

LOADING AND CONDITIONING IN IJAW NAMING SYSTEM AS STRATEGIES FOR EXPRESSING FILIAL RELATIONSHIPS

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Abstract

Studies in relevant literature reveal that natural languages are known to loan words from other languages that are diametrically opposed to them in terms of family, patterns and groupings to suit their purpose. This is the case with the Ijaw naming system, which this paper investigates. Specifically, there is an intricate correlation between certain morpho-semantic sub-domains of lexemes in Ijaw identified and isolated herein as **ba(u)**, **(m)bina** and **tuḅo** when combined with English names. The result of such combinations is phonological conditioning, necessitated by environmental factors that result in processes such as; deletion and insertion in order to conform to the Ijaw syllable structure. The purpose of this study, analyzed using the Merge theory within minimalist syntax, therefore, is to; isolate the kinship terms employed in the Ijaw naming system and identify the phonological processes that inadvertently pop up in the derivation of Ijaw names. It also seeks to ascertain the morpho-semantic conceptual interface between the loanwords (names) and the choices of kinship terms made in a bid to identify the correlation between the choices made and the conceptual values they portray. Data for this study is drawn from day-to-day interactions with ego and informants. The study evinces that, Ijaw loans from English for expressing their thoughts.

Keywords: family, kinship, conditioning, insertion, conceptual, ego.

T̄ibi bíri

Buodẹ tólumọ f̄iri o m̄jenimi w̄erimi n̄i, akpọ má emi beelibosẹ a m̄omó buḅo apaaemi beel̄i, an̄i akpọ buḅo fie bara paaemi beel̄i bá, buḅo zitu beel̄i duo ak̄i fieb̄ibi bul̄oi w̄eri an̄i d̄ou eye m̄jem̄ini. M̄i diim̄ini Iz̄on ar̄i t̄in b̄ira kp̄o m̄o ki emi. Gb̄esi m̄i, Iz̄on ma z̄ua z̄au d̄ein fieb̄ibi ẹmgb̄ouama n̄i tu n̄ina w̄eri emi yāi m̄i tolumọ ye m̄o lelei, ba sele ak̄i b̄ina war̄i ar̄ibo; **ba(u)**, **(m)bina** m̄o **tuḅo m̄o** gb̄oloi Beke ar̄iama m̄o ken̄i w̄enim̄om̄ini. M̄i ma beel̄i fiebib̄ibo; Iz̄on m̄o Beke m̄o gb̄oloi daba, am̄omo nai emi ẹmgb̄oubo ani fonoloz̄i dei-mini. Tiye ki tu gha, Iz̄on ẹmgb̄oubo an̄i d̄ou bara tim̄i ‘m̄ duoni, z̄ua ẹmgb̄ouama vin-mini an̄i akpọ t̄ua binm̄o-mini. Fieb̄ibi z̄uu m̄o gb̄oloi ar̄ibibi mie-mini dadiye operason̄i m̄ez ‘operation merge’ t̄inm̄iniye k̄i o m̄o k̄on paam̄ini yebo dii d̄ou-mini. Iz̄on ma b̄ina war̄i ar̄ibo n̄i k̄on ar̄i pirim̄ini yāibo sele paam̄o ba anḡo dei-mini ẹmgb̄oubo paam̄ini b̄ira dii k̄i duoni m̄i fun m̄i o m̄o dii-mini. An̄i buod̄eme, z̄au dein ẹmgb̄oubo m̄o ba tu n̄ina w̄erimi fiebib̄ibo m̄o sele-mini b̄ina war̄i arebo m̄o gb̄oloi-m̄ini b̄ira kp̄o o m̄o dii-mini. Ereinbosẹ e má ar̄i nana otu m̄o bá beel̄i naai otu m̄o kp̄edi-mini eyo k̄i e m̄o duo ar̄i t̄inm̄ini barabosẹ k̄on m̄e. Tolumọ fun di tolu eyo m̄i gba gha mo, Iz̄on m̄i k̄uk̄ọ fie ẹmgb̄ou bul̄oi-mini, an̄ia t̄i k̄i duo n̄i gha, k̄on an̄i ẹk̄iȳo bul̄ou ma emi yebo gba paam̄o ‘m̄ duoni.

1. Introduction

In linguistics and other related disciplines, the idea that language users borrow or loan lexemes from other languages that are not related to theirs either in terms of linguistic codes or patterns and structures has variously been elucidated. Similarly, and closely associated to this phenomenon is the fact that people who are multilingual, or who have command and fluency over more than one variety of any language, are generally very sensitive to the differences in the vitality of the languages they use as such, appropriately select the direct equivalents of a source language lexemes for use in a target language (Meyerhoff, 2006:115-116). Language users are equally aware that in some contexts one variety will serve their purpose better than another serves as such, inadvertently switch or mix codes by loans from other languages or dialects¹ of the same language as the exigencies of their communication provided.

The literature is replete with lexemes that have been borrowed and integrated into the lexicon of natural languages. Iz̄on², for example, is reported to have loaned a good number of English lexemes, especially those that are not conceptualized in the language (Kekai, 2013).

¹ These two phenomena are technically referred to as code-switching and code-mixing in the literature and denote hybridization.

² One of the clusters of languages collectively called Ijaw (Ijo) and spoken in six states of the federal republic of Nigeria.

Such loanwords often undergo linguistic and morphological conditioning in order to be fully integrated into the pattern(s) of the language. It is therefore not surprising that; English lexemes are loaned, conditioned and integrated into Ijaw as this study will illustrate.

Though the above phenomena seem to be very prevalent in most natural languages, observed data reveal that Ijaw also loans lexemes from other languages, in particular, English and combines such lexemes with Ijaw kinship terms to derive names classified herein as compounded names. Since the names identified can neither be classified as English nor Ijaw names because of their component parts, this study proposes that such names be given the coinage EngIjaw. This proposition stems from the component parts of the derivations namely English + Ijaw → EngIjaw names.

The derived names indicate relationships between the bearers of the derived names, referred to as EGO being the individual to whom all kinship relationships are linked, and the bearers of the loaned names. The derived names are concatenations comprising Ijaw kinship terms that are equivalent to and indicate relationships such as; *brother, sister, daughter*, son etc. linked to ego and functioning as vectors. These kinship terms are phonetically distinct from English (Ijaw is a tonal language as opposed to English) yet, the language speakers conceptualize them as they were, as terms referring to the same forms of lineal relationships namely; relations of *ego's* generation.

That language and culture are interconnected and influence each other is no longer new in linguistic parlance. Scholarly works of Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), Franz Boas (1858-1942), Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf (1929), just to mention a few, buttress in relevant literature that, languages influence each other (see Lakoff and Johnson, 1980); Lakoff, 1987; Sharifian, 2011 and 2017; Barsalou, 2012; Casasanto, 2016; Kövecses, 2000 and 2005; Enfield and Wierzbicka, 2002; Brenzinger and Kraska-Szlenk, 2014; Kraska-Szlenk, 2014a, 2014b);

In Ijaw, there exist a web of cultural interaction with English whereby an English name is loaned and combined with an Ijaw kinship term indicating pragmatically the lineal relationship that ego has with some known bearer(s) of the English name(s) so combined. This is the crux that this study seeks to elucidate, evincing that, kinship terms in Ijaw function as vectors for the derivation of compound names in the language. Hence, an Ijaw compound name may be composed of a loaned English name which often is the head of the compound name and referred to herein as *loan name*, plus an Ijaw kinship term functