IMPLICATIVE DENOTATIONS OF CIGOGO PERSONAL NAMES

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Abstract

This study takes an onoma-pragmatic approach to investigating Cigogo personal names, in order to identify the determinants of the choices and the implications involved in naming. Personal names are considered here to be utterances like any other, whose understanding depends heavily upon their situational interpretation, based on both general and specific information shared by speakers and surrounding the utterance. Therefore the data in this study were analysed with general background information to retrieve the relevant etymologies, and with specific information to identify their possible implicatures. The findings have shown that Gogo personal names derive etymologically from lineage, seasons, socio-economic activities, calamities, surroundings, birth circumstances and celebrities. All these collectively carry two implicatures: either recording and recalling, or wishes and prayers. The sources of personal names reveal not only how this community reckoned time before the introduction of literacy, but also how they have worshiped. Of further interest is the recording of birthdays, family history and clan legacy by Cigogo speakers through personal names. Some of the names – particularly the ancestral ones – were used as good will prayers and wishes bestowed upon the younger generation. These observations may inspire further study of personal naming, a subject area of pragmatics which so far has not received sufficient systematic attention. Further, the pragmatics of African personal names illuminates one dimension in the complex transmission of cultural and historical information in oral knowledge traditions.

Keywords: *Cigogo, onomastics, onoma-pragmatic, personal names, naming systems, Tanzania*

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Introduction

Studies in African languages have revealed that personal names bear far more meaning than their referential role in distinguishing one individual and another. In African contexts, personal names function as store rooms for their owner's culture and history (cf. Agyekum 2006, Chauke 2015, Ncube, Dhlamini and Moyo 2013). This being the case, personal names in African families are not arbitrary; rather they echo the events, instances and circumstances which prevailed at the time of the bearer's birth (Buberwa 2017, Rubanza 2000, Seeman 1983). Naming as an action further denotes the name giver's intentions.

The ways in which Gogo speakers bestow a name to newly born children, and the implicatures attached to those names, are a fruitful store of ethnographic, normative and empirical historiography and cultural heritage. Various studies illuminate the patterns depicted through personal naming, especially in African societies (cf. Buberwa 2017, Ncube et al. 2013), as reflecting social and cultural structure, personal names in African languages have been studied in various disciplines including anthropology (Chauke 2015, Mandende 2009, Swilla 2000), sociolinguistics (Agyekum 2006, Buberwa 2017), semantics (Asheli 2017, Muzale 1998), morphology (Marjie-Okyere 2015, Mwangi 2015, Rubanza 2000), and in morpho-semantics (Baitan 2010). These studies clearly concur that personal names are not chosen haphazardly, because they have associated connotative meanings.

However, there are no studies that focus on the varied implications attached to names for the individual subjective agents who intentionally bestow a personal name, as well as for the individual who bears that name as a crucial aspect of his or her identity. This study investigates the implications associated with personal names of the Gogo people, by identifying the individuals' shared basis for a name's selection. It emerges that a personal name not only benefits the one who is named through its referential and vocative functions (Muzale 1998: 38); the benefit of the name also advantages the one who has bestowed it.

Cigogo speakers in Tanzania

Historically, Cigogo speakers are claimed to be Hehe by origin (Mnyampala 1954); they migrated to Dodoma, Tanzania, in groups at different times. Rigby (1967: 640) adds that the Gogo are a collection of "eighty-five named patrilineal clans" who found themselves in central Tanzania after migrating from their homelands. Migrating groups are traditionally identified

as *milongo.*[2] Despite the fact that Cigogo speakers were originally Hehe, there is no literature to account for the change of their indigenous identity – i.e. from Hehe to Gogo.

On their arrival in Dodoma the Gogo encountered different cultures to which they assimilated in order to mask their own. For instance they adopted the Maasai cultural practices of boring their earlobes and uprooting two of their lower incisors, *nyhende.*[3] Moreover, they practiced circumcision ceremonies as a way of preparing the young generation to become family heads (Mnyampala 1954: 4-5). This means they would adopt new cultural aspects of the ritual to modify their own traditional protocols, in order to differentiate themselves from their ancestors.

Cigogo is one of the Bantu languages indigenously spoken in Dodoma, Tanzania (Mnyampala 1954, Rigby 1967). It is classified together with Kagulu (North Sagara) in zone G.10 where Cigogo is specifically coded G.11 (Guthrie 1948, 1967). The study conducted by the Languages of Tanzania Project (2009) [hereafter LoT] emphasises that Dodoma is the homeland of Cigogo, with a total population of 818,768 speakers scattered in all districts as shown in table 1 on the next page.

