Obolo Anthroponomastic Trends

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Abstract
Anthroponyms communicate the many preferences of their owners (or givers) in terms of real life objects, actions, features and beliefs of the people.The Obolo are a people with systematic naming style. The name given to an Obolo is not disconnected from the events that surround the birth of the child, the family's existence and the immediate society. In line with this, this paper established the trends upon which Obolo personal names are given. To actualize this, the researcher and his assistants used direct observations at naming ceremonies, chieftaincy installation ceremonies, etc. where names are used for various purposes. Also, he gathered data through introspection, personal interviews, extensive library work for materials on anthroponomastics, etc. the findings of the showed that among the anthroponomastic trends of the Obolo is Theophoric Obolo anthroponyms, Monumental Obolo Anthroponyms (MOAs), Testimonial Obolo Anthroponyms (TOAs), Ideational Obolo Anthroponyms (IDOAs), Solicitous Obolo Anthroponyms (SOAs), Relational Obolo Anthroponyms (ROAs), Admonitory Obolo Anthroponyms (ADOAs)and so on.
Keywords: *Monumental Obolo Anthroponyms, Testimonial Obolo Anthroponyms, Ideational Obolo Anthroponyms, Solicitous Obolo Anthroponyms, Relational Obolo Anthroponyms,*

1. Introduction

Naming is purely an exclusive preserve of humans. Names drive from prominent features on human experiences, existence, belief system, culture, worldview, the landscape; such as seas, coastlines, rivers, lakes, mountains, or valley, or other natural features such as animals, birds, flowers or minerals. In the view of Emeka-Nwobia (2016), "names are not just arbitrary labels but are socio-cultural tags that function as communicative tools. They carry a variety of semantic, pragmatic and socio-cultural information, and mete out the ethos of the people" (p. 1).At the moment, a name is given to an object; the language of the name-giver provides both the elements needed and the structure to join them together. The elements consist of semantic and morphological units – units of meaning and form – called *words* and *morphemes*. The former are the smallest units that may occur independently, the latter the even smaller particles, like suffixes and affixes forming part of or joined to them. The structure is provided in the form of a set of rules called *grammar*, that defines the way the language can be used to convey (*communicate*) meaning. The meaning they convey goes beyond the semantic level but extends to pragmatic and even to sociolinguistic sense.

Naming is a specific linguistic act that is linked intimately with values, traditions, hopes, fears and events in people's lives. Names equally communicate the many preferences of their owners (or givers) in terms of real life objects, actions, features and beliefs (Rosenhouse, 2002). The word chosen to identify a child has enormous symbolic power; the name not only identifies, it also sends a message, expresses a hope or prayer, perpetrates cultural or religious tradition (Alford, 1987). Crystal (1999) sees onomastics as a branch of semantics that studies the etymology of proper names. It is a multi-disciplinary field that has occupied the attention of philosophers of language, anthropologists, linguists and ordinary people. This buttresses the fact that all over the world, onomastics and indeed anthroponomastics are relevant to language and communication and a good source of information storage and dissemination.

In Africa, naming according to Mbiti (1969) is a "… big social event" (p.213). This is because names execute multiple functions. For the Twi or Akan of Ghana, personal names are given as a way of finding out evil doers. The Nuer people of Sudan used personal names to define people's relationship with other members of the community. Makondo (2009) notes that proverbial names are very common among the East Africans whether they are the Swahili of Tanzania, Kenya, Somali or Comoros Islands, or other Bantu stork, the Swahili people have a proverb that says "if you inherit a name you must also adopt its affairs". The Bantu culture, according to Neethling (1995), reflects the socio-cultural circumstances of the group or clan. As far as they are concerned, a personal name represents the name of the individual. The Ovimbundu of Angola, for instance, have women's name that convey the thought patterns of a people as in Vihemba—a child whose birth was difficult and required the use of charms.

The Obolo also known as Andoni are found in the eastern fringes of the Niger-Delta, the language is a member of the Lower Cross language cluster. They have a history spanning over a thousand years (Ejituwu, 1991). The system of naming among them is not disconnected from their culture and tradition, portraying their worldview. Just like some other African societies as established by Makondo (2009) have factors that greatly influence the selection of personal names; some of which are: names given to commemorate a deceased relative or friend, names that make reference to the physical features of the child at birth, the birth temperament or health milieu, specific names for twins and the following children, names which refer to the 'state of mind' of the parents, quarrelling and friction within the family, etc. Therefore, the main objectives of this paper are to find out whether there are trends in Obolo personal names as well as establish the trends upon which Obolo personal names are given. The names under study are based on the Ataba dialect. However, the convention for tone marking follows the tradition of leaving the high tone unmarked.

