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Anthroponymy in Eastern Nilotic: A case of Turkana personal names

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Abstract

This paper is about personal names given to Turkana children at birth, during the rite of passage to adulthood and throughout one's life. Following the lexical pragmatic theory according to Wilson (2003) and Carston (2002), the paper establishes the morpho-syntactic features of the Turkana names, that is, the inflectional and derivational features. It also presents the semantics and pragmatics of selected personal and nicknames, and concludes that all Turkana names are meaningful, and context plays a major role in identifying their correct interpretation. Socio-cultural factors govern the pragmatic meaning of the names and how they convey messages. Thus, approximation, narrowing and metaphorical extension are some of the processes that bring out the meaning of names - drawn from context surrounding the birth.

Keywords: anthroponymy, Eastern Nilotic, gender markers, nicknames, Turkana

Public Interest Statement

Anthroponymy is an integral part of language and a means by which communities practice their culture by way of giving names. Names not only carry meaning, but speak a lot about people's experiences, relationship with one another and tell a story about the people. A name may indicate the position of a name bearer in society, the collective history and life experiences surrounding the individual, the date of birth, or circumstances taking place at the time of birth (Mphande, 2006, p. 107). Further, personal names are the result of a particular linguistic act of naming which is connected to values, traditions, hopes and fears in a society (Brennen 2000, p. 142).

1.0 Introduction

African names in general are mostly brief and at the same time figurative which is a characteristic of oral discursive practices of people of Africa. In the Turkana language, their experiences of life are diverse as they are ever on the move searching for pasture for their livestock and every place they stay in is never the same as the previous one. They therefore, acquire names that are brief but, in their briefness, they tell a whole tale either new or different story of a place they might have never been or been before. For example, the name *Akamuu* 'drought' is given to a female child born during a drought.

Generally, the meaning of African names is a cluster of three layers: lexical meaning, that is, the meaning of the component lexemes; onomastic meaning, which is based on tradition of naming practices; and socio-pragmatic meaning which is based on the cultural knowledge of onomastic code of conduct (the rules outlining the social norms, religious rules and the responsibilities of or a proper practice for an individual or party or an organization) (Batoma, 2006). African names do not just stop at lexical meaning but extend their connotation depending on the traditional practices of a community, that is, the meanings are unstable and vary according to culture, the historical period and individual experiences (Leech 1981, p. 18).

Among the Turkana people's names are of great significance as they provide a wealth of information about the name bearer, the environment in which one was born, the circumstances during birth and the expectations of the entire society from the name bearer. The socio-cultural factors govern the pragmatic meaning of the names and convey messages. According to Dimmendaal (1983, p. 300) a name given to a Turkana child may be taken from the geographical terrain such as valleys, flat land, hilly places such as *Emoru* 'born near a mountain', *Akope* 'born near a spring below a slope' and *Apua* 'born in a dusty place'. There are also names taken from, events and natural phenomenon. Examples include; *Lotomo* 'born in a place with many elephants', "*Ariko*" 'born during war or animal raids', *Ekaru* named after a natural phenomenon and in this case 'a lot of rain'. The present contribution will provide a lot more detail about the meanings of names.

Every child is given a name immediately after birth by the mother or grandmother. This name is only used by the mother and refers mainly to some event at the point of birth. The mother uses that name to show the liking or love for the baby (Ifemesia, 1995). A child is also given a name by the father or the "godfather". This name is one used by everyone unlike the name given by the mother. The name can be given during the first month of birth, after this, the child can be taken among the stock and can start wearing beads and charms (Gulliver, 1985, pp. 187-188). However, naming in Turkana does not stop at child birth, but it continues to adulthood. As children grow, they acquire other names whereby male children are given names associated with the colour of a favourite bull or character. The names from bulls are acquired by boys during initiation or after a war depending on the character traits displayed by the respective person/boy like braveness, swiftness or cunningness.

On the other hand, a girl child also acquires a name from her character and body features such as *Nakabusian* 'beautiful'. Thus, is to say that through the personal names, though they are short unlike sentences and paragraphs in a story, a tale of the Turkana language and of the speakers of the language can be told. Presumably, among Turkana as with other Nilotic groups, there are multiple different kinds of names. However, birth names will form the recent of the present discussion.

2.0 The Morphological Analysis of Turkana Anthroponymy

Since names are not distinct from other linguistic signs they can be analyzed at the level of morphology, syntax, semantics or etymological perspective, among other levels. Turkana personal names are formed from different word categories such as nouns, verbs and adjectives. These word categories go through different morphological process such as affixation, prefixation, suffixation and compounding. An understanding of morphological constituents of Turkana words as is covered in this section will help in understanding the entire meaning of personal names.

2.1 Number marking in Turkana

Due to the complexity of number affixes in Nilo-Saharan languages, Turkana being one of them, Dimmendaal (1983) suggests a tripartite division of nouns. These features are explained as follows: Firstly, the most common way of number marking is where the singular is morphologically unmarked while the plural is morphologically marked. Secondly, there are nouns where the plural is morphologically unmarked while the singular is marked. Lastly, nouns that are morphologically marked in both singular and plural, but the suffixes are different in both cases. The tripartite system is not predictable to which group a noun will belong (cf. Barasa, 2015; 2017). Table 1 below displays the tripartite division from Turkana.