Although the Cigogo language shows strong statistics in terms of numbers of speakers and geographical expanse, it is inadequately documented linguistically. Nurse and Phillipson (2003: 4) report that Niger Congo and Bantu languages are scarcely described, appearing mainly in word lists "often of dubious quality." This claim may apply to the Cigogo language more aptly than to other languages. The insufficiency in the documentation of Cigogo has been regarded already (Chipalo 2012), following Rugemalira's (2009: iii) observation that written records about this language were only available in the form of an "unpublished 483 word list compiled by Mwalimu William Mlagulwa." In any case, before Rugemalira's (2009) publication, the scant records written about Cigogo did not constitute formal linguistic documentation. However, one can trace written records about Gogo in Mnyampala (1954) and Rigby (1967), both of whom have written extensively about their culture. Several years later, missionaries published a bible and a hymn book in Cigogo (The Bible Society of Tanzania 2002, Diocese of Central Tanganyika 2015). Yet none of these latter publications address any linguistic aspects of Cigogo. Therefore the data analysis presented here, grounded in

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[2] 'Milongo' (mulongo in singular) in (Rigby 1967) means explicitly Hehe clans who migrated in groups from southern Tanzania via Udzungwa mountains and settled in Dodoma.
[3] Nyhende is a hole remaining after uprooting the incisors, the hole was useful when a person was seriously sick. The caregivers would use it to feed the patient.

the frameworks of onomastics and pragmatics, begins to chart a linguistic territory as yet unexplored.

Table 1: Cigogo Speakers in Dodoma per District (LoT 2009: 12)

S/N	District	No. of Cigogo Speakers
1.	Chamwino	227,936
2.	Dodoma (M)	171,625
3.	Mpwapwa	170,784
4.	Kongwa	123,317
5.	Bahi	118,234
6.	Kondoa	6,872
Total		818,768

The onomastic approach to studying personal names

Crystal (2008) defines the term 'onomastics' (also onomatology) as a branch of semantics which deals with the etymology of proper names (names established for people and places). Al-Zumor (2009) as cited in Asheli (2017), argues that any etymological description of proper names belongs to either one or the other of main two branches of this genre: anthroponomastics (or anthroponymy) which deals with person names, and toponomastics (or toponymy) which deals with place names. Subscribing to the view that names can be studied from diverse disciplinary perspectives (Agyekum 2006), the present study deals with the etymology and implicatures of Cigogo personal names.

In the same vein, Lusekelo (2015) remarks that the term 'onomastics' belongs more broadly within the domains of study covered by anthropology, history, linguistics as well as folklore, since the ritual linguistic activity of naming reflects the socio-cultural values of the speech community in which it is performed. It is from this point of view that the current study builds on the assumption that proper names have a specific origin and specifiable reason for their existence. That is to say, every name given to any person or place has a specifiable causal origin as well as social considerations associated with it. Further, it is important to note that proper names violate the arbitrariness of human language; that is, the principle that there is no natural connection between a linguistic sound string or written symbol and the actual object to which it is assigned and to which it refers (as a 'name' denotes the particular person or place being so named). Given this widely recognised observation, this study is intended to illuminate the motives influencing the choice of a

certain name. Also the implicatures attached to that particular name will be examined.

Relevance theory in studying personal names

According to Yus (2010), the relevance theory was first developed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson in the mid-1980s, in order to study the relation between the pragmatics of linguistic communication and human cognition (Allott 2013). Since speakers of a language often tend to utter meanings that they do not explicitly intend (Bach 2012), relevance theory was developed to propose parameters which can be used to recognise a speaker's intention. It is feasible to apply these parameters in order to discover the shared recognition of the significance of a speaker's utterance. This strategy is based upon the common-sense assumption that, in most circumstances, the main goal of any verbal communication is the shared recognition of a speaker's intention. By extension, it can be assumed that meaning can be conveyed within a speech community without the speaker's explicit, deliberate and conscious intention on every occasion that the utterance is made. Names, particularly personal names, are among the linguistic signs that human beings use to communicate a multiplicity of messages simultaneously. This being the case, the theory of relevance seems clearly worth applying to the study of personal naming, especially in African languages where the significance of the cognition of the individual linguistic agents directly involved in the naming activity has heretofore been overlooked.

As pointed out earlier, many scholars (including Agyekum 2006, Asheli 2017, Baitain 2010, Buberwa 2017, Muzale 1998, among others) have been analysing personal names; however the meaningfulness of names revealed in these studies does not rule out the possibility of speakers using the same names in another way. Bach (2012: 47) claims that sometimes "a speaker can say something without meaning it, meaning something else or nothing at all."

This indicates that regardless of its meaning, the same utterance can have more than one implicature. Similarly, despite the widely recognised meaning conventionally associated with a personal name, the same name can be given to different children and carry quite distinct implicatures. Asheli (2017: 24) gives as an example the claim that the name Nyerere (the first president of Tanzania) can be given to a child because, for instance, the child was born on the day Nyerere visited the child's home town or village. Or the name might be bestowed because the parents admired Nyerere and wished their child to follow his example. Or the name might be granted to honour a certain grandparent in the lineage called Nyerere, thereby naming the child

after that grandparent. Thus the same name readily carries three different implicatures within the same linguistic community.