2. Literature Review

For African societies, naming is a systematic activity. It is not done just for the sake of it, rather; it aims at communicating virtually all that characterizes human existence. Batoma (2006) observes that the meaning of African names is summed up in a cluster of three layers of meaning. These are; the lexical meaning, the onomastic meaning which is based on each tradition of naming practices and the socio-pragmatic meaning – thiscenters on the cultural knowledge of the onomastic code of conduct, the interpersonal relationships of the partners of the onomastic communication, and the situational contexts that engender that communication.

The study of anthroponyms have over the years won the attentions of linguists, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologist, language analysts and even ordinary people; this is largely because every human being and creature; living and nonliving has or should have a name. A person's name is part of the referent, with which he/she is addressed or referred to. Name draws affinity between the signifier and the signified. The essence of the thing it represents or identifies lies on the name that it bears. Not to have a have a name is not to exist (Emeka-Nwobia, 2016). Agyekum (2006) notes that names are purely referential and are only considered as arbitrary labels that refer to certain signified entries. Therefore, the signifier and the signified may not share certain intrinsic qualities, and this accounts for why two people bearing the same name may behave differently. This stance aligns with de Saussure's characterization of linguistic signs as arbitrarily connected to their referent. Rymes (1996) connectedly asserts that names have no functional correlation with culture. Emeka-Nwobia (2016) notes "while it may to be said that there is no functional relationship between names as arbitrary label and the behaviour of the bearer, it is pertinent to note that proper names in Afikpo Igbo has a generational storied past"(p.96). McPherron (2009) notes that "In Book 13 of The Analects of Confucius, Confucius responds to the question about how to govern appropriately by commenting on the importance of using names properly. (p.532) He notes, 'When names are not used properly, language will not be used effectively; when language is not used effectively, matters will not be taken care of . . . Thus, when the exemplary person puts a name to something, it can certainly be spoken, and when spoken it can certainly be acted upon'" (Ames & Rosemont, 199, p.162). This shows a stiff connection

between names, language and the people's culture. Names carry the meaningful language of the people.

There are various categories of anthroponyms in Africa (Ubahakwe, 1982, p.30). He recognizes the following: God and Deities such as: *Chukwu*(God), *Ofo*(ritual object); The good and virtuous such as: *Ike (*strength), *Ngozi*(Blessing); Kinship such as: *Nne*(mother); Natural processes/phenomena such as: *Ndu*(life), *Onwu*(death); Social entities/concepts such as: *Ibe*(social group), *Mba*(people/town); Calendar such as: *Eke, Orie, Oge*(period/time); Titles such as: *Eze*(King); Evil and non-virtuous such as: *Agha* (war); Natural physical objects such as: *Ugwu*(*hill*), *Osimiri*(stream); Parts of the body such as: *Isi* (head), *Ukwu*(leg); Material assets such as: *Ego* (money) and Occupation such as: *Uzu*(smith), *Nta*(hunt)

Also, Makondo (2009) notes that there factors that influence personal names. Among those factors he recognizes names given to commemorate a deceased relative or friend, names that make reference to the physical features of the child at birth, the birth temperament or health milieu, specific names for twins and the following children, names which refer to the 'state of mind' of the parents, quarrelling and friction within the family or with in-laws or neighbours, names capturing the market-day, weather conditions, day of the week, or month of birth, names which refer to birth order and sex, etc.

Ayuwo (2014) observes thatwithin the social factor of Belief System (which also includes protection) is**Theophoric Anthroponyms** as a Semantic Category. He further categorises the events leading to the realization of theophoric anthroponyms into two broad groups referred to as sub-semantic categories - Dedicatory and Majestic. In the study, each sub-semantic category showed that OAs could be a dedication, either to the supreme God or to a tutelary deity. These are referred to as **Majestic Theophoric Obolo Anthroponyms** (MATOAs). MATOAs have communication such as the divine deity, or portraying the mercy, protection or praise of God or of a deity. It is this reference to deity that makes such Obolo anthroponyms (OAs) theophoric anthroponyms.

3. Method of data collection/ Instrumentation

Data for this study were collected from Ataba and its environs between December 1996 and July2004. The researcher and his assistants made use of diverse sources to collect data for this study. A good number of the data were collected through introspection – the researcher's knowledge of the language and the people, personal interviews, extensive library work for materials on anthroponomastics and related areas of focusas well as burial/Funeral programme handbooks. Also, direct observations were made at naming ceremonies, chieftaincy installation ceremonies, libation and masquerade displays – where names are used for various purposes.

The major instrument used for this study is interview. This interview characterized both structured interview for literate native speakers and unstructured interview for illiterate native speakers resident in Ataba.

4. Obolo Anthroponomastic Trends: An Analysis

The analysis in this paper will focus on the semantic categories and also the various social factors or categories under which OAs appear. These trends as available in Obolo anthroponyms are examined below.

