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Pragmatic Act Analysis of Hausa Personal Names

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Abstract
This study examines the Pragmatic meanings of names in Hausa. One hundred and ten data gathered from Hausa names have been purposely selected for Pragmatic analysis because of their assertive, penetrating, and insightful messages. The connotational meaning of the selected names was analysed using the pragmatic and linguistic tools of context. The study examines the pragmatic inferences of the names by exploring the reasons and circumstances of the selected names. The names were purposively selected through primary and secondary methods. The data were grouped according to different circumstances surrounding the names. The findings from this study shows that Hausa names do not only identify a person but also communicate so much about the circumstances surrounding the person's birth. Another significant reason is the fact that Hausa people have now recognized the importance of preserving Hausa language. The study concludes that names perform several practs like informing, assuring, pronouncing, or expressing gratitude which are reflective of the emotional link or expectations of the giver of the personal name.
Keywords: Pragmatics, Hausa, Pragmatic Act, Names, Culture.

Introduction

The richness and diversity of peoples' ways of existence are expressed and manifested via language. Agyekum (2006) asserts that a people's naming systems, customs, family, kinship, politics, professions, religious convictions, laws, funeral customs, and other aspects all reflect their language. Most people believe that personal names are universal, or what Agyekum calls "universal cultural practice." It does not appear that there are any records of individuals or towns/communities going without names. Every community in the world uses names as identifiers for its members, but the methods used to assign names, the customs and ceremonies involved, and the meanings associated with them differ among cultures (Agyekum, 2006). Personal names permeate our semiotic experience and are an essential element of many social interactions. According to Mensah and Rowan (2019), "names project belief, norms, attitudes, emotions and mores that can facilitate a broader understanding of Africa and its people". A person's name or names are part of who they are. Names are significant pieces of information that are impacted by the cultural backgrounds of those who bear them. African names are socially formed through positions that are imposed, expectations about appropriate behaviour and attitude, division of labour, and beliefs about innate traits and skills.

Early research on the topic focused on the names' cultural connotations and the idea that Hausa traditional personal names have cultural significance that tells something about their bearers. A child's physical characteristics or structure, the way or circumstances of their birth, their kinship tie, and, in certain cases, their parents' jobs are some cultural variables that influence Hausa personal names. Giving a Hausa new born a personal name, as is possible in other ethnic groups, would depend heavily on linguistic, political, economic, social, cultural, and religious factors. Like most African personal names, the Hausa personal names provide distinct meanings about the bearer and act as a

prism through which we can view many facets of the Hausa culture.

Other than their common shapes or sensory appeal, most individuals do not find anything exceptional about names. This is a result of our conscious acceptance that names are already clear, particularly when we are accustomed to addressing people by their given names without identifying the act behind the names as well as the sources of such names. The issue of names and naming has often been considered as an issue of convention, but more to it lies the fact that naming in some cultures goes beyond the question of convention because distinct cultures use different parameters to give names and construct identities for individuals.

In the light of the above, this study intends to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the sources of Hausa personal names?
2. What are the pragmatic acts embedded in Hausa personal names?

The aim of this research is to analyse the meaning associated with names and naming in Hausa. Therefore, the objectives are:

1. To find out the sources of Hausa personal names.
2. To find out the pragmatic acts embedded in Hausa personal names.

Any language that can serve the purposes of communication and promote the culture of a people is worth studying. This is not leaving out the Hausa language, a major language in the northern region of Nigeria. The language serves a good deal of purposes, revealing the rich culture of the Hausa people. It has also been used in writing as well as a medium of instruction where necessary.

The study of Hausa language will open more avenues for further research into the immeasurably rich culture of the people. As such, names which are an aspect of the culture encode various important socio-cultural and even historical values which in turn make the

study an imperative significance. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, not so much has been done so far in a bid to study names in Hausa. This study therefore will further bring to the fore the cultural value that people attach to names when they bestow an identity on individuals as obtainable in Hausa land.

Languages in Northern Nigeria

Several languages have been identified to be popular in interpersonal and interactional use by northerners and for different purposes. The English language undoubtedly is a language in use for officialdom and formal events. Although, the north is known for preference for native language in public relations, it recognizes the constitutional status of the English language in Nigeria. Following English in the north is the language of the immediate environment, Hausa.