Personal naming practices in African languages

Among African linguistic communities, many disparities have been noted in the way children's names are bestowed. Chauke (2015) reports that before colonialism, mothers in Tsonga families had the important responsibility of giving names. But during colonialism and thereafter, both paternal and maternal grandparents took the leading role. In contrast, Nyakusa people enact their patrilineal system through personal naming. This is why most of their names have the prefix 'mwa-' to mean 'child of X' (Lusekelo 2018: 52). This system is dominant in most of the African societies studied extensively, including Zulu (Ngubane 2013), Kuria, Iraqw, and Maasai (Asheli 2017), as well as Ruhaya (Muzale 1998). Ndali is reported to portray a quite different naming protocol whereby both lineages represented by the child's respective parents are given the right to bestow names (Swilla 2000). Further, many societies practice key ceremonies to highlight the act of name giving (cf. Mandende 2009, Matsatsi 2009, Asheli 2017).

Previous studies exploring personal names in African languages have shown that this aspect of social marking carries more inter-cultural similarities than it does differences, whereby the main difference concerns the structure of personal names (cf. Ncube et al. 2013, Agyekum 2006, Mandende 2009, Chauke 2015, Lusekelo 2015, Buberwa 2017, Lusekelo and Muro 2018, and others). The most recurrent feature of African naming is that it is not arbitrary; there are almost always significant reasons behind the deliberate choosing of a personal name. Most (if not all) of these studies have focused on the factors that determine or influence the choice of individuals' names, without exploring the broader implications of those choices.

Among the factors influencing personal name choices in African languages, morphological, semantic and sociolinguistic patterns have been studied extensively. Using the morphological approach, Marjie-Okyere (2015) reports that personal names in Babukusu demonstrate patterns of inflectional and derivational prefixes such as wa-/na- which are attached to word bases associated with events, things or noteworthy circumstances. Additionally these prefixes are associated with the gender of the name bearer, whereby wa- is reserved for males and na- for females. This phenomenon is also observable in Gikuyu where many personal names are derived from nouns, verbs and adjectives (Mwangi 2015). The internal structure of personal names in Gikuyu is comprised of a prefix and word bases from the different grammatical categories. This morphological structure of the inflectional or

derivational prefix and the word base in personal names has been similarly recognised in Ruhaya (cf. Baitan 2010, Muzale 1998, Rubanza 2000). None of these analyses provide a hint concerning the implications associated with personal names.

Other studies display various semantic patterns in personal names; for instance Muzale (1998: 38) identifies the personal and social relations among the Bahaya people, as well as "natural and supernatural phenomena" reflected in their given Ruhaya individual names. Among these semantic patterns in Ruhaya names, Baitan (2010) lists events and circumstances surrounding the birth, sequence, manner, time, place of birth, and other individuating characteristics. The same patterns are dominantly found in Kuria, Iraqw and Maasai languages according to Asheli (2017). Ncube et al. (2013) report a unique semantic pattern of names among Ndebele which dominated the colonial era in Zimbabwe from 1970 to 1982. But none of these rigorous morphological or semantic studies have explored the pragmatic aspects of naming as a significant collective activity within these linguistic communities.

Ngubane (2013: 170) notes that personal names are normally formed by adding the onomastic meaning (i.e. the implication) to the lexical or conceptual meaning of a particular name. For instance, considering the Ndebele scenario in the data collected by Ncube et al. (2013), the lexical meanings of the names *Siphilanzima* and *Zwelinzima* are 'we are surviving hard' and 'the country is burdensome', respectively. Implicatively, the Ndebele people born in a particular historical period were named in that way as a means of sustaining an informal political dialogue in an atmosphere that was infused with antagonism at the time.

In contrast, a sociolinguistic approach to the study of implicatures in naming reveals patterns that are both varied and similar across languages. Agyekum (2006) argues that the Akan (the largest ethnic group in Ghana) are named by customs that very deliberately contrast with European societies, where people are consistently named after their fathers' last names. The Akan assign names to their children in light of many sociolinguistic factors including the circumstances of their birth, parental attitude to the birth, and the infant's own individual attributes. These observations suggest that the intentions and thinking that determine the naming of a child cannot be universalised; instead such factors always should be interpreted culturally and contextually. From a more formal standpoint, the study of naming can only be accurate when it is done by, or under the guidance of, indigenes of the language under study, and always with reference to their given context.

In this vein, Buberwa (2017) has identified several sociolinguistic factors which influence the selection of personal names in Kiswahili language as spoken in Tanzania. These factors include speakers' religious beliefs, circumstances surrounding the birth, serial order of birth in the family, family ancestors, physical attributes and traits, parents' expectations or wishes for their child, celebrity names, and events occurring on the birth day. Similar to the Akan, these factors show that personal names in Kiswahili are not given haphazardly. There are always traceable, deliberate reasons behind the choice of every Kiswahili personal name.