4.1.1 Dedicatory Theophoric Obolo Anthroponyms (DETOAs)

DETOAs communicate clearly the Obolo belief system. It is through OAs of this nature that one can find the Obolo man's love for the worship of the supreme God or other deities. Such names always have *Owaji* (God) attached to them as can be seen in example 1.

a.	Guñ	+	Òwàjì	⟶	Guñòwàjì
	Child		God		
	'God's child'				
b.	Enê	+	Òwàjì	⟶	Enêòwàjì
	Person		God		
	'Person of God'				
c.	Òwàjì	+	okàñ	⟶	Òwàjìokàñ
	God		he has		
	'God owns'				

`The examples above are Dedicatory Theophoric Obolo Anthroponyms (DETOAs). They are given in reference to the supreme God. On the other hand examples 1(d) refer to other deities

d.	Guñ	+	ogbòlòdo	⟶	Guñogbòlòdo
	Child		ogbolodo (God of thunder)		

4.1.2   Majestic Theophoric Obolo anthroponyms (MATOAs)

The communication import of MATOAs is that they give insights into the Obolo belief system and of protection received from God. Several other communication events considered here are divine majesty, divine reliance, divine mercy, divine protection and divine praise. For each of the sub-heads, few examples are provided to illustrate them.

Divine Majesty

These types of OAs typify the majesty of God and communicate the fact that the Obolo believe in the greatness of God, and that all things are under the control of the almighty. Consider examples (2):

a.	Òwàjì	+	mi	+	imìn	⟶	Òwàjìmiimìn
	God		be		Bigness (greatness)		
	'God is great'						
b.	Òwàjì			+	Ogàk		Òwàjìogàk
	God				Surpasses		
	'God is supreme'						

Divine Reliance

There are OAs that carry in them information reflecting the Obolo man's reliance on God. Also such names have embedded in them provision and protection additional information connoting provision and protection as can be seen in example 3 below:

a.	Òwàjì	+	mowâ	⟶	Òwàjìmowâ
	God		present		
	'God is present'				
b.	Ùche	+	Òwàjì	⟶	Ùcheòwàjì
	Gift		God		
	'Gift of God'				

Divine Mercy

Many names were found that convey divine mercy. These OAs tell of the mercy of God or a deity in the life of an individual. In example 4 is a few of such names that portray divine mercy. It should be noted that they also convey grace and love.

a.   Ǹsàn   +   Òwàjì   ⟶   Ǹsànòwàjì

      Grace   God

      'Grace of God'

b.   Ìma   +   Òwàjì   ⟶   Ìmaòwàjì

      Love   God

      'God's love'

c.   Ikàñ   +   ǹsàn   ⟶   Ikàññsàn

      He has   mercy

      '(God) has mercy'

Divine protection

OAs exist that communicate the notion of protection which comes from the Supreme Being or deity. This communication event also shows that the Obolo have what is sometimes called extra-mundane communication mode (Wilson. 1998). The implication is that the Obolo people believe in a higher being and would not fail to reflect such belief in their personal names. Here are some examples (5)

a.   Òwàjì   +   oki   +   bàn   ⟶   Òwàjìokibàn

      God   he do   guide

      'God guides'

b.   Òwàjì   +   òsùm   +   èmì   ⟶   Òwàjìòsùmèmì

      God   he keep   me

      'God is my keeper'

c.   Adumu   +   obèm   ⟶   Adumuobèm

      Adumu   he guard

      'Adumu guards'

Divine Praise

The Obolo person shows his gratitude to the divine by praising, thanking or appreciating God for His kindness. These OAs indicate some level of indebtedness to God by man. The few examples in 6 below communicate such levels of thanksfulness.

a.   Òwàjì   +   onirọ   ⟶   Òwàjìonirọ

      God   he has done

      'God has done well'

b.   Bọnọ   +   Òwàjì   ⟶   Bọnọòwàjì

      Praise   God

      'Give God praise'

c.   Ugbana   +   Òwàjì   ⟶   Ugbanaòwàjì

      Blessing   God

      'God's blessing'

4.2   Testimonial Obolo Anthroponyms (TOAs)

Testimonial Obolo Anthroponyms (TOAs) a semantic category found in the social factor called FORTUNE. TOAs convey testimonies of the fortune of parents of bearers of such names. TOAs have a bearing with information, revolving round the birth of a child and the joy it brings. Embedded in TOAs are interpretations such as Temporary Barrenness, Preference for Male Children, and Unexpected or Circumstantial Births. Each of them is presented with examples in an attempt to describe their communication import and the implications of such names.