A Hausa language is the most popular indigenous lingua franca in West and Central Africa. The total number of Hausa speakers is estimated at sixty-three million. The population of the speakers of this Afro-Asiatic language in northern Nigeria goes to show that it is the most popular Indigenous language in northern Nigeria. This spread across Africa, especially in northern Cameroon, Chad, Sudan, and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire among Fulani, Tuareg, Kanuri, Gur, Shuwa, Arab and other Afro-Asiatic speaking groups, makes it the second most important language in northern Nigeria. According to Adamu (1978), the Hausa have a language contact with the Arabs and Arabic cultures going back to the seventh century. To Smith (1970), Hausa is written in Arabic characters, and about one-fourth of Hausa words come from Arabic.

Adamu (1978) further opines that Arabic is usually ranked among the top six of the world's major languages. As the language of the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, it is widely used throughout the Muslim world. It belongs to the Semitic group of languages which also includes Hebrew and Amharic, the main language of Ethiopia.

According to Ibileye (2020), around three hundred million people speak Arabic across the globe out of which over forty million people in Nigeria understand and speak it. With the dominance of Islam in northern Nigeria, Arabic has dominated all the other minority languages in the region. The language has also been accepted as the language of education as a course in the university in the north. Thus, Arabic has contributed immensely to the development of Nigeria as a nation because it has offered upliftment especially in the areas of religion, education, and identity.

Naming Procedures

The Hausas are a nation that has its own culture and traditions. As Africans, Hausas were not excluded from Western or colonial influences that came with the early missionaries. Like many other cultures, the Hausas are careful when it comes to the selection of personal names. People who are responsible for the choice of names will always consider the events and behaviour observed at the time of name-giving. The circumstances surrounding the birth of a child provide the necessary information for the selection of an appropriate name. A favourable event and/or behaviour will be rewarded with a better name, while unfavourable circumstances or behaviour elicit a name that likewise has negative connotations.

The Hausa naming ceremony is the first rite of passage in the life of any individual and to express the notion of transition from "nature" to "culture" brought about by naming. Hausas describe the event in terms of an equestrian image. A name is likened to a horse's bridle, *sun a linzami ne* ("a name is a bridle"), and the naming-ceremony to the initial breaking in of an unschooled horse. Just as a bridle is first placed on a young horse (*sa masa linzami*) so likewise is a name placed upon a young child (*sa suna*).

Fowler (2012) opines that there are values and expectations attached to naming systems. It implies that there are meanings and

logic attached to naming practices. The process is hardly arbitral. On the day of the naming ceremony the child is brought out of its mother 's hut (*daki*) by the midwife and carried on her back across the compound (*gida*) to the hut's entrance (*zaure*) where the males of the compound are assembled with the Imam (Muslim religious leader) for the actual name conferral. The chosen name is first whispered into the child's ear by the Imam and then he announces it to those present. Once named, the child is carried across the threshold of the *azure* (hut's entrance) into the area in front of the compound (*gari*) to be shown to the assembled friends and well-wishers. The name is then proclaimed loudly by the waiting *maroka* (professional beggars) for all present to hear, and after the proclamation the infant is returned to its mother. From this brief account of the stages in the naming ceremony the major spatial zones of the Hausa dwelling unit, *daki, gida, zaure,* and *gari* are used to symbolize the stages of this rite of passage: separation, transition, and incorporation.

Personal Names

Names are not merely a means of identifying their referents but can reveal the sociocultural norms of a particular speech community. It is a fact that personal names in Nigeria have varied meanings. While some have descriptive meanings that is, they are a short-hand description of the bearers, others have connotative meanings that is, an underlying meaning different from the ordinary or surface meaning of the name.

A study on Ninzam names by Ibrahim (2110) for instance makes sense because they acquire their meanings by virtue of societal conventions that bestow on them the various statuses. Ibrahim's (2010) study analyses names in Ninzam language of Kaduna State and the study examines the semantics of names in Ninzam language and one fundamental assumption in the work is that Ninzam names are part of Ninzam language, and they possess meanings. The study, moreover, recognises that Ninzam language

is dependent on the culture that designs the inner structure of the language.