Table 1: Number marking in Turkana (Adapted from Dimmendaal, 2000:216)

	Singular	Plural	Gloss
Singulative marking (singular derived from plural)	e-na-it	ni-na	'grass'
Plurative marking (plural derived from singular)	a-poo	na-poo-i	'hare'
Replacement	a-kima-t	na-kima-k	'old woman'

From Table 1, in singulative marking, singulars are marked by the morpheme /-it/ while the plurals are unmarked. In plurative marking, the plurals are marked by the morpheme /-i/ whereas the singulars are unmarked. In replacement, the morpheme /-t/ in singular is replaced by the morpheme /-k/ in plural. Thus, names can be derived from both singular and plural nouns.

1.2 Gender in Turkana

Gender in Turkana is marked by the morphemes /e-/ and /ni-/ for masculine /a-/ and /na-/ for feminine while /i-/and /ni-/ for neuter in singular and plural, respectively (Dimmendaal, 1983). The gender markers for both feminine and masculine in singular form are the most common in the derivation of personal names. The singular form in feminine is still more common than the masculine. This can be explained by the fact that, nouns which are masculine undergo zero morphology when it comes to deriving names from them, hence, they remain in their bare form. This mainly occurs in cases

where the names are derived from plants and big animals such as wildebeest, buffalos and others as will be explained later. Rarely is the gender marker /i-/ for neuter used in personal names unless it is referring to a child or when the connotation is diminutive (Dimmendaal, 1983, pp. 218-219). Gender is also marked on personal names by the locative case markers. The locative case is marked on the nouns where they function as locative compliments indicating direction, source or place. The locative gender prefixes are /na-/ and /lo-/ for feminine and masculine forms, respectively.

1.3 Verb to Anthroponymy Derivation

Personal names that are derived from verbs are formed by adding gender prefixes to the verb stem. The locative gender morphemes /lo-/ for male and /na-/ for female are most common for the names derived from verbs. However, some female personal names derived from infinitive verbs remain in their bare forms as Turkana verb infinitives are formed with the gender marker /a-/ (Dimmendaal, 1983, p. 138). The prefix /a-/ is a gender marker as well as verb infinitive marker. Consider example (1) and (2) below.

- (1) a. a-tama
INF/F-think
“thinker (female)”
b. Lo-tama
LOC/M-think
“thinker (male)”
- (2) a. Lo-turum
LOC/M-gossip
“gossiper”
b. Na-turum
LOC/F-gossip
“gossiper”

Example (1a) shows that the name is derived from an infinitive verb “to think” but remains in its bare form as the infinitive morpheme /a-/ also marks the feminine gender in the derived form. However, in (1b) the masculine locative gender marker replaces the infinitive prefix /a-/. Both names, respectively, mean ‘a female and a male child named after a person who thinks or used to think a lot’. In (2a) and (2b), the names are formed by prefixing the locative gender markers /lo-/ and /na-/ on the verb root, which indicate male and female gender, respectively. The meaning of the name is an attribute of a person who loves gossiping. In this case, the locative case morphemes /lo-/ and /na-/ indicates the source of gossip. Apart from the addition of a locative gender, a suffix may be added to the verb root. For instance, the suffix /-it/ is a singulative marker that brings a semantic change to the form /lo-it/.

- (3) Lo-it-it
M-sharpen-SG
“a specific way of sharpening an object”

The name is formed from the verb root /it/ ‘to sharpen’. The suffix /-it/ has a singular individualizing meaning. The suffix /-it/ falls under a special group of nouns which can have two singular forms

where one specifies an individuated, unitary meaning while the other one gives a unindividuated, general meaning. Dimmendaal (1983, p. 240) gives examples of nouns with the special individualizing meaning as follows:

- (4) a. a-kwap-it a piece of land
- b. a-kwap land
- c. a-kuar-it one night
- d. a-kuari night

(Adapted from Dimmendaal, 1983, p. 240)

Barret (1988) gives six elements that are contained in Turkana verbs. Some of these elements are core in derivation of verbal nouns and in this case personal names. For example, the suffix /-an/ shows that an activity is done frequently. *Acal* 'noise', is an action verb with the verb root *-cal*. The verb goes through the nominalization process to form a positioner noun and in this case, a personal name as expressed below:

- (5) a. a-ka-cal-an
 INF/F-DM-make noise-FRE
 "to be noisy or to be a chatterbox"
- b. a-ka-cal-aa-n
 INF/F-DM-noisy-HAB-SG
 "an extremely noisy person"
- (6) e-kapil-aa-n
 M-witch-HAB-SG
 "one who portrays the character of a witch"

There are two forms of the same name in (5), the first, (5a) is from the central dialect which uses a frequency marking morpheme /-an/ (Barret 1988), while the second one is from the Northern dialects of Turkana who use a habitative extension /-aa-/ (Dimmendaal, 1983, p. 165). Both versions of the name are female named after the habit of making noise (chatterbox). The pre-prefix /a-/ is gender marker while the prefix /ka-/ is a noun derivation morpheme that derives nouns from verbs to form personal names. The form /-cal-/ is the verb root while the suffix /-an/ is a frequency marker in verbal nouns. The name in (6) is a nickname given to a male person who is always jealous and planning evil for others like a witch. The name takes the habitual maker /-aa-/. The gender morphemes contribute in change of word class from verbs to nouns (personal names).

Likewise, there are some verb stems which express an intensive action or a repeated action. The intensity is formed by reduplication of the verb root and insertion of a vowel (Dimmendaal, 1983, pp. 104-105). Consider example (7) below.