A similar sociolinguistic account is reported by Lusekelo (2018), who argues that Nyakyusa names are mostly meaningful in association with birth circumstances and the relationships between the bestower of the name and supernatural powers. This is similarly reported by Muzale (1998), who adds that the opportunity to confer a personal name is used to commemorate important historical birth events, and to show faithfulness to spiritual powers.

So far, the studies mentioned illuminate only those contextual factors that clearly influence the selection of a particular name, and the consequent meanings associated with those factors, but not the implicatures attached to the personal names themselves. In contrast, an onoma-pragmatic approach investigates the factors influencing selection of a name (i.e. onoma) and then identifies the non-logical implications, i.e. the implicatures, of that selected name (i.e. pragmatics).

Gathering background knowledge essential to naming in Cigogo

Applying relevance theory to determine the implicatures of choosing particular personal names in Cigogo, this study follows the suggestion from pragmatics that a correct understanding of an utterance requires associating the utterance with general background knowledge as well as specific information surrounding the episode of the utterance's baptismal episode (Bach 2012, Wilson and Sperber 2006). Sperber and Wilson (1996: 194) put it clearly that "the implicatures of an utterance are recovered by reference to the speaker's manifest expectations," in order to "achieve optimal relevance." The working assumption here is that the background and specific information invoked will help to identify the etymological and the implicational details of a personal name. Basically qualitative in nature, this study involved working with a representative list of 210 names, and collecting pragmatic data by conducting interviews and making direct observations in the field (Christensen, Johnson and Turner 2015). All the informants were residents of Mvumi Makulu village where the headquarters of Mtemi Mazengo, the chief of the Mvumi area, is located (Mnyampala 1954). In this way, the collected data achieved

the standard of Cigogo 'received pronunciation', that is, the variety of their language preferred and respected among the Gogo (Chipalo 2012).

With non-structured interviews, ten Cigogo elders were interviewed face to face. They were asked about the proper procedures to follow in bestowing a name in their community. They were asked about what important factors should be considered when choosing a certain name to a child. Researcher randomly picked names from the list of 210 as samples, asking what influences would provoke parents to choose such a name.

Naming practices in Gogo society

Unlike many African traditions where it is mandatory to perform special ceremonies when naming a child (cf. Agyekum 2006, Lusekelo 205, Matsatsi 2009, Swilla 2000), the Gogo have neither clearly prescribed nor uniform naming procedures to which they adhere. There are neither special rituals, ceremonies nor specific persons whose role it is to bestow a name to a newly born child, as is widely the case in other societies. Contrary to other Bantu languages like Ndali (Swilla 2000) and Sotho (Matstatsi 2009), there is no special occasion for conferring a child's name in Cigogo. Nevertheless Cigogo speakers take very seriously the time in an infant's new life when naming takes place. The baby is given a name after the healing of its navel (i.e. after the umbilical cord drops off). This is similar to the practice of the Ndali (Swilla 2000). This practice is figuratively expressed as *'kaya/nyumba yela'* which literally means 'the house has become clean'; so parents or any relative can suggest a name to the child. Moreover, as practised by the Sotho (Matsatsi 2009) this is also the time for well-wishers from outside the household to visit the new-born, and where possible to suggest a name to the baby. Whoever suggests the baby's name is supposed to give a present to accompany the name, an item which would reflect in some way the reason for offering a name and the implications of the name chosen.

Although Gogo observe patrilineal kinship, it is not consistently reflected in the bestowal of personal names. Mnyampala (1954: 60) demonstrates that it is possible for one child to bear two names, each coming from either parent. No matter what, the choice of name should carry a deliberate implication; and the name itself should reflect the reason why it was chosen.

In many African societies, including Gogo, the activity of bestowing personal names is compelled by numerous intentions (cf. Agyekum 2006, Asheli 2017, Buberwa 2017). These include heralding family lineage (descendants), seasons of the year, socio-economic activities, and events, the manner of the pregnancy's conception, circumstances of the birth, parents'

63

social status, birth place, sequence of siblings, and celebrity. All these driving forces are grounded on two main implications: recalling or recording for the community, and prayers or wishes for the child.

Recalling and recording history through personal name-giving

Writing technology is quite a recent invention in human history (Dobrovolsky and O'Grady 1977). Denham and Lobeck (2013) report that only twenty five per cent of the world's languages have writing systems, and that writing is the most reliable and useful means of documentation. Therefore, before and even after this invention, about seventy five per cent of the world's languages use different alternative strategies to recall and record their life issues, major events and experiences. For instance, Ncube et al. (2013) found that Ndebele reacted to British rule through individuals' selections of personal names. Also Asheli (2017) concludes that some Kurya names tell about communities in contact, which were once embraced and were later repelled. Comparably the Gogo use personal name choices to recall and record their history, experiences, important socio-economic events and activities.