Personal names among some communities bring to the fore the beliefs and philosophy of the people. Abubakari (2020) explores the personal names of the Kusaal speech community of Northern Ghana, and the study focuses on the pragmatics and semantics of names. It, therefore, argues that names are not given to Kusaas' infants in a vacuum without any underlying philosophy. Names among the Kusaas are meaningful and underpinned by the religious beliefs of the people. It is these beliefs that make it possible to have Kusaas bearing traditional, Islamic or Christian names.

Labaran (1990) conducts a semantic study of names in Hausa language and results to the assumption that Hausa names are part of Hausa language, and they have sense just like any other lexical item in the language. Labaran recognizes that the name a child is given is determined by the circumstances prevailing at the time of its birth. As such, Hausa names are part of Hausa language, and the language is part of the Hausa culture.

Similarly, Mohammed (2023) posits terms of address and forms of reference in *Roko* poetry among the Hausa in Ghana. The study which is a literary onomastic one argues that the Hausa philosophy of the world and their cultural practices showcase the Hausa understanding of the world and therefore reveal the real identity of a Hausa infant through the names he or she bears. This leaves us in no doubt that names are chosen carefully and consciously to reflect the worldview of the people.

On the other hand, Emetu (2009), studies the sociolinguistics of names in Ohafia language of Abia State. In the findings, the study identifies that context determines the meaning of a word (names) or utterance as harnessed by society. Thus, Emetu acknowledges

that Ohafia names have sense, denotative as well as contextual meanings; and as such, Ohafia names are part of the Ohafia culture.

On the contrary, some writers strongly deny that names have meaning and see names as mere labels that simply distinguish individual bearers. Names here are signs which consist of a signifier and a signified with a relationship of signification linking them, Haack (1978). Moreover, the reference of a name is contextually dependent. Thus, to Chizoba (2009) names are believed to be inter-linguistic elements that are context bound. Meaning as a phenomenon is more determined by the social context than the lexical context, and names are social phenomena. This explains why in the Hausa tradition status, sex, religion, age, among others may influence names and the naming practices. Therefore, names to some extents do reflect the social context in which they are acquired.

From the foregoing, it has been ascertained that African personal names are imbued with conceptual-pragmatic implications which reflect personal and societal experiences, ideologies, values, and norms. African names have communicative significance which provides information about past occurrences, experiences, and the circumstances of birth.

One thing though is quite common with all these studies above and that is the fact that names have meaning, and they are context-bound. This and many other interesting issues are attractive and relevant to this study. First is the fact that the studies above look at names in some indigenous languages in Nigeria and Ghana, and second, they have taken a step further to find out the striking issue that help to determine the meaning of names in these languages – the issue of culture. However, these studies differ from the study at hand because this is on the task of finding the shades of meaning associated with Hausa names in Hausa language. They may all

share similarity in the quest for meaning, but the language and the peculiar shades of meanings associated with Hausa names as well as the cultural differences give a disparity.

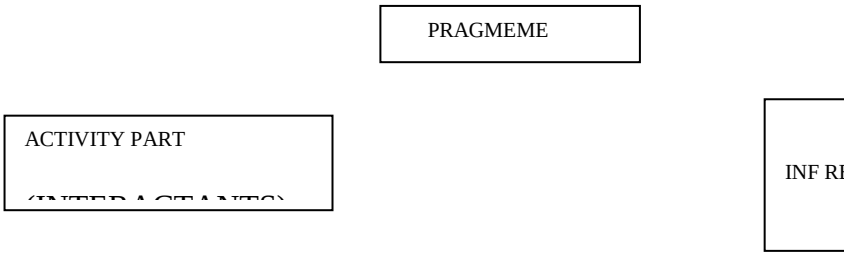
Theoretical Framework

Pragmatic Act Theory

Speech-act theory is a communication activity (locutionary act) defined with reference to the intentions of speakers while speaking (illocutionary force of their utterances) and the effects they achieve on listeners (perlocutionary effect). Searle (1976) agrees with some of Austin's classifications of illocutionary acts, disagrees with some and goes ahead to rename those to which he is indifferent, offering additional in-roads into the explications and understanding of acts being performed with speech. It is noteworthy that, although Austin's (1962) Speech Acts theory and the improvement on it by Searle (1969) and other scholars provide the springboard for Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts theory, Mey departs radically from Austin's and Searles' positions. The main flaws that Mey identifies in Speech Act theory concern the absence of a theory of action and the consideration of the presence of a performative verb in an utterance for the act in it to count. He maintains that a pragmatic look at people using language shows them as performing pragmatic acts. As such, one may conclude that since all human beings are language users, all are engaged in one form of pragmatic acting or another. Therefore, notwithstanding a user's noncompliance with rules, all language usages are right, so long as the users know what they are doing.