- (7) *baŋ* "be stupid"
- e-ka-baŋ-a-baŋ-at
- M-DM-stupid-of-stupid-SG
- "extremely stupid"

The root word ‘-baŋ-’ has been repeated with a linker /-a-/ for emphasis. The derived name implies that the stupidity of the individual is intense to a point that it cannot be ignored or brushed off.

1.4 Positioner Noun to Anthroponymy Derivation

Some personal names are formed from the positioner nouns. Dimmendaal (1983, pp. 274-275) explains that positioner nouns are derived from dynamic or stative verbs and indicate the animate entity that is closely associated with the action, process or state expressed by the verb, which forms the base of the nominalized entity. To derive personal names from positioner nouns, the gender is marked by the pre-prefix for either gender, followed by the prefix *ka-* which is a derivational marker preceding the verb root and finally a suffix (Dimmendaal, 1983, p. 275). Positioner nouns are therefore interpreted as either agentive, processor, or essive (a state of being). Below is an example of personal names derived from positioner nouns.

- (8) a) e-ka-baŋ-ar
M-DM-shave-INST
“to shave with”
“a barber”
b) e-ka-nyar-it-o-ni
M-DM-call-A-e-SG
“a caller”
“an informer”

The stem of the verb is *-baŋar* ‘shave’, an activity verb. Therefore, the noun formed from the verb stem is agentive (one who performs an action by use of an instrument). The morpheme /e-/ is a pre-prefix gender marker, /ka-/ a derivational morpheme, *-baŋar* ‘shave with’ is the verb stem where a personal name *Ekabaŋar* is derived from. The name is given to a male child named after a person who shaves or loved doing it.

1.5 Adjective to Anthroponymy Derivation

Turkana does not possess a large number of adjectives, a fact explained by Dimmendaal (1983, p. 332) cited by Schroeder (2008, p. 19). Nonetheless, some names are derived from adjectives. Some names can also be derived from adjectives as below:

- (9) a. e-ka-capan
M/SG-DM-weed
“a skilled person in weeding”
“a weeder”
b. Na-ka-busian
F-DM-beautiful
“a beautiful person”

The example in (9a) is a verbal adjective that is modified into a noun. It is derived from the verb root /-cap-/ “weed”. In this case, it is used in a verbal sense to describe a male person who is skilled in weeding and who does it a lot; hence, the frequency marker /-an/. The name expressed in (9b) is also a verbal adjective derived from the noun /busian/ ‘beautiful’. It is a female name referring to one

who is beautiful.

1.6 Personal names derived from nouns

There are several names that are derived from other nouns such as abstract nouns and concrete nouns (e.g. love, laughter, colour) and compound nouns. These names are used in a manner that they describe a person or the attributes of an individual as shown by the examples in (10).

- (10) a. lo-koro
M/SG-greed
“a glutton”
b. a-ka-dwar-aa-n
F/INF-DM-bitter-HAB-SG
“that which is always bitter”
c. a-ka-lioko-n
F/INF-DM-lie-SG
“one that tells lies”
d. apa-lo-kwan
POSS-LOC/M-white
“That of white colour”
“The owner of a white coloured bull”
e. apa-ka-reŋ-a
POSS-DM-red-SG
“That of red colour”
“One who praise a bull with red colour”

The names in example (10 a, b and c) are derived from abstract nouns greed, bitterness and lie. The names give descriptions of persons with the aforementioned attributes. The name “*lokor*” is given to a male child named after the habit of eating too much or a gluttonous person, “*akadwaraan*” is a name for female child born near a plant that produces bitter substance, *aloe vera* while “*akaliokon*” is a female name given to a person who has the habit of lying. The names in (10d) and (10e) are derived from colours of bulls’ hides. The one in (10d) praises a white bull while (10e) praises an ox with red coloured hide. The white and red colours could just be on a small portion of the praised bulls. However, it remains to be the unique feature of the bull and that feature contributes to the personal name.

1.7 Compounding

Compounding as a word formation process is limited to some word classes in the derivation of personal names. Dimmendaal (1983, p. 334) explains that in Turkana, compounding of adjectival roots is only possible with colour terms, although, from the present data, it was found that it is possible to have compound personal names from shape of horns, size of humps and shape of the animal’s head as shown below.

- (11)a. Lo-dapal-kou
M-flat-head
“Flat headed one”
b. Lo-kori-mateŋ-en

M-black/checked-cheek-SG

“Black checked cheek one”

The example (11a) is a compound name that describes the flat shape of a bull’s head. The name is given to a male child who is named after a person who praises a flat headed bull. Also, colours are used specially to describe cattle, sheep, goats and camels as in (11b) above. The name is given to a male child named after a bull with black checked cheeks.

1.8 Anthroponymy with Zero derivation

These kinds of anthroponyms take the name exactly from what it refers to and also maintain the word category and form. These names are commonly derived from animals. It is worth noting that most of these animal names become personal names for males only. This is due to the fact that the animal names in their bare form are masculine and hence, no affixation process is required for gender marking in deriving a personal name.

(12)a. e-tome

M-elephant

“Elephant”

b. e-kosowan

M-buffalo

“Buffalo”

c. e-makata

M-wildebeest

“Wildebeest”

d. e-kunyuk

M-squirrel

“Squirrel”

The names above remain in their basic form. Their prefixes by default are masculine gender marker morphemes. The derived name in (12a) refers to a child born in a place with many elephants. The name in (12b) is given to a male a child born in a place with many buffalos while (12c) is a name for male children born in a place where wildebeest were spotted and (12d) is a name for a male child born in a place where squirrels were in the vicinity.