Clans and ancestral names are highly valued in Cigogo; thus they ascribe great importance to recording and recalling them. Giving a Gogo child a grandparent's name (whether alive or deceased) has great significance. Firstly, such names are considered to be a dedication to those grandparents. Secondly, giving the young generation those names constitutes an important aspect of preserving the clan's history. There is a belief in Cigogo that whenever lineage names are ignored, the ancestors demand any newly born baby to be given their names. As with the case in Tsonga, flouting the ancestral demand for preservation of their names is signalled by unreasonably frequent crises and virulent incidents of sickness (Chauke 2015). Mnyampala (1954: 61) observed that Gogo witch doctors were called upon to use their divination techniques (*cisangu*)[4] for diagnosing the source of sickness and crises. It emerged that, independently, they all had discovered a certain deceased relative's demand that the sick baby be given that ancestor's name.

These considerations indicate how important lineage names are in Gogo communities. Therefore, among the favourite names that parents have for their children, there should be at least one from their family elders or their ancestors. Such names are commonly known among Gogo as *'itagwa*

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[4] Cisangu is a traditional way the Gogo witch doctors used to diagnose the source of sickness or any misfortune of a person. It is practiced by the witch doctor who is believed to have communication with supernatural powers telling him/her the causes of sickness or misfortune and the possible solution.

lye nhili' which literally means 'a gruel name' but in reality it is an ancestral name bestowed upon a person during childhood. This is similar to Akan birthday names which apply automatically to everyone (Agyekum 2006). The incidence of having more than one name is likewise reported to prevail in Hadzabe (Lusekelo 2015).

Sometimes personal names in Gogo record or recall the time of one's birth. In this respect the findings show that Gogo people use seasons of the year and annual socio-economic activities and events as temporal benchmarks. In other studies, names referring to the chronology of birth events are collectively called temporonyms (cf. Agyekum 2006, Asheli 2017). The data in this study suggests that before the introduction of literacy, Gogo parents recalled their children's birthdays through the names bestowed to them. Among the ready references for recording birthdays might be the season prevailing at the time, or the dominant socio-economic occupation or significant activity concurrent with the birth. Table 2 consists of some names referring to seasons of the year.

Table 2: Cigogo Common Personal Names Associated with Seasons of the Year

S/N	Cigogo personal names	Sex	Etymology	Associated meaning
1.	Matonya	Male	*tonya* 'rain'	Born in the rainfall season
2.	Mamvula	Female	*mvula* 'rain'	Born in the rainfall season
3.	Mtonyi	Male	*tonya* 'rain'	Born in the rainfall season
4.	Nhonyi	Female	*tonya* 'rain'	Born in the rainfall season
5.	Nhonya	Male	*tonya* 'rain'	Born in the rainfall season
6.	Mbeleje	Female	*ibejele* 'millet or maize stalk'	Born during the harvesting season
7.	Lubejele	Male	*ibejele* 'millet or maize stalk'	Born during the harvesting season
8.	Chibahu	Male/ Female	*ibahu* 'sunny or dry season'	Born during the dry season
9.	Sanula	Male	*sanula* 'flower'	Born in the grain ear flowering season

65

Not only seasons of the year, but also the socio-economic occupations and significant events taking place for the family at the time of birth would help parents to recall their children's birth dates. These activities include settlement construction, agricultural activities, burial activities, local brew preparation, clearing the bush etc. Any of these might result in a child's given name. Table 3 lists some names referring to social and economic activities or events in Gogo society.

Table 3: Cigogo personal names associated with social and economic activities

S/N	Cigogo personal names	Sex	Etymology	Associated meaning
1.	Mazengo	Male	*zenga* 'construct'	Born during settlement construction
2.	Matembe	Female	*itembe* 'a roof of a Gogo house'	Born during settlement construction
3.	Mtyani	Male	*tyana* 'forge iron into weapon(s)'	Born during metal or iron forging activities
4.	Mahelu	Male	*ihelu* 'millet porridge mixed with malt for brewing'	Born during preparation of millet porridge mixed with malt for brewing
5.	Mnyasenga	Male	*senga* 'clear the bush'	Born during bush clearing activities
6.	Majimbi	Female	*ujimbi* 'local brew'	Born during preparation of or when there was local brew activities at home
7.	Ilima	Female	*lima* 'cultivate'	Born during farming activities
8.	Mlima	Male	*lima* 'cultivate'	Born during farming activities
9.	Malima	Male	*lima* 'cultivate'	Born during farming activities

Table 3: Cigogo personal names associated with social and economic activities *(Continued)*

S/N	Cigogo personal names	Sex	Etymology	Associated meaning
10.	Ulimile	Male	*lima* 'cultivate'	Born in the weeding season
11.	Nzuwa	Female	*zuwa* 'weed'	Born during weeding activities
12.	Chipanha	Male	*panha* 'sow/ plant'	Born during planting or sowing activities
13.	Ndudula	Female	*dudula* 'harvest'	Born during harvesting activities
14.	Nhwanga	Male	*twanga* 'husk'	Born during grain husking activities