In the rational reasoning of Mey (2001), acts performed with language need not be tied to specific illocated speech or word, but to the entire utterance. To him, there could be several acts being performed implicitly or explicitly by the interactants (speaker and the hearer) in a discourse. Such generalized pragmatic acts are what Mey subsumes under the concept of pragmeme. A pragmeme, according to him, is the totality of the verbal activities

contained in the body of a text or utterance, the variants of which are practs, allopracts or ipras. Mey's Pragmatic Act Theory is illustrated below:



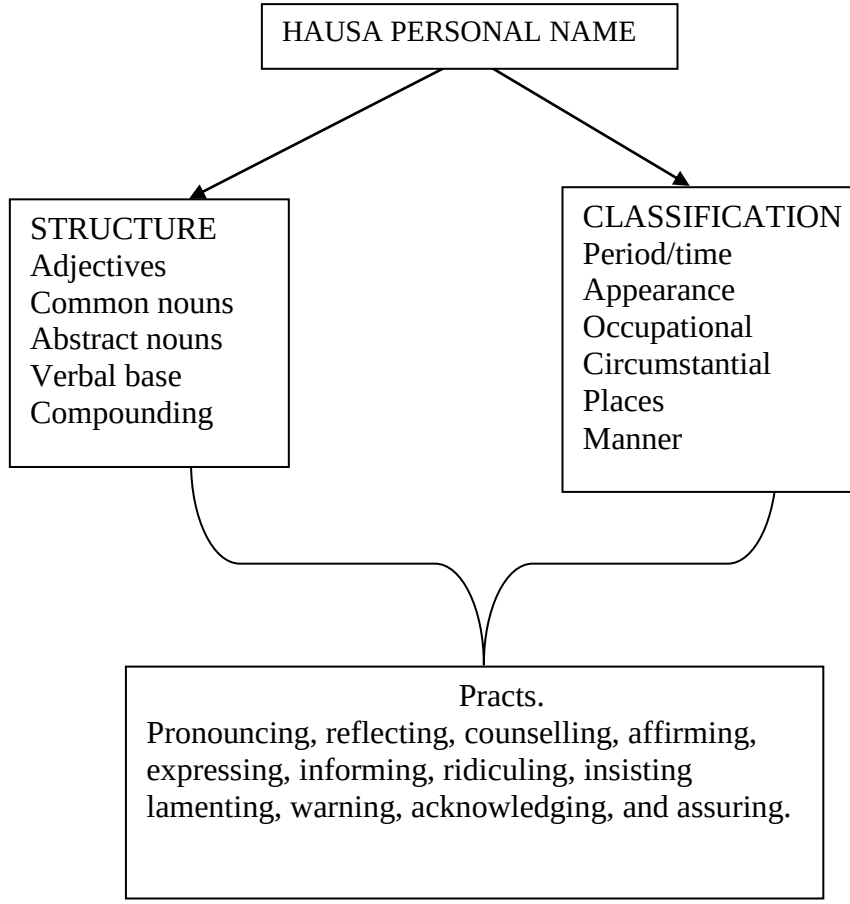
M'… SPEECH ACTS
INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS
CONVERSATIONAL (DIALOGUE) ACTS
PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTS (EMOTION)
PROSODY (INTONATION, STRESS)
PHYSICAL ACTS:
BODY MOVES (INCL… GESTURES)
PHYSIOGNOMY (FACIAL EXPRESSIONS)
(BODILY EXPRESSIONS OF) EMOTIONS
…
Ø (NULL)

PRACT
ALLOPRACT

Adopted from the concise encyclopedia of pragmatics

In the above diagram, various abbreviations to the right have to do with textual features, such as INF for 'inference,' REF for 'establishing reference,' REL for 'relevance,' VCE for 'voice' SSK for 'shared situation knowledge,' and MPH (for 'metaphor').The symbol 'M' denotes a 'meta pragmatic joker' – that is, any element that directs our attention to something happening on the meta pragmatic level. For instance, changing the order of the words in a sentence may tell us something about the relative importance of the transposed elements.

