance of licence, permission or a proclamation. It becomes something like a decree when we liken a name such as **Máyégún** (Make the community decent and orderly) to the above.

(v) *Ṣojúọya* (Play the part of Ọya godess)

CONTEXT OF DISCOURSE: A feminine name . Ọya is a feminine river godess . Sanction in form of official permission is here being expressed in the name. The authority is being bestowed. A name such as **Adérópò** (The royal authority substitutes) and **Akóredé** (One who brought goodness in to the family) perform a similar function.

From the speech acts functions expatiated so far, the uniqueness of African names, and indeed the Yoruba have become more evident and pragmatically identifiable to support the claim that there are more to the African names than mere identification tag. Of course the pragmatic functions of names do not support the whole text to be overtly expressed, best of secrecy and privacy which certain events and psychic should entail, nonetheless Yorùbá names participate remarkably and uniquely in the discourse configurations of Yoruba language expressions.

Conclusion

The study therefore examined the various discussions in the literature and found that not much attention has been focussed on the explication of discourse engagements of Yoruba names within the pragmatic contexts. Attempts were therefore made to situate the names within the Speech Acts contexts with a view to supporting the view that Yoruba names, indeed most African names, transcend mere identification tags. Basically, the Illocutionary acts explored in Allan (1986) were critically explored and mirrored against the backdrop of the Yoruba names being typical of most other African names. It was found that although not all aspects of speech acts explicated by Allan are found in our data, those that are found are discussed to attest to the pragmatic capabilities of the Yoruba names' participation in discourse encounter, they point to the fact that aspects of culture are intrinsically interwoven in communication theory and practice. Conclusively therefore, the paper opines that the disdained attitudes of the Yoruba people towards their native language and the consequent decay in the socio-cultural ethics by the younger generation is largely due to their inability to glean the rich cultural recourse inherent in the African names.

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End Notes

1.   See Ògúnwálé (2003) Ìhun àti Ìtumò Àwo n Wúnrè n Orúko Aje mó -e ni àti Orúko Aje mó ibi nínú Èdè Yorùbá.
2.   For example, if the parents bought a new dress, new car ,etc they cannot be part of the consideration to be included in name words.
3.   This is however being undertaking by the present author in Evidence of Language change: the Vestige of Diachrony in Yoruba personal Name form.
4.   See Ògúnwálé (forthcoming) Tokens for metaphoric extension in Yorùbá Anthroponymes.
5.   See Ògúnwálé (2010) A pragmatic Study of Yorùbá Proverbial Names.
6.   This additional information is gleaned from http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/speech-acts.