3.0 Semantic meaning of personal nouns

Personal names in Turkana have various semantic sources where, environment and the circumstance that a child is born under becomes a great determiner for the meaning of a name the child is given. The names given therefore, serve as historical records for the Turkana people as they describe their life experiences. This section will discuss the various sources where the names are derived from.

3.1 Personal Names Related to Plants

Due to the movement of Turkana people in search of pasture, they encounter various species of plants. Children acquire names from the vegetation surrounding the place of their birth. Consider the examples below.

- (13)a. e-ηomo
 M/SG-wild fruit'
 "edible wild fruit"
- b. a-arut
 F/SG-wild fruit
 "edible wild fruit"
- c. egilae
 "a wild tuber crop"
 "cassava"
 lo-gilae
 M/SG-wild tuber crop'
 "cassava"
- d. a-kujen
 F/SG-leaf
 e-kujen
 M/SG-leaf
 "a single leaf of a tree"
- e. a-kaleruk or na-kaleruk
 F/SG-wild plant F/SG-wild plant
 "wild plant" "wild plant"

A variety of vegetation have different purposes in the Turkana community. They are medicinal, sources of food for both human and animals, and others are used as construction materials. Example (13a) is a name given to a male child born near a plant that bears edible wild fruits and (13b) a female child named after an edible wild fruit. There are other plants which provide food apart from trees such as wild tuber crops such as in (13c). The name was suggested as cassava by a native speaker because it has the same characteristic as a cassava plant such that, it grows like a small green shrub, but the edible part grows in the ground in form of a big root. The character displayed by trees are also source of names for Turkana people. Such is with the name in (13d) which could have been given because the child was born near a tree that was dropping leaves. Through the name, the Turkana people are able to tell the period when the child was born as trees shed leaves at a given time of the year. "Akaleruk" in (13e) is a female child named after a wild plant that has medicinal purposes. The plant is given to livestock to make them give birth to twins. This name is given to females only since, the females are ones who carry a pregnancy.

3.2 Personal names derived from Animals and insects

Turkana people interact with a variety of animals and insects during their movement. Hence, they acquire names from animals and insects which were in the vicinity when a child was being born or name a child after the character of an animal that was around when a baby was born. These names can be used as traces of history of their movement since they refer to unique features found on their way. Some of the names are presented below.

- (14)a. lo-mukup
 M/SG-black ants
 "a male born in a place with many black ants"

- b. na-mukuj
F/SG-black ants
“a female born in a place with many black ants”
- c. lo-kori
M/SG-giraffe
“a male born in a place with many giraffes”
- d. na-kori
F/SG-giraffe
“a female born in a place with many giraffes”

The names in (14a) and (14b) are given to male and female children, respectively, born in an area that was infested with the black ants. Some kind of black ants appear just before the rainfalls hence, they are an indication of weather changes. Examples (14c) and (14d) are names for male and female children born near a place with many giraffes. Giraffes are often spotted in arrears with high shrubs and trees as it is easier for them to feed due to their height and long necks. Keeping in mind that Turkana people are nomads, spotting of animals in area determines whether to settle in that area or not. A place with giraffes is an indication of green shrubs which are a source of food for both animals especially goats as they are high climbers and humans.

3.3 Gender Specific Names

Some names are unique in that, as much as children are born in the same place or environment, the names given to these children are not shared by the male and female genders. This is expressed in example (15) below:

- (15)a. e-kosowan
M/SG-buffalo
“buffalo”
- b. e-makata
M/SG-wildebeest
“wildebeest”
- c. e-kupuk
M/SG-squirrel
“squirrel”
- d. na-kolea
F/SG-fish
“fish”

The names “*Ekosowan*” and “*Emakata*” in (15a) and (15b), respectively, are given to male babies only as a comparison is made between them and men seen to be big in body size hence strong and fierce unlike women who are seen to be small in body size hence, weak and compassionate. The names are given to male children born near a place with buffalos or a place with wildebeest. *Ekuṇuk* ‘squirrel’ in (15c) is a name for a male child born when squirrels were spotted in the vicinity. Squirrels are known to be wise animals, in Turkana folktales, despite their size. This name is therefore, given to men only as they are thought to be wise compared to women. It is worth noting that, male names gotten from animals where the names start with the prefix /e-/ remain in their bare forms as the

prefix already marks male gender. Some people are named “*Nakolea*” ‘fish’. The name only applies to female children because fish is considered weak and fragile an attribute associated with females. Although there are some men who can be named after the fish “*lokolea*” based on their feminine characteristics.

3.4 Personal Names derived from Location of birth

Location is an important aspect of the Turkana people lives. The daily activities they engage in is depended on location, for example land weeding, if they are in a fertile place, herding their domestic animals if the location has good pasture and weaving for women if there is raw material for weaving. Depending on the location a baby is born in, one can acquire a personal name from there. It is worth noting that the gender morphemes used in personal names for these categories are locative gender markers /lo-/ for masculine and /na-/ for feminine.