In this direction, the researcher provides a schema to guide the understanding and explication of Hausa names by content and context in the society. The modified scheme for this study is below



The modified schema indicates that the pragmeme which is Hausa personal names bifurcates into two: The Structure Part and the Classification Part. The structure part illustrates how the name is put in use. It encapsulates the action of the words (speech acts) and introduces the emotional form involved during the child's birth. Naming is a medium of communication between distinct levels of people concerning a particular person or community. So, it is pertinent to introduce how Hausa society represent their beliefs by stating them through the verbal pragmatic, the narrative method and how the names are being communicated to the people. For this reason, the context is important in the interpretation of meaning because the contextual aspect of communication determines the effectiveness of the communication. The interaction of the interactants results in the classification part and the names that determine the structure part results to the pract. It is also pertinent for interlocutors to be conversant with the contextual features required and they include inference (INF), reference (REF), Shared Situation Knowledge (SSK). They will aid the understanding of the names.

This pragmatic act modified schema is useful in some ways. First, it broadens the view of what acts may be performed by language whether it be verbal or physical or both. Secondly, the notion is an extension of speech act theory in that it is not constrained by rules or grammar. While speech act has traditionally been seen as being performed by a sentence utterance, pragmatic act is not limited to the sentence level. It can also be performed by a word, a turn of speech, or by sustained discourse. ''While speech acts, when uttered in contexts, are pragmatic acts, pragmatic acts need not be speech acts'' (Mey, 2001). The notion of pragmatic acts frees language-as-action theory from the constraints of speech act theory since ''action'' is no longer seen as being performed solely by certain types of language use but understood as occurring more pervasively. Thirdly, the scheme of the pragmeme is flexible since it is based not on rules but predicated on choices—a variety of

ways in which communicative action can be performed and in which textuality shapes a pragmeme and is shaped by it.

Methodology

The paper collected some Hausa personal names including male and female names. The data for this paper were collected from both primary and secondary sources with the use of random sampling technique to select the interviewees who are native speakers that were either the givers or bearers of the names. Pragmatic act theory was adopted as the analytical tool to unveil the pragmatic significance of the names. One hundred and ten names were purposively selected for balanced analysis. The names were treated as a locutionary act and grouped according to circumstance, value, or belief before it was explained and analyzed in terms of pragmatic acts. The qualitative descriptive method was considered the most suitable design for the study because it aided in the analysis of the pragmatic acts and different speech prototypes related to the selected names.

Data Analysis

Classification of Hausa Personal Names

Hausa personal names are symbol of socio-cultural values of the people. This means from a person's name in Hausa, the circumstances of the birth or the period the child was born or even to some extent the social background and the physical structure can be easily identified. The Hausa names are classified in the following order:

1. Names indicating manners.
2. Names indicating circumstances.
3. Names indicating physical appearance.
4. Names indicating occupation.
5. Names indicating period/time.
6. Names indicating places.

Table 1: Names Indicating Manner

In the Hausa naming tradition, infants are named by considering the manner of the child's birth. Examples include:

Name	**Sex**	**Gloss/Manner**	**Pract**
Mairiga	Unisex	The bearer/owner of shirt	Informing
Jamila *Jamilu*	Female Male	Beautiful	Reflecting
Munira *Muniru*	Female Male	Light	Pronouncing
Hassana/Husseni *Hassan/Hussani*	Male Female	Names for twin	Informing

In Hausa naming practices, an infant is named following the manner of birth of the child. For instance, the name *Mairiga* is a Hausa traditional name that indicates the manner of birth. The word *riga* in Hausa means shirt and *mai* means owner, so the combination *Mairiga* means the owner of shirt. This name is given to a child who is born with a placenta. The term means the owner of shirt. This name is not gendered.