In addition to referring to the seasons and socio-economic activities or significant events, Gogo used names referring to calamities, in order to fix in their recall and to permanently record their children's birthdays. The calamities mentioned here are those which resulted in enormous loss of human life or some blow to the community's welfare or survival. This can be attested even today, by asking a non-literate Gogo elder about his or her birthday. The most likely answer will involve mentioning a massive disaster (a famine, or war) which transpired at the time of birth. It is incumbent upon the one who asks the question to relate the mentioned disaster and the year when it happened. For example, during interviews with some Mvumi Makulu elders, *'Lihambaya, Mtunya* and *Machingo* were mentioned among the very famous famine disasters that had transpired in their region. Together with others in table 4, these famine calamities are confirmed as the most infamous ever experienced by Gogo society (Mnyampala 1954).

Regarding these calamities, children born during their duration were likely to be named 'Manzala' or 'Malogo', from the Gogo words *nzala* and *ilogo* meaning famine and calamity, respectively. Other names such as Mandeje, Madeje and Manzije (from the words *ndeje* and *nzije* respectively, meaning bird and a species of grasshopper) are given to people who were born during famines caused by pest infestations which ruined people's harvests.

In the same way, wars were used as benchmarks to name children, to recall infallibly the year of their birth. For instance 'Mlugu' or 'Malugu' are among the names collected from the field; these names come from the cognate *ulugu* which means battle, fight, or war. Hence it is likely that the bearers of these names were born during certain memorable conquests in their society's

history. This kind of naming suggests how the Gogo reckoned time before the introduction of literacy. The names reveal that sunrise, sunset, seasons of the year, socio-economic activities and significant events including traumatic calamities, indicate reference to times past more generally.

Table 4: Famous famine disasters experienced by Gogo society

S/N	Name of the famine	Period of existence
1.	Magubika	17th century
2.	Chonya-magulu	16th century
3.	Mazije	18th century
4.	Mtunya	19th century
5.	Makaputula	18th century
6.	Lihambaya	19th and 20th centuries

Correlatively, personal names are used to record or to recall other past events, experiences and circumstances surrounding a birth. Such important memories include how parents struggled for conception, the manner of delivery and the parents' status at the time. A close examination of Cigogo names reveals this practice of recording unusual events. There is no name in Cigogo that implies parents having no difficulty in conception. Rather, table 5 reflects names that mark noteworthy, out of the ordinary episodes such as the parents' undergoing medication for conception, the parents' encounters with public ridicule or embarrassment experienced before having a child.

Table 5: Cigogo personal names associated experiences before birth

S/N	Cigogo personal names	Sex	Etymology	Associated meaning
1.	Muti	Female	*muti* 'tree or drug'	The conception was after using herbs
2.	Miti	Male	*miti* 'trees or drug'	The conception was after using herbs
3.	Msekwa	Female	*seka* 'laugh'	Parent(s) were laughed at for staying long without getting a child
4.	Hepwa	Female	*hepa* 'despise or disregard'	Parent(s) were despised or insulted for staying long without having a child

Table 5: Cigogo personal names associated experiences before birth
(Continued)

S/N	Cigogo personal names	Sex	Etymology	Associated meaning
5.	Muhepwa	Male	*hepa* 'despise or disregard'	Parent(s) were offended or insulted for staying long without having a child
6.	Nyamhepwa	Female	*hepa* 'despise or disregard'	Parent(s) were offended or insulted for staying long without having a child
7.	Mbedegalo	Male	*bedegala* 'despise'	Parent(s) were offended or insulted for staying long without having a child
8.	Mojela	Male	*jela* 'try'	Parents tried a lot of treatments or medicines before conception
9.	Mojelwa	Male	*jela* 'try'	Parents were tempted by witch to miss children
10.	Mjelwa	Female	*jela* 'try'	Parents were tempted by witch to miss children
11.	Majelanga	Male	*jela* 'try'	Parents tried several treatments or medicines before conception

As listed in the subsequent table 7, there are personal names in the findings which reveal that the Gogo record and recall significant features of their physical surroundings. Personal names falling into this category are revealing about the linguistic community's locale and all things of importance in it. These include cattle, crops, production tools, weapons, trees, and geographical features surrounding Gogo communities, This category of names has a counterpart in the names popular among the Akan (Agyekum 2006) and among Kiswahili speakers (Buberwa 2017). Lusekelo (2015) adds that this category includes names that refer to one's homestead, economic engagements and environment, as is the case in Hadzabe society. It is not certain what is the specific purpose for recording or recalling physical surroundings through personal names in Cigogo, but Asheli

(2017: 68) claims that the Iraqw use their local wildlife (animal and bird) names to record "what transpired at the time an individual was born."