(16)a. na-cuuro

LOC/F- galleys

“Galleys”

b. na-rot

LOC/F-foot path

“Footpath”

The name in (16a) is given to a female child born in the galleys, and in (16b) a female child born along a foot path. However, a child who immediately after birth produces an irritating cry, is also named *lobun* ‘hyena’ even when there is no hyena spotted at the place of birth. The child’s cry is compared to the loud and irritating noises made by hyenas. Other personal names given to children born in various places under different situations are:

(17)a. a-keno

F/SG-keno

“Kitchen”

b. e-waar

M/SG-waar

“animal shed”

c. na-pololo

LOC/SG-river

“a place with a river”

d. e-kwoma

M/SG-kwoma

“anthill”

Example (17a) is a name of a female child who was born in the kitchen while the mother was cooking. The name ‘*Ewaar*’ ‘animal shed’ in (17b) is given to a male child born in the animal shed while the mother had gone to milk the goats or tend to them. One born in the river when the mother had gone to fetch water is called ‘*Napololo*’ ‘river’ as expressed in (17c). The male child born near an anthill is named “*Ekwoma*” ‘anthill’ as in (17e).

3.5 Seasonal Names

Children are also named after the time or season they are born in or after the experiences faced by the people during each season as no season is similar. For example:

- (18)a. a-rupe
F/SG-short rain'
"Short rains"
- b. lo-kolon
M/SG-sun'
"Source of heat"
"Very hot sun"
- c. lo-kwan
M/SG-white/bright
"source of light"

The name in (18a) is given to a female child born during short rains that lead to growth of grass. The growth of grass is important to the Turkana people as it provides pastures for their livestock. When it is too hot, a child can be named after the sun "*Lokolon*", (18b), as it is the source of heat. The interpretation for (18c) is based on the effect of light which is specifically the brightness. It is also based on the size of the moon. A full moon is an indication of high peaks of rainfall; therefore, the name is a reminder of favourable weather, leading to plenty of food, pasture and water. The name "*Lokwan*" is given to a male child born during the full moon or bright sun. The sun is usually bright in January, so a child born in that month is also called *Lokwan*'. The name marks a good time in the lives of the Turkana nomads when the meaning is associated with the full moon which indicates coming of rains.

3.6 Personal names derived from foreign things (Loan words)

Due to encroachment of modern ways of living, the Turkana people tend to borrow words and use them as personal names. Some of these names are acquired from days of the week, modern things such as hospitals, stores, modern professionals and among others. The loan words undergo a morpho-phonological change for naturalization. The main process applied in nativizing of loan words to names is the inclusion of the gender marker prefix. If a loan word contains a voiceless dental fricative /f/, the sound is changed to a voiceless bilabial plosive /p/ in a nativized form. Consider the following examples:

- (19)a. e-sapar
M-journey
"journey or travelling"
"a male baby born while the parents were on a journey"
- b. e-ᵿikon
M-kitchen
"Kitchen"
- c. e-meᵿen
M/PL-majani-PL
"tea leaves"

The name *Esapar* in (19a) is borrowed from the Kiswahili form *safari* 'for a child born during a journey'. The name is nativized by adding a gender morpheme and by changing the voiceless dental fricative /f/ to a voiceless bilabial plosive /p/. The name in (19b) is borrowed from Kiswahili "*jikoni*" "kitchen" and a morpheme /e-/ added to it for masculine gender marking to indicate a personal name for a male child born in the kitchen. The final vowel is dropped since Turkana words end in a consonant. The name '*emeɽen*' in (19c) is the form '*maɽani*' from Kiswahili language which means "tea leaves". It is adopted into Turkana by changing back high vowels /a/ to the mid front vowels /e/ and dropping the vowel /i/.

3.7 Turkana Nicknames

Nicknames are additional names given to an individual by peers or parents. They show a specific attitude from the person that do the naming towards the named person. They also reflect the expectations of the people that give the name on the one nicknamed. Thus, nicknames are coined for a bearer to serve a specific purpose and it shows a level of informality that the speaker and hearer share. De Klerk and Bosch (1997) perceive nicknames as informal and impermanent names. They further explain that nicknames also show whether the speaker approves or disapproves the character of the bearer. They further to indicate that certain nicknames are restricted to selected people only. These observations also apply to Turkana nickname giving, as the nicknames originate from the character of an individual mainly, towards animals or general character of an individual. The nicknames given to men are associated with bulls. Nickname giving is not an overnight activity, rather, the elders, age mates and parents, do observation of an individual for a long time before they settle on a nickname. The nickname given to an individual can be from the bull itself or some attributes of the bulls. Turkana people have a traditional dance called *endona*. The dance is performed during marriage negotiation, marriage ceremony, and recreation to enhance unity within the community. During the dance, every individual and in this case men, dance praising the bulls they love. They can praise the entire bull, the shape of the head, the horns and any characteristics that they love about the bulls. The nicknames are then derived from these attributes of the animal. Women too are given nicknames although it is not a common phenomenon. For women, the nicknames can be derived from person characteristics and majorly on behavior such as *Naturum* 'a gossiper' or *Akacalan* 'a quarrelsome person'. Below are examples of Turkana nicknames:

- (20)a. apa-ke-ris
POSS-DM-leopard
"that of a leopard"
- b. apa-ke-ɽatun
POSS-DM-lion
"that of a lion"
- c. lo-kimiet-ruk
M-large:fat-hump
"large fat hump"

Examples in (20a) is a male nickname given to a person who killed a leopard or one who owns or praises a bull that has similar colours as those of the leopard. Example (20b) refers to a male nickname given to a person who killed a lion or is as brave as a lion. The nickname in (20d) is given to a person named after a bull with a big hump.