Two children born in single birth labour are traditionally called *Tagwaye*. However, the Hausas long standing relationship with Islam, the twins are given Islamic/Arabic names which, with the passage of time, have metamorphosed into Hausa traditional names for twins. In a naming ceremony, the Hausa infant male elder twin is named *Alhassan/Alasan/Hassan* which means good whereas the younger male twin is called *Hussain/Husseni* which is diminutive form of *Alhassan*. In the situation where both are females, they are called *Husena* and *Hasana*, respectively. On the other hand, if the twins are of different sexes and a male is the elder one and the female is the younger, they are named *Alhassan/Alasan /Hassan and Hussena,* respectively. The reverse is the case if the elder one is a female, they are named *Hassana and Husseni*. The data,

however, indicate a shift, albeit a gradual one, from the Hausa traditional naming practice of twins to modern ones such as *Jamila, Jamilu*, beautiful, *Halisa* and *Hulaise*, pure, *Muniru* and *Munira*, light.

Table 2: Names Indicating Physical Appearance

Physical appearance of a child is another way of naming a child culturally in Hausa. Some of the names belonging to this category include:

Name	Sex	Gloss/Feature	Pract
Kurma	Unisex	Deaf child	Informing
Gooshi	Unisex	A child born with bald forehead	Ridiculing
Gajere *Guntuwa/Gajeriya*	Male Female	Short	Ridiculing
Kumatu	Female	A child born with big cheeks	Expressing
Fari *Fara/Y fara*	Male Female	Fair	Reflecting
Tsiriri *Afiruwa*	Male Female	Slender child	Ridiculing

The above names are Hausa names with some physical features the children exhibit. Such physical features include the height, skin colour, body size of a child, the shape of the head etc. as seen, some of the names are gendered with irregular gender markers such as *Gajere*, a male short person and *Gajeriya* for a short female person. Some of the names are neutral while some are gendered without the use of gender markers. A typical example is *Tsiriri*, a slender male and *Afiruwa* a slender female. The name *Kumatu* is used exclusively for a female with big cheeks. One thing worthy of note is that these names are not given in a grand style naming ceremony held by the Hausa when a *sunanyanka* (the slaughtering name) is being given. The names are spontaneous response to the Hausa culture. Therefore, these names are acquired later in the child's life as some of the physical features do not show immediately after the child is born.

Table 3: Names indicating Circumstances

This is a factor that relates to the peculiar situations of delivery of children among the Hausa people. Usually, names given based on the birth circumstances describe the physical condition of a child at delivery. Hence, a name is given to indicate this uniqueness. Some of the names are gendered while some are not. These names include:

Name	Sex	Gloss/Occasion	Pract
Shekarau *Shekara*	Male Female	A child born after one year of pregnancy	Assuring
Talle	Male	A child's mother died during birth	Lamenting
Audi	Male	A boy whose father died after his birth	Lamenting
Dantune *Tuni/Tune*	Male Female	A child whose parents lost hope of giving birth or give up for another birth.	Assuring
Ayashe	Female	A female born that has been abandoned	Counselling
Doogara	Unisex	A surviving child after all siblings died	Counselling
Bakwai	Male	A child born at a seven-month pregnancy level	Informing
Gambo	Unisex	A child born directly after twins	Informing

These names are based on or reflect the situation in which the new child is born. This may relate to the situations, expectations among others as it is believed that African people chose personal names that address to a range of circumstances that were relevant at the time of the child's birth. For instance, a child born during the economic boom of her parent is called *Tawada/ Yalwa/Goshi* 'rich.'

Table 4: Names Indicating Time/Period

These are names that indicate the time of birth (in the daytime or at night) as well as a certain period or season a child is born. The days, weeks and seasons are calendars around which the traditional Hausa society structured its activities, just like any other society, ancient or modern. In the case of the Hausa, however, events in the seasons were often commemorated in the naming process-serving both as a reminder of the immediacy of the time of birth, as well as diary of the event. The following are examples of names based either directly on time of birth, seasons or an event that

characterized a season as presented in the table below. People can easily identify the period of one's birth from the name he bears in his category. Examples of such name include:

Name	Sex	Gloss/Occasion	Pract
Sallau *Tasalla*	Male Female	A child born on Id Day	Expressing
Sammaka	Unisex	A child born early in the morning	Pronouncing
Anaaruwa *Marka*	Male Female	A child born while it is raining	Pronouncing
Ciitumu	Male	Child born at the harvest time	Informing
Taroro	Female	A child born during beans or groundnut harvest	Informing
Kassu	Unisex	A child born on a market day	Informing
Duma	Male	A child born during the harvest of pumpkin	Informing
Aaadare/Bako/Bakundare	Male	A child born at night	Pronouncing
Geero	Male	A child born during the harvest of millet	Informing
Daamana	Male	A child during farming season	Informing
Shuka	Unisex	A child born during sowing of seed	Informing
Ci-Dawa	Unisex	A child born during the harvest of corn	Informing