TOAs on Temporary Barrenness

The meaning of some testimonial names in Obolo suggests that the parents of bearers of such names may have been childless for a while. These are also reflected in additional prayers or cry for help as in the example (7).

a.   Òwàjì   +   înọ̀   +   m̀bere   ⟶   Òwàjînọ̀m̀bere
      God   heard   plea
      'God has heard my prayer'

b.   Òwàjì   +   înọ̀   +   èmì   +   idà   ⟶   Òwàjînọ̀midà
      God   hear   my   voice
      'God has heard my cry'

c.   Kpeyakà   +   ìchàk   +   èmì   ⟶   Kpeyakìchàkèmì
      not again   laugh   me
      'I will not be a laughing stock again'

TOAs on Male Preference

There are certain names that bear information on the preference of male children. The desire to have a male child in every family is important in Africa. The Obolo people are not left out of this desire. After all, it is believed that the lineage is preserved through male offspring. TOAs communicate the deep - seated desire of the Obolo to have, or are pleased with having a male child as exemplified in 8.

a.   Oriè   +   kêmì   +   mma   ⟶   Orièkemma
      Male   me   like
      'It is male that I prefer'

b.   Ìbelek   +   ògùtè   ⟶   Ìbelekògùtè
      Resembles   father
      'She looks like her father'

c.   Oriè   +   mô   +   nùñ   ⟶   Orièmônùñ
      Male   will   come
      'A male child will come'

TOAs on Unexpected Sex of a child

Testimonial Obolo Anthroponyms (TOAs) also communicate an expression of unexpected sex of a child. From some of the OAs in this category can be deduced the state of mind of the namers at the time such names were given. A close scrutiny of the OAs in 9 will add fillip to this claim.

a.   Ǹkakere   +   ibe   +   ìrèeyi   ⟶   Ǹkakereibîreyi
      I did not expect   is   this
      "I did not expect that this is the one'

b.   Mbọ̀kọ̀   +   itàp   ⟶   Mbọ̀kọ̀itàp
      I receive   it

'I receive it (like that)'

c.   Gêlek   +   iwàn   ⟶   Gêlekiwàn
         Any   good
         'Whichever is good (for me)'

TOAs on Circumstantial Birth

Testimonial Obolo Anthroponyms (TOAs) have been found to communicate circumstantial births. Circumstantial because the deliveries were taken at places that are least expected or the children were born in places other than their homes. It is also circumstantial if the baby was born when it was least expected, that is before the expected date of delivery. TOAs also communicate the position of a bearer in the line of children in a family. As can be seen in example (10):

a.   Okpan   +   gùñ   ⟶   Okpangùñ
         First (male)   child
         'First male child'
b.   Ewe   +   ile   ⟶   Eweile
         Market   big
         'Large market'
c.   Oron   +   ìjà   ⟶   Oronìjà
         Bush   small
         'Small bush'

4.3   Relational Obolo Anthroponyms (ROAs)

 Relational Obolo Anthroponyms (ROAs) have the Home as its social factor. Names in this category communicate one form of relationship or another. There are two sub-themes that characterize ROAs: **Kinship** and **Matrimony.**

ROAs on Kinship

ROAs on kinship have three communication events namely motherhood, fatherhood and relational. Names in this category are given mainly in association with reincarnation. Such names point to the fact that the Obolo believe strongly that dead relatives do return to the world through other people. The returnee may be mother, father or other relatives in the family. These OAs are communication tools in the extra mundane mould as they show interaction with the dead. Example (11) is apt for the communication events in ROAs.

a.   Ugà   ⟶   Ugà
         'Mother'
b.   Ǹte   +   ògu   +   ugà   ⟶   Ǹteògugà
         Father   of   mother
         'Mother's father.'
c.   Ulòk   +   ǹgwañ   ⟶   Ulòkǹgwañ

         Relation   relation
         'A relation'

Matrimonial ROAs

Matrimonial ROAs are harbingers of communication events, such as friendship, affection, value and resemblance. Some respondents are of the opinion that when a couple has lived together for some time they tend to resemble themselves so, such names are used. In the same vein children who look like their parents may be given such names as well. Example 12 suffices for the moment.

a.   Unìnì   +   ògu   +   nwà   ———————⟶   Unìnìògunwà
        Friend   of   wife
        'The friend of (the) wife'

b.   Ejìt   +   ògu   +   olom   ———————⟶   Ejìtògolom
        Chest   of   husband
        'The husband's heart'

c.   Ìkpòkò +   ore   +   ugòt   ———————⟶   Ìkpòkorugòt
        Wealth   is   in-law
        'Wealth is (the basis) for good in-laws'

4.4   Solicitous Obolo Anthroponyms (SOAs)

Names that fall under Solicitous Obolo Anthroponyms (SOAs) encode information on the experience of namers. They fall under the semantic category Solicitous derived from the social factor of Bereavement. This means that such names have death – **'Mkpa'** as their focal point. Names found in this category c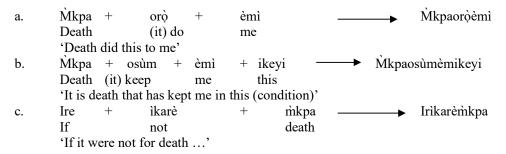ould be a plea with death, complaining of what death has done; a defiance of death; and, sometimes, just an indication of the repugnance of namers or parents to death and its wicked acts. The namers of this type of OAs are in one way or the other soliciting with the ever present death that they believe is responsible for the situation in which they found themselves. In the sections following, the different aspects of SOAs shall be treated one after the other.