4.0 Lexical pragmatic analysis to the derivation of Turkana personal nouns

In this section, lexical pragmatic theory will be used for analysing the data to bring out the pragmatic meaning of personal names. The section will show the connotative and denotative meanings of different names. Further, the processes of lexical semantic such as broadening (metaphorical extension, categorical extension) narrowing and metonymy will be applied to show the pragmatic meaning of the names.

4.1 *The meaning of personal names*

Mill (1964) explains that proper names are termed as denotative since they refer to objects without describing any attribute of the object. They are also connotative as they describe the various attributes and characteristics associated with a proper name (Batoma, 2009, p. 216).

4.2 *Connotative Meaning*

According to Leech (1981, p. 18), connotative meanings are unstable and vary considerably according to culture, the historical period and experiences of an individual. Therefore, the meanings are open ended as our knowledge of the universe is. Turkana personal names have connotative meanings which are based on their cultural knowledge of the universe. Hence, the interpretation of a personal name given a connotative meaning is utterly based on their culture.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| (21)Akoel | (a) sharp (denotation)
(b) 'a person with sharp shaped ears' (connotation)
(c) the name is given to a female who is born with ears that seem to be pulled upward. |
| (22)Engomo | (a) 'a wild xerophytic plant' (denotation)
(b) sticks from the plants are designed and used as walking sticks and also dancing sticks during ceremonial dances such as edoŋa (connotation)
(c) The name is given to a person who uses a walking stick to walk. |
| (23)Ekeriau | (a) 'a small hydrophytic tree (denotation)
(b) Derived from the tree name "ŋikeriau" used as a charm to divert bad spells and curses to the wrong direction. It therefore offers protection. (connotation)
(c) The name is given to a traditional doctor who ensured the society was safe from bad spell by driving them away. |

4.3 *Denotative/Literal meaning*

Several personal names in Turkana maintain their primary meaning. The names are not affected by the context or emotional overtones associated with the act of communication. To help unravel the meaning of names in this sub-section, the anthroponymys are divided into different categories where the first level and second level denotative meaning is given. The first level denotative meaning has a gender marker that gives the interpretation of the word as a personal name while the second level denotative meaning has no gender marker hence, it is what the hearer literally sees. These are illustrated in Table2.

Table 2: Anthroponyms drawn from big animals and wild animals

Anthroponymy	First level denotative meaning	Second level denotative meaning
Lojole	a male given name	Horse
Namaniko	a female given name	bulls
Lotukoi	a male given name	a place where zebras are found
Logetei	a male given name	a place with gazelles

Although females are not named after big male animals, the name *Namaniko* does not give any description of a bull; making it 'safe' to be given to a woman. The name is given to a female born in a place where bulls were present. However, names that described the traits of a bull are given to men as nicknames though they do not have the term *maniko* 'bull' in them hence it requires a competent speaker of the language to interpret the meaning.

Table 3: Anthroponymy derived from plants

Anthroponymy	First level denotative meaning	Second level denotative meaning
Eponj	a male given name	Candelabra tree
lopedur	a male given name	Tamarind tree
atilolo	a female given name	Sodom apple
epele	a male given name	Seedlings of a palm tree
acucuka	a female given name	Aloe vera

Table 4: Anthroponymy drawn from insects and small animals

Anthroponymy	First level denotative meaning	Second level denotative meaning
Abeere	a female given name	butterfly
Edete	a male given name	locust
Emaase	a male given name	grasshopper
Nasuru	a female given name	mosquito

Table 5: Anthroponymy from descriptive areas

Anthroponymy	First level denotative meaning	Second level denotative meaning
Acoto	a female given name	a place with mud
Losipen	a male given name	a place with sand
Lomoni	a male given name	a bushy place
Aukot	a female given name	a hilly place
Etorube	a male given name	a shade

4.4 Semantics of Turkana personal names

As already mentioned, personal names given to a baby are highly influenced by the surroundings during birth and from this, meaning is drawn. Therefore, the process of the lexical pragmatic processes which are approximation, narrowing, metaphorical extension and hyperbole are applied to bring

out the meaning of the personal names. Only appropriate processes of lexical pragmatics will be discussed as not all of them are viable.

4.4.1 Metaphorical Extension

This is a phenomenon of broadening where an interpretation of an utterance is extended further than what is expected and known as the original concept. To interpret what is meant, the hearer through ad hoc concepts, which are not linguistically given, looks for relevance in that utterance depending on the context in which it was uttered. Trask (1994) defines metaphor as a figure of speech based on a perceived similarity between distinct objects and actions. Metaphors, therefore, do a comparison and are not taken literally since they are figure of speech. A number of personal names in Turkana are a comparison of a trait or an attribute of an object either animate or inanimate. For example, the name *Nasumkituk* is a female given name. Morphologically, the name is a compound word derived from the noun *esum-* 'poison' and the verb *kituk* 'to speak' or 'to utter'. The first part of the word is borrowed from the Kiswahili word 'sumu' which means poison. The encyclopaedic entries of poison and the character traits of a woman are compared as shown below.

<u>Esum 'poison'</u>	<u>Woman</u>
Harmful	Talkative
Dangerous	Gossiper
Paralyses	Loving
Kills	protective of her children

The morphology is shown below:

Na-sum-ki-tuk
F/SG-sum-INF-speak
'Poison speaking'
'To speak evil'
'A female who speaks bad things or curses, about others.'