Since Hausa people are mostly farmers, they give special consideration to any farming season. Periodic names show a particular season or period in which a child is born. It gives information on how and when a child is born. Also, these names not only indicate the farming tradition of the Hausa society, but also their dietary preferences. Grains acquired later such as rice and wheat do not figure in the Hausa naming convention based on crops, considering their peculiar, waterlogged needs. Related to names given according to the farming season are those given according to the day of the week. These names are presented in the table, 'day names' below:

Day Names

Among the Hausas, the name of the day of the week in which the child is born is normally given to the child. These types of names depict the day on which the child is born, they are predictable and gendered like most Hausaised names. The child is unofficially

called by the name by the parents and even the members of the community because such names are predictable. They are gendered names with the male ones preceded by the prefix '*dan'* meaning 'the son of' serving as a male gender marker in most cases apart from the name *Balaraba*, a male Wednesday born whose male gender maker is '*e*,' this is not predictable. Categories of such names include:

Name	Sex	Gloss/Day	Pract
Danladi *Ladi*	Male Female	Sunday born	Expressing
Dantani/Litini/LitiTani	Male Female	Monday born	Expressing
Dantalata *Turai/Baturia/Talatuwa/Talata*	Male Female	Tuesday born	Expressing
Balarabe *Balaraba*	Male Female	Wednesday born	Expressing
Danlami *Lami*	Male Female	Thursday born	Expressing
Danjumma *Jummai/Jumma/Jimma*	Male Female	Friday born	Expressing
Danasabe *Asabe*	Male Female	Saturday born	Expressing

Table 5: Names Indicating Occupation

Parental occupations also portray a key role in giving personal name in Hausa society. Parents give names to their children to reflect their occupation. Such names include:

Name	Sex	Gloss/Occupation	Pract
Keeso/Ankeesoo	Male	A child born in the family of musicians/poets	Informing
Baushi/Maidaji	Male	A child born in the family of hunters	Informing
Abaamu/Karoo	Male	A child born in the family of musicians/poets	Informing
Maadugaa/Maaduguu	Unisex	A child born in the family of caravans	Informing
Maitamaa/Zugau/ Mazuga	Male	A child born in the family of blacksmiths	Informing
Noomau/Shibkau	Male	A child born in the family of farmers	Informing

Makwashe	Male	A child born in the family of fishers	Informing

Table 6: Names Indicating Places

Across Hausa cultures, names and naming systems are embedded with the notion of identity of places and collectives, the social formation and changes were undergone by particular people, and all these are pathways into the epistemology of the people. The Hausas have a habit and tradition of naming their places after the well around which they are temporarily settled. From this, there is a tradition among them in which they adopt the name of their towns or villages they grew up as part of their names or name a place after a particular person. For instance, *Aliyu Kontagora, Aminu Kano*, among others. Some of the names revealed in the data are presented below:

Name	Sex	Gloss/Derivation	Pract
Kontagora	Male	Lay down your gourds	Informing
Dandawudu	Male	Men who act like women	Affirming
Abuja	Male	*Abubakar Ja*- red *Abubakar*	Acknowledging
Suleja	Male	*Sule Ja* -red *Sule*	Acknowledging
Damagaram	Male	Eat meat	Affirming

Some of the names above are coined from another's name while some are from a phrase that is common to the place. Abuja for example was coined out of Hausa language and derived from a person called *Mallam Abubakar Ja* translated to *Abubakar the Red* because he was fair in complexion. However, *Abubakar* was abbreviated to *Abu* with *Ja* to become *Abuja*. On the other hand, the names such as *Damagaram* was coined from two words "*Dama-jerem*" from Kanuri language namely "*Da*" meaning edible meat from animals like cattle, goat etc. and "*Jerem*" meaning eat. So, *Dama-jerem* means to eat meat.