SOAs on Plea with Death

The Obolo people through the names they bear make pleas with the ubiquitous death. Some of the more frequent names are given in example 13.

a.   M̀kpa   +   sòsò   ———————⟶   M̀kpasòsò
        Death   please
        'Death, please (stop)!'

b.   M̀kpa   +   nrìañ∏ +   òwò   ——————⟶   M̀kpanrìañòwò
        Death   I beg   (of)   you
        'I plead with you, death'

c.   Èrien   +   ñ∏a   +   ikà   +   chep   ——————⟶   Èrieñ∏aikàchep
        Name   my   not   lost
        'May my name not be lost'

***SOAs* on** *Complaints about Death*

It can be argued that as a result of death's refusal to heed the plea, man decided to complain to the harshness of death. The complaints are not to any one in particular as exemplified in 14.

a.   M̀kpa   +   orọ̀   +   èmì   ———————⟶   M̀kpaorọ̀èmì
        Death   (it) do   me
        'Death did this to me'

b.   M̀kpa   +   osùm   +   èmì   +   ikeyi   ——————⟶   M̀kpaosùmèmikeyi
        Death   (it) keep   me   this
        'It is death that has kept me in this (condition)'

c.   Ire   +   ìkarè   +   m̀kpa   ——————⟶   Irìkarèm̀kpa
        If   not   death
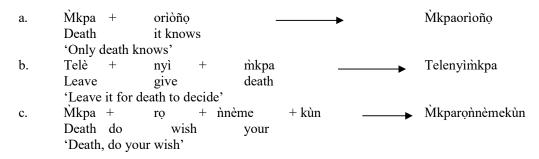   'If it were not for death …'

SOAs on Defiance to Death

Solicitous Obolo Anthroponyms (SOAs) of defiance to death encode a situation of a namer being defiant. The pleas and complaints have become futile before death. Namers in Obolo capture their frustrations by becoming defiant to death as in 15.

a.   M̀kpa   +   ìkèm   ⟶   M̀kpaìkèm
      Death   enough
      'Death you have had enough,'

b.   M̀kpa   +   chit   +   otu   ⟶   M̀kpachitotu
      Death   close   mouth
      'Death keep quiet'

c.   Gọñ   +   èmì   +   luk   ⟶   Gọñèmìluk
      Join   me   stay
      'Live with me (child)'

SOAs of Scepticism towards Death

Solicitous Obolo Anthroponyms (SOAs) of skepticism towards death is yet another communication import of Obolo names. SOAs encode information on skepticism to the activities of death. This is exemplified in 16.

a.   M̀kpa   +   orìòñọ   ⟶   M̀kpaorìòñọ
      Death   it knows
      'Only death knows'

b.   Telè   +   nyì   +   m̀kpa   ⟶   Telenyìm̀kpa
      Leave   give   death
      'Leave it for death to decide'

c.   M̀kpa   +   rọ   +   ǹnème   + kùn   ⟶   M̀kparọǹnèmekùn
      Death   do   wish   your
      'Death, do your wish'

4.5   Admonitory Obolo Anthroponyms (ADOAs)

Subsumed under the social factor of HARDSHIP is the semantic category which is referred to as ADMONITORY. Obolo Admonitory Anthroponyms (ADOAs) have communication events that are centred round three sub-themes: hate, gossip and war. Each of these forms a special communication import that can indeed bring hardship to any people. The Obolo bear names that are either talking to an enemy, or are, one form of gossip or another. Sometimes, the names may be given because of the effects of war and the accompanying hardship that follows the drums of war. Each of the communication import or event is treated with a few examples.

ADOAs on Hatred

Admonitory Obolo Anthroponyms (ADOAs) are usually realized in cases where there is hatred or where someone is hated with a passion. Sometimes the hatred is so intense that the hated person gives her child a name that is laden with an admonition to those who hated her so much. The examples in 17 are used to explicate this position.

a.   Kañ   +   èyi   +   kùn   ⟶   Kañèyikùn
      Have   own   yours
      'Have your own (child)'

b.   Keke   +   kèmì   +   nrọ̀   ⟶   Kekekèmìnrọ̀
      What   I   do
      'What did I do?'

c.   Ǹtumù +   keke   ⟶   Ǹtumùkeke
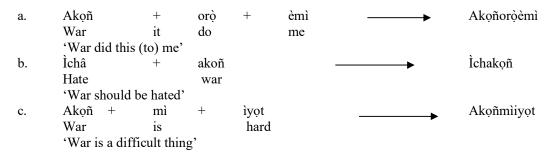   I say   what
      'What did I say'

ADOAs on Gossip

      Admonitory Obolo Anthroponyms (ADOAs) that communicate gossip are common. In ADOAs of this category, gossips are admonised to mind their own business and say only that which is done. Example (18) explains further just what this means:

a.   Tùmû +   èyi +   nrọ̀   ⟶   Tùmùèyinrọ̀
      Say that   which   I do
      'Only say what I did'
b.   Kpido +   okpà   ⟶   Kpidokpà
      Not ask   he says
      '(One who) says without being asked to say'
c.   Ùduñ +   ìkakì +   ìnọ +   ikọ̀   ⟶   Ùduñìkakìnọikọ̀
      Back   do not hear   word
      'The back does not hear'
      (What is said in one's absence does not harm anybody).