To interpret the name, the hearer from the different encyclopedic entries will pick the one that relates to the women character traits. What is more suitable becomes the meaning of the name '*Nasumkituk*'. The gender prefix *na-* is what indicates that the name belongs to the female person. The ad hoc concept is applied to the context of a woman. The most relevant trait of a woman and the relevant encyclopedic entries of poison are merged together which are harmful and talkative. Harmful is picked as most viable as words alone cannot kill neither can they be dangerous, but they can harm once self-esteem and affect relationships negatively. From the two encyclopedic entries the interpretation then is a woman who talks harmful things such as abuses or curses against or about others.

In metaphorical extension, the encyclopedic entries of a literal term might not apply. Hence, the hearer through contextual influence will have to create new information of a word to get relevant meaning, and this is called ad hoc concept as indicated in (25) below:

- (24) *Agule-* leaside of a mountain or the back of the house
Na-gule
F-leaside of a mountain

The encyclopedic entries of *Agule* and *Nagule* are compared as shown below;

<u><i>Agule</i> 'leeward'</u>	<u><i>Nagule</i> (female name)</u>
Infertile side	Bears children
Origin of wind	Compassionate
Low rainfall	Most of them love gossiping

Nagule is a female personal name derived from the noun *agule* 'leeward'. The name is metaphorical as comparison is made between a woman's characteristics which are compared to the attributes of the leeward side of a mountain. In searching for the metaphorical link, a hearer might focus on fertility as a possible point of comparison, since the leeward side of the mountain is agriculturally infertile, while women are the ones who give birth. This interpretation would be discarded, though, since it is highly offensive to call a person infertile. One might then consider characteristics such as 'dry' and 'uncomfortable' in terms of settling or farming. Transferring this information to a human being could mean that people are uncomfortable associating with this kind of a person. Gender stereotypes come into play here, too, as the notion of discomfort can be linked to stereotypes about women that they tend to quarrel with each other and gossip about others. They are then compared with the distance between leeward and windward side of the mountain and the negative attributes of the leeward side of a mountain.

1.1.2 Lexical Narrowing

Lexical narrowing involves the reduction of meaning of a lexical unit to a specific meaning depending on the context. Narrowing helps the hearer to choose the most appropriate meaning of a name from many other available options by constructing ad hoc concept which will give the most relevant interpretation. It is worth noting that Turkana personal names have their meaning narrowed down to physical features or location at the time of birth. The names given to children born at different places hold a specific meaning and the interpretation of the meaning is based on the context at the time of birth. The hearer creates ad hoc concept; thus, the interpretation of the names does not stop at the knowledge that he has of the term, but he builds other concepts based on the context so as to get the most appropriate meaning of the given name. The names derived from location and situational personal names undergo the process of narrowing as shown below:

(25)Lo-gete-i

LOC-gazelle-PL

'a place with many gazelles'

'a male child born in a place where many gazelles were spotted in the vicinity'

The encyclopaedic entries of *egetei* is; curved ringed horns, four legged, lives in the bush. The name is given to a child born in a bush where there were many gazelles. Turkana people are meat eaters and apart from getting meat from their domestic animals, they also hunt for game. The name is based on the fact that they had a different source of their meat and giving a new born baby this name is worth their memory. The meaning hence, is narrowed to the location without the consideration of any of the character traits of the gazelles.

Also, a boy born under a tree is called *erotube* 'shade'. A shade might seem insignificant to many as it can exist without being noticed. However, for Turkana people, it is a source of comfort, relaxation and offers protection from dehydration in the extreme hot weather conditions. The meaning

is narrowed to the shade without the consideration of other features of the shade or any other object that is creating the shade. The encyclopedic entries of shade are: any object living or non-living that is a covering which cools temperature and blocks brightness. Shades are created from umbrellas, lampshades, tents, building, trees and many others. In the Turkana experience in the wilderness, the shade could have been created by a tree, a rock or a hill but all that matters to them is the shade and not the source, the size or the shape of the shade.

A baby boy born in a bushy place is called *Lomoni* 'bushy place'. For the Turkana to give a child this name, it is an indication that the place of birth had vegetation and or the vegetation would be food for both the human and their animals. Turkana use a lot of herbs for their medicine too, the name then could mean a place where they took care of their health, the meaning is narrowed down to their wellbeing in general and of the wellbeing of their animals too.

Originally, the name *ḡoleḡan* meant the white colonist. The name was derived from the white people skin colour where the Turkana described it as *ḡan* 'yellow'. However, the meaning of the name has been narrowed down to mean 'government' without the consideration of the skin colour of the people or their way of ruling. Hence, when one is called '*Nanḡoleḡan*', the hearer's interpretation is purely based on the power or the activity of the government without the consideration of colour or race.

5.0 Social-cultural significance of Turkana personal names

Mwangi (2015) argues that indigenous languages are a window through which indigenous people view the universe, as the languages are full of indigenous knowledge, value and attribute that make a people hence, important in national development. In this section we bring out the value, culture, and attributes of the language seen in their naming system. Ng'asike (2020, p. 26) in his work on education of the nomadic people, cites problems Turkana children face when they join formal schools. According to Ng'asike (2020), these children have already acquired knowledge from their environments but what is found in textbooks is completely out of their imaginations. The children, coming from a nomadic lifestyle, interact with desert features and vegetation where crops such as tea and coffee which grow in highland areas are new to them. Hence, understanding a concept with this kind of material is rather torturing. Names especially in African languages are part and parcel of people's indigenous knowledge and cultural experiences. Thus, they can be used as part of teaching materials just like oral narratives, as they are a story in their brevity.