Table 7: Cigogo personal names associated with artefacts and physical surroundings

S/N	Cigogo personal names	Sex	Etymology	Associated meaning
1.	Mehozi	Female	*ihozi* 'tear'	Born simultaneous with death of a family member
2.	Mazika	Male	*zika* 'bury'	Born on a day a family member was buried
3.	Chililo	Male	*lila* 'cry'	Born simultaneous with death of a family member
4.	Makani	Male	*nghani* 'news/ information'	Born simultaneous with death news of family member
5.	Nyanzila	Female	*nzila* 'route, way or path'	Born while on the way to hospital or midwife
6.	Mjendi	Male	*jenda* 'walk"	Born on the journey
7.	Muhinzo	Male	*muhinzo* 'journey'	Born on the journey
8.	Mchiwa	Male	*ciwa* ' orphan or poor'	The birth was preceded or followed by death of a parent
9.	Mechiwa	Female	*ciwa* ' orphan or poor'	The birth was preceded or followed by death of a parent
10.	Ndekwa	Female	*leka* 'leave behind'	The birth was followed by death of the mother
11.	Nhizwa	Female	*tiza* 'run away'	The birth was followed by death of the father
12.	Maganigani	Male	*ganiciza* 'surmise'	Uncertainty of the birth
13.	Mmaje	Male	*mmaje* 'knife'	Born by medical surgery

Table 6: Cigogo personal names associated with birth circumstances

S/N	Cigogo personal names	Sex	Etymology and associated meaning
1.	Ndogowe	Male	*ndogowe* 'donkey
2.	Mahembe	Male	*ihembe* 'horn'
3.	Msele	Male	*msele* 'a kind of tree'
4.	Nhundulu	Male	*nhundulu* 'a kind of thorn tree'
5.	Nghongolo	Male	*nghongolo* 'a big male cow, bull'
6.	Hengo	Male	*hengo* 'a traditional bush knife'
7.	Chipalo	Male	*ipalo* 'a hoe normally small due to over usage
8.	Mabalwe	Male	*ibalwe* 'a weed'
9.	Mabwe, Chibwe	Male	*ibwe* 'stone'
10.	Nhembo	Male	*nhembo* 'elephant'
11.	Sonyo	Male	*sonyo* 'an arrow'
12.	Mgoha	Male	*mgoha* 'a spear'
13.	Nzogolo	Male	*nzogolo* ', a male chicken, cock'
14.	Chamhene	Male	*mhene* 'a goat'
15.	Swaga	Male	*swaga* 'a species of snake'
16.	Mgaji/ Magaji	Male	*igaji* 'sugarcane'
17.	Mgunda	Male	*mgunda* 'farm'
18.	Mavunde	Male	*ivunde* 'a cloud'

Bestowing wishes and prayers by naming

There is a belief among many African societies that a name predicts or determines the owner's future or destiny (cf. Asheli 2017, Muzale 1998). To that effect, Muzale (1998: 23) found speakers in Ruhaya society reminding each other of the significance of name choices through the proverb: '*eibara libi liita nyilalyo'* ('a bad name destroys its owner'). Similarly, Asheli (2017) warns all name-givers to be careful when selecting and bestowing names. The Cigogo data reveals a pattern of names which carries the bestower's wishes or prayers to the person so named. Names in this category normally come from grandparents (lineage names), celebrities, or other proper names that carry positive and popular connotations.

Apart from recalling a clan's history, lineage names have a role in conferring prayers and wishes upon members of one's family. Towards this end, the names of grandparents who were successful in their life are commonly inherited through bequeathing their name, in the hope that their

success will be imbued in the young generation. The Gogo wish and pray for the good behaviour of their children and its rewards reaped in their adulthood, by attributing to them the name of an ancestral role model. Also, parents will take the name of an admired celebrity for their child, believing that the name induces the success. This resembles how Lusekelo (2018) and Muzale (1998) observed in Nyakyusa and Ruhaya societies, respectively, that names related to God are believed to safeguard their human bearers from supernatural evil influences and forces. Observe the Gogo names assumed to bestow good fate upon their bearer in table 8.

Table 8: Personal names associated with wishes or prayers

S/N	Cigogo personal names	Sex	Etymology	Associated meaning
1.	Masawo	Female	*sawo* 'wealth'	Expected to become rich
2.	Mgoli	Male	*ugoli* 'wealth'	Expected to become rich
3.	Msaji	Female	*saga* 'grind grains into flour'	Expected to be good grinder
4.	Mnyamhala	Male	*nyamhala* 'a court elder'	Expected to be a court elder
5.	Mtemi	Male	*tema* 'rule'	Expected to be a ruler of chief'
6.	Mnyamazi	Male	*nyamala* 'be silent'	Expected to be cool or polite
7.	Mganga/ Maganga	Male	*ganga* 'cure or treat'	Expected to become a doctor
8.	Mwalimu	Male	*mwalimu* 'teacher'	Expected to become a teacher
9.	Mdimi	Male	*dima* 'graze'	Expected to take care of others as a pastor
10.	Matewa	Male	*itewa* 'herd of cattle'	Expected to have cattle