ADOAs on War

      Admonitory Obolo Anthroponyms on war is prevalent in Obolo land. The Obolo are known for their military prowess. They live among neighbours who are always at loggerheads with them. For that reason, fighting with neighbours was rampant; sometimes it could be national or communal. Along with war comes lots of hardship for the citizens. The loss of bread winners for families, promising young men also die prematurely leaving the care of the family to women and children. ADOAs on war tell of the evil effect of war as exemplified in 19.

a.   Akọ̃ +   orọ̀ +   èmì   ⟶   Akọ̃norọ̀èmì
      War   it   do   me
      'War did this (to) me'
b.   Ìchâ +   akoñ   ⟶   Ìchakọ̃
      Hate   war
      'War should be hated'
c.   Akọ̃ +   mì +   ìyọt   ⟶   Akọ̃mìiyọt
      War   is   hard
      'War is a difficult thing'

4.6   Temporal Obolo Anthroponyms (TEMOAs)

      Temporal Obolo Anthroponyms (TEMOAs) encode and communicate events such as **birthday** and **date**. ROAs tell of seasons which may either be geographical as in the seasons of the year or religious as in various celebrations to mark festivals.

      Chucks-Orji (1972) working on Igbo names referred to names in this category as *'Time names'*. Iwundu (1994) called them *'Temporal'*. For aesthetic reasons this effort maintains the term temporal for OAs in this category. Temporal Obolo Anthroponyms (TEMOAs) have two sub-themes namely **Daily** and **Seasonal**. Each of the two segments shall be examined one after the other.
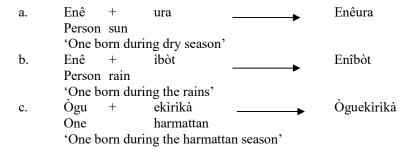
Daily TEMOAs

      Daily TEMOAs are the fewest OAs, unlike the Akan/Twi of Ghana (as was pointed out in chapter two) who have names for every day of the week that are used by the people as anthroponyms.

The Obolo people do not have many names in this sub-semantic category infact there are not more than three names in the daily TEMOAs as seen in 20 below.

a.   Guñ   +   orone   ⟶   Guñorone
        Child   Sunday
        'Child of Sunday'
b.   Enê   +   kala   +   orone   ⟶   Enêkalaorone
        Person   small   Sunday
        'Person of Saturday'

Seasonal TEMOAs

        Seasonal TEMOAs are also very few in Obolo. Infact, they are fewer than its daily counterpart. The communication import of these types of OAs is that they encode seasonal events, seasons, festivals and religious feasts that may point to periods of celebrating an important event. Here are some examples in 21.

a.   Enê   +   ura   ⟶   Enêura
        Person sun
        'One born during dry season'
b.   Enê   +   ìbòt   ⟶   Enîbòt
        Person rain
        'One born during the rains'
c.   Ògu   +   ekìrìkà   ⟶   Òguekìrìkà
        One   harmattan
        'One born during the harmattan season'

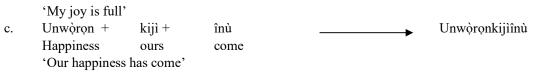## 4.7   Ideational Obolo Anthroponyms (IDOAs)

        In the social factor of environment is a semantic category called Ideational Obolo Anthroponyms (IDOAs). As a semantic category IDOAs convey events such as virtue, man, society, beauty, life and death. Personal names classified as IDOAs tally with what Uwalaka (1990, p.6) calls 'names with philosophical information'. It is in IDOAs that one really gets the philosophy of the Obolo people as they communicate events such as virtues of life, man, beauty, including life and death. We shall discuss each of these one after the other.