1.1 Turkana Personal Names Associated with War

The names given to individuals are a vehicle that conveys messages to the society about their life experiences. They interpret the relationship between the named and the name giver. According to Neethling (2005), the names give warning, alert, advice and also rebuke. The nicknames given to Turkana warriors or young adults are used to evoke emotions especially during preparation for war. The names create a sense of bravery, wisdom and knowledge which are the core values possessed by the warriors. For example:

(26)a. E-moit

M/SG-enemy

'hide out of enemies'

b. *ḡirototin* 'spy'

From *ḡirototin*, a male name is derived as shown below:

E-rototin
M/SG-spy
'a spy'

The name in (30a) is given to a child born near a place where enemies had been spotted or at the time when an enemy or a stranger was spotted in the vicinity. The presence of an enemy is the beginning of war to the Turkana. The name hence, in its brevity will tell a whole tale of the outcome of the interaction with the enemy. In illustration (30b) the nickname is given to a young warrior who is expected to warn or alert the community of the looming dangers. The name is chosen for the person since they have qualities of a spy which are wise, cunning, intelligent and brave.

1.2 Turkana personal names associated with gender

Gender is viewed as the most important aspect in the Turkana community, this is due to the fact that one's gender, determines the role one plays in the community. The females take care of the household chores and do other lighter jobs like tilling the land. On the other hand, the males are involved in heavy jobs such as taking large herds of domestic animals for grazing to far off land and life-threatening duties like going to war and raiding their neighbours' herds to increase their wealth. Hence, a name given to a young child born male or a nickname to a young male, dictates the duties that one is expected to perform. The names from wise, big and strong animals were given to male children and not female because the duties they perform as men requires such qualities. Some of the examples have been discussed above such as:

- (27)a. e-ka-lot-oo-n
M-DM-go-HAB-SG
'a male person who walks regularly'
- b. e-kosowan
M-buffalo
'buffalo'
- c. na-kolea
F-fish
'fish'

The name in (32a) is given to a male child who walks regularly or a person who could walk for long distances without getting tired quickly. This person is compared to a camel. The name is given to both genders where the female version is *Akalotoon*. In example (32b) the name is given to male only. Buffalos are aggressive animals. They are strong and have dangerous horns, demand respect and any person or animal trying to move closer to their territory is given a stare that scares them away. A male child or person given this name is expected to display the same characteristics as the Buffalo. Women are thought to be weak in body and also easily frightened thus this explains why they are not given such a name.

Apart from being cattle herders, Turkana people who live near Lake Turkana are fishermen. The fishing activity is mainly done by male, whereas, the preparation of the fish and the selling is done by the women. As much as the activity of fishing involves both genders, the name however, is given to females, except for some rare cases where a man is named *Lokolea*. This could be explained by the fact that the size of the fish cannot be compared with that of a bull. The fish are thought to be

weak and die within a few minutes of being out of water, most fish are not fierce, so they rarely attack the fishermen and if they do, most of the time it is not tragic. The traits of a fish then, cannot match the strength, the size, the fierceness and endurance of a Turkana man but more of a Turkana woman, hence the name is preferred for female.

Conclusion

The paper has established that Turkana personal names undergo different morphological processes for their formation. The processes include derivation, inflection and compounding. These processes are achieved through prefixation, affixation and suffixation to the roots or stems for creation of the names. Names are mainly derived from verbs and other common nouns. Some names however, remain in their bare form if the prefix is similar to a gender marker morpheme /a-/ for female and /e-/ for male. The language also uses the locative gender markers /na-/ for female and /lo-/ for male to indicate not only the gender of the child but also the location where one is born.

Nicknames are formed through compounding; by joining a noun with an adjective. Some of the nicknames are preceded by a possession pronoun /apa/ to mean someone who possess or has behaviour similar to or the owner of the praised animal. The naming according to bulls is also unique as there is no mentioning of the bull in the name. However, a competent speaker of the language will tell it is a bull being praised and not any other animal. As the Turkana people interact or come into contact with modern things such as vehicles, hospitals and schools, they introduce new names associated with modernization. The names adapted from different languages undergo nativisation. The names also have semantic values. The interpretation of meaning does not stop at semantic level but is pragmatically analysed as they are based on the context. The analysis in this chapter was done through the lexical pragmatic theory so as to see where the meanings are broadened through metaphors, categorical extension and metonymy or narrowed down. Most of Turkana personal names were narrowed down to mean what was more important at the time of birth without consideration of other things in the vicinity. For example, a child might have been born in an area with several wild animals, but the name will be drawn for the animals with largest herd or one that was spotted rather than the ones which were seen easily.

Furthermore, names have a social and cultural significance as they are a recording of events and experiences of the Turkana people. The names are also used to warn or alert and also rebuke unwanted behaviours among the members of the society. Some of the nicknames are praise names which encourage good behaviours among the members. As much as the names have an aesthetic side of them, they also teach the values of the Turkana community. The Turkana personal names are not mere words but they in overall, are loaded with meaning which evoke different emotions depending on past experiences. They therefore, tell a story in brevity.

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