Since before the introduction of Christianity and Islam, Gogo people have worshipped their departed predecessors, and held in highest esteem their clan and family ancestors, including their grandparents. They normally wish or pray for a bright future for their young generation by giving them

lineage names, invoking the remembrance of these forebearers. Of the names surveyed in this research, none were associated with God or supernatural powers directly, as is the case in many Bantu languages, including Nyakyusa (Lusekelo 2018), Machame (Lusekelo and Muro 2018), Ndali (Swilla 2000), Ruhaya (Muzale 1998), and Kuria, Iraqw and Maasai (Asheli 2017), among many others.

It is arguable, therefore, that in Cigogo the lineage or ancestral names connote supreme or supernatural power because they are the names used to pray, and to wish a bright destiny. The fact that these names are highly valued among Cigogo speakers is reported by Mnyampala (1954: 61), who noted that it was a routine prescription of witch doctors consulted about a child sickness. Due to this, it became routine for a child to bear two or more names including *itagwa lye nhili* (lineage name) in order to counter supernatural powers and to ward off the threatening effects of illness and bad fortune. Thus personal names are chosen in Cigogo as instruments for making wishes and for offering prayers.

Personal names in Cigogo are associated with history, experience, and cultural values, as well as hope for the future. The names associated with historical references are paramount and seem to be among the tools Cigogo speakers have continued to use, as a means to preserve their family lineages and the remembrance of birthdays since before the invention of literacy. This means parents recall events of the past, including the birthdays of their sons or daughters through their names.

Time keeping is also accomplished through naming: recurrent events such as sunrise and sunset, seasons of the year, as well as significant socio-economic activities such as sowing and harvesting, and one-off calamities that function as singularities not to be forgotten. All these provide reference points in time. All names associated with such calamities, with seasons of the year, with recurrent big chores and renewable projects, enable parents to readily recall the birthday of the bearers of the names. This practice of using names to recall time and as a form of historiography has been found to be common among many African societies (cf. Agyekum 2006, Buberwa 2017, Ncube et al. 2013). Generally, then, personal naming is among the ways that historical accounts and collective memory in African oral traditions are kept in perpetuity.

Thus collective memory as kinship history, as well as individual identity including birthday recollection, are given priority through the deliberate choosing of Cigogo personal names. Names in Cigogo record and store the lineage of individuals' families. It was noted that Gogo people prefer

73

bestowing their sons and daughters with the names of grandparents (*itagwa lye nhili*) among other past relatives. Such names convey dedication to kinship heritage, which remains central to Gogo identity. Mnyampala (1954: 77) advises that:

> … [I]t is better we use our clan or family names instead of Christian or Islamic names because many Gogo speakers who are either Christians or Muslims use religious names only. For instance, George Zakaria or Ramadhani Hussein. Such people cannot be recognised as Gogo or a certain tribe because they do not use their clan names. This is a mistake. [Author's translation]

From that advice one can see how lineage names are important among Gogo. They not only identify one's clan but also detail one's family history. As put by Duranti (1997), there is connection between language and the social dynamics and relationships and structures in which it is used. Similarly, personal names in Cigogo carry both the bestower's and the bearer's experiences.

Apart from history and experience, Cigogo names also reflect cultural values. In this respect the data reveal names which show the way they live in their families and societies. There are names associated with socio-economic activities such as farming, burial ceremonies, brew preparation and surroundings. This is also a phenomenon in Akan (Agyekum 2006) and Hadzabe (Lusekelo 2015) among many African societies. One can generally conclude that personal names in African societies are among the key aspects which store their culture.

Conclusion

The findings presented here show a diversity of motives at work when choosing a particular personal name. Specifically, every personal name has its own etymology and associated denotation. With respect to the relevance theory employed in this analysis, personal names can be analysed as utterances which carry implications like any other utterance used in communication through a natural language. Personal names in Cigogo can be found to carry multiple meanings, reflecting a range of intentions of the individual speaker bestowing upon a person their name for the first time. From all the data presented here, two patterns in the pragmatic significance of naming a child emerged: the choice of name serves as an indelible stamp for recording and recalling, and thereby re-emphasising, important aspects of the past; and a chosen name serves as an engraving of a wish or prayer for the child's future.

This analysis demonstrates that a personal name in Cigogo, as in other African languages, is an important datum to consider in diverse approaches

to studying the socio-cultural, religious, historical, geographical and practical perspectives of a linguistic community. So it would be no exaggeration to say that personal names form a useful component in the system of indigenous public education since pre-colonial times. Choosing a name forms part of the dissemination of knowledge in oral traditions, insofar as personal names are store rooms for keeping historical records and for sustaining the shared beliefs and identity of a linguistic community.

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