Structure of Hausa Personal Names

Beside the sociolinguistic interpretation of Hausa personal names, they also exhibit an interesting linguistic structure worthy of study. Hausa names like various words in Hausa language have different structures. Some of the Hausa names are derivations from adjectives and common nouns while others are compound words

with a verbal base. However, some content of Hausa names when deeply analysed are beyond a single word, they can be seen as phrases as well as sentences in language. In this section, such instances are examined as:

7. Common Nouns as Hausa Personal Names
8. Adjectives as Hausa Names
9. Abstract Nouns as Hausa Personal Names
10. Hausa Names with Verbal Base
11. Compounding in Hausa Names

Table 7: Common Nouns as Hausa Personal Names

Common nouns are some of the sources of traditional naming in Hausa. Many of these names are for insulting or mocking purposes. It is not given to a child from birth but at a later stage. Some examples of common nouns that serve as personal names in Hausa include the following:

Name	Sex	Gloss	Pract
Ango	Male	Bridegroom	Affirming
Baawa	Male	Slave	Affirming
Waaro	Male	An insect	Affirming
Azumi	Female	Fasting	Expressing

Table 8: Adjectives as Hausa Names

The function of an adjective in grammar is modification of a noun. In Hausa naming culture there are some adjectives that serve as personal traditional names. These types of names are given to children based on their physical natural structure. The following examples are adjectives in word classification of Hausa.

Name	Sex	Gloss	Pract
Doogo	Male	A male child born with a tall body structure	Acknowledging
Arama	Female	A smallish female child	Acknowledging
Arami	Male	A smallish male child	Acknowledging
Gajeere	Male	A male child born with a	Acknowledging

		short body structure	

Table 9: Abstract Nouns as Hausa Personal Names

Abstract nouns are also part of the linguistic category that play a role in giving personal names in Hausa society. These categories of names are mostly given to female child to express their importance and beauty to the world. Examples of such names include:

Name	Sex	Gloss	Pract
Nasara	Male	Success/Victory	Expressing
Goodiya	Female	Blessing	Expressing
Ni'ima	Female	Prosperity/fertility	Expressing
Wadaata	Female	Wealth	Expressing

Table 10: Hausa Names with Verbal Base

Name	Verb	Sex	Gloss	Pract
Saadaa	*Saada*	Female	Cause to meet	Expressing
Jimr-au	*Jure*	Female	Endure	Acknowledging
Barau	*Bari*	Female	Leave	Affirming
Tun-au	*Tuna*	Female	Remember	Acknowledging

These categories of names are derived from some transitive verbs of Hausa. Apart from the sociolinguistic content of the names, their root is a transitive verb. Examples include:

Table 11: Compounding in Hausa Names

Name	Class of words	Sex	Gloss	Practs
Shaaraana	Verb + noun	Male	A male child born in sunny period	Acknowledging
Bagoobirii	Adj + noun	Male	A Gobir man	Affirming
Anauta	Adj + noun	Male	A last male child	Affirming
Bazamfaree	Adj + noun	Male	A Zamfara man	Affirming

Conclusion

In Hausa culture, names are significant and reveal a great deal about both the giver and the recipient. According to the study, most of the names had philosophical meanings since they express the name setters' worldviews. The perspective of the language user fundamentally shapes how they use language. This viewpoint is reflected in the language used, which is naming. Additionally, it

was discovered that names represent seasons, causes, and events such as joy, grief, worth, appreciation, surprise, among others. It is said that "*Ni'ima*," a kid born with an abundance of fertility and prosperity, opened the door for success and the birth of other children. In Africa, names play a significant role in shaping cultural beliefs. Furthermore, the study found that names might convey, affirm, express, acknowledge, and perform a variety of other acts. For example, "*Nasara*" signifies the one who triumphs, and carries out the deed of asserting God's victory at the moment of birth. The study has shown that names have additional connotations beyond their literal translations and represent a peoples' identity. Given that names convey the circumstances or meaning behind them, the connection between names and the Hausa peoples' philosophy was highlighted to express cultural values. This study takes the stance that more research on Hausa names is still necessary even though the groundwork has been established.

The study recommends that names and naming should consider cultural nuances and the circumstances surrounding the individual's birth. Beyond this, the continued and intentional use of cultural names for naming by Africans is crucial to the survival of Indigenous languages in Africa. Native languages will survive because of this.

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