IDOAs on Virtuous Life

        The data collected reveal that the Obolo through the names communicate life's virtues. In other words, through OAs the Obolo found a way of capturing the good and desirable aspects of life. Other qualities encoded in OAs are: joy–*ubelejit*; behaviour – *eru*; and happiness – *unwọrọn.* The Obolo are not known to extol vices and bad behaviour, so no personal name in Obolo portrays such vices.
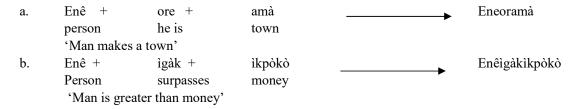
        Another communication import of IDOAs on virtuous life is the admonition that bearers should be of good behaviour (22a), wherever, they may be found. Our investigation did not show anything to the contrary among the people studied.

a.   Àta   +   èrù +   ogàk   ⟶   Àtaèrùogàk
        Good   habit   surpasses
        'Good behaviour is best'

b.   Ùbèlèjìt +   ña +   ijòt   ⟶   Ùbèlèjìtñaijòt
        Joy   mine   full

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'My joy is full'

c. Unwọ̀rọn +   kijì +   înù   ⟶   Unwòrọnkijiînù
    Happiness   ours   come
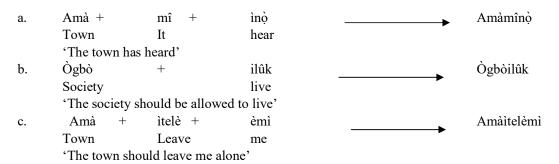   'Our happiness has come'

IDOAs on Man

There are some OAs that have man as their focal point. Such IDOAs do not just point to man in isolation, but also say something about what man is to the society. They also speak of man in the family or even about the individual. The communication import in such IDOAs is that they declare the importance of men as human beings. Few OAs in examples (23) will suffice.

a. Enê +   ore +   amà   ⟶   Eneoramà
    person   he is   town
    'Man makes a town'

b. Enê +   ìgàk +   ìkpòkò   ⟶   Enêìgàkìkpòkò
    Person   surpasses   money
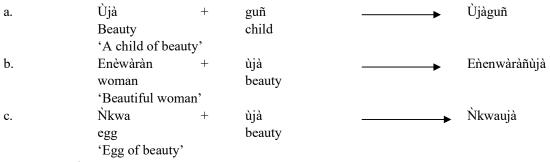   'Man is greater than money'

IDOAs on Society

There are OAs that encode information about the society; they show the frame of mind of the namers at the time the names were given. The implicature of such names is that the society was unfair to members of the community. A few examples (24) will suffice.

a. Amà +   mî +   ìnọ̀   ⟶   Amàmînọ̀
    Town   It   hear
    'The town has heard'

b. Ògbò +   ilûk   ⟶   Ògbòilûk
    Society   live
    'The society should be allowed to live'

c. Amà +   ìtelè +   èmì   ⟶   Amàìtelèmì
    Town   Leave   me
    'The town should leave me alone'

IDOAs on Beauty

Names in this category announce the beauty of the child. Sometimes it could even encode the expectation of the namer, who is expecting the child to be as delicate as egg. Here are some examples in 25.

a. Ùjà +   guñ   ⟶   Ùjàguñ
    Beauty   child
    'A child of beauty'

b. Enèwàràn +   ùjà   ⟶   Eṅenwàràñùjà
    woman   beauty
    'Beautiful woman'

c. Ǹkwa +   ùjà   ⟶   Ǹkwaujà
    egg   beauty
    'Egg of beauty'

IDOAs on Life

The Obolo have a way of giving insight to their views about life through the names they bear. In other words, there are certain OAs that are built around life. Life is seen as primary, while other values and aspirations in the world are secondary. Such names tend to give succour in times of

adversity and connote the fact that in sickness and when passing through hard times life is more important. For as the saying goes in Obolo, *Ire ugemikuikpọchenmowa* – 'if there is life, there is hope also'. Examples in 26:

a.   Ugem   +   ìgàk   +   ìkpòkò   ⟶   Ugemìgàkìkpòkò

    life   more than   money

    'Life is more than money'

b.   Ugem   +   ore   +   ibòt   ⟶   Ugemoreibòt

    life   is   head

    'Life is supreme'

c.   Ugem   +   ikù   ⟶   Ugemikù

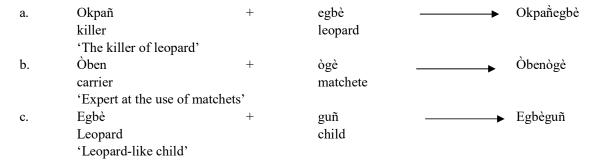   life   be

    'Let there be life'

IDOAs on Death

The supremacy of death as contained in the IDOAs of death buttresses the saying that "it is only the living that has hope for a better tomorrow". Ideational Obolo Anthroponyms on death allow everyone to see the views of the Obolo people on ubiquitous death. (27):

a.   M̀kpa   +   orọ   +   èmì   ⟶   M̀kpaorọ̀èmì

    Death   do   me

    'It is death that has done this to me'

b.   M̀kpa   ìkâ   chère   ⟶   M̀kpaìkâchère

    Death   it not   agree

    'Death has refused (to let me be)'

4.8   Monumental Obolo Anthroponyms (MOAs)

Achievement as a social factor for the classification of OAs has the communication import of heroic exploits. The heroic exploits which the Obolo people are engaged in include the capture and taming of animals and birds. As a result of the special ability displayed by man, the names associated with such exploits are in most cases praise inclined. Names in this category could be given names or family names describing individuals in terms of their deeds or actions. Monumental OAs are discussed under attainment and social status. Each one is discussed with examples.
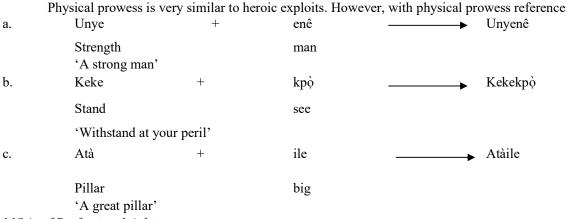
MOAs on Heroic Exploits

Embedded in OAs that fall in this class are meanings that describe individual exploits in war or elsewhere that a show of bravery is required. Examples in 28 corroborate this claim.

a.   Okpañ   +   egbè   ⟶   Okpañ̌egbè

    killer   leopard

    'The killer of leopard'

b.   Òben   +   ògè   ⟶   Òbenògè

    carrier   matchete

    'Expert at the use of matchets'

c.   Egbè   +   guñ   ⟶   Egbèguñ

    Leopard   child

    'Leopard-like child'

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MOAs on Physical Prowess

Physical prowess is very similar to heroic exploits. However, with physical prowess reference

a.   Unye   +   enê   ⟶   Unyenê

Strength   man

'A strong man'

b.   Keke   +   kpọ̀   ⟶   Kekekpọ̀

Stand   see

'Withstand at your peril'

c.   Atà   +   ile   ⟶   Atàile

Pillar   big

'A great pillar'

MOAs of Professional Achievement

Monumental Obolo Anthroponyms point to professional attainment in the life of the giver of the name. Such OAs also speak of the position held by the givers of the name in the society at the time the bearers were born. Also embedded in names of this category are the expectations of the givers of the names. Example 29a-c will suffice for illustrations.

a.   Ògu   +   isi   +   akọñ   ⟶   Òguisiakọñ
one   front   war
'Leader of war team or commander'

b.   Ugâ   +   aninim   ⟶   Ugâaninim
Mother   diver
'Great diver'

c.   Àta   +   ògu   +   otâ   ⟶   Àtaòguotâ
good   one   hunter
'A great hunter'

MOAs on Social Status

Monumental Obolo Anthroponyms (MOAs) are also harbingers of information on the achievement of social status. This is explicated through the following examples in 30 a-c.

a.   Ogu   +   ubọñ   +   iriñ   ⟶   Ogubọñiriñ

Who   chief   fish

'chief of fish (catchers)'

b.   Dee   +   ogu   +   ile   ⟶   Deeoguile

Man   who   big

'a highly placed man'

c.   Ubọñ   +   èbì   +   ofìà   ⟶   Ubọñèbìofìà

Chief   the   herbalist
'chief of herbalists or diviners'

4.9   Unclassified Obolo Anthroponyms

In the course of this investigation it was found that a number of names used by the Obolo people do not fall into any of the eight categories. Some of the names, like **Ogbolo**, may either have been

borrowed or lost in antiquity. Whatever the case may be, some surnames are built on **Ogbolo** as can be seen in example 31.

a)   Ògbolo + ngbìlì   ⟶   Ògbolongbìlì
     Ogbolo short
     'The short Ogbolo'

b)   Ògbolo + ìjà   ⟶   Ògboloìjà
     Ogbolo small
     'Small Ogbolo'

c)   Ògbolo + ogùgò   ⟶   Ògbologùgò
     Ogbolo image
     'Ogbolo's image'

5. Conclusion

The analyses so farhave shown in clear terms that OAs are not merely to mark the identity of bearers, rather, they encode and communicate the world-view of the Obolo people. Furthermore, OAs are veritable sources of traditional modes of communication. After all, they tell of the events surrounding each name. The events most of the time point to the namer but sometimes the named. OAs are equally channels through which the Obolo people express the way they see the whole world. The love of a peaceful environment, for instance, has made the Obolo people to avoid names that encourage war. The personal names borne by the Obolo people also convey the people's view and reaction to ubiquitous death. the findings of this paperalso reveal that whereas there are a large number of Theophoric Obolo anthroponyms (DETOAs and MATOAs), they have a few Monumental Obolo Anthroponyms (MOAs), Testimonial Obolo Anthroponyms (TOAs), Ideational Obolo Anthroponyms (IDOAs), Solicitous Obolo Anthroponyms (SOAs), Relational Obolo Anthroponyms (ROAs), Admonitory Obolo Anthroponyms (ADOAs),Temporal Obolo Anthroponyms (TEMOAs) as well as Unclassified Obolo Anthroponyms. In this paper, it is quite uncommon to find in OAs market-days names; unlike in Igbo anthroponomastic trends. The reason for this may not be unconnected with the fact that the Obolo do not have market days' names in their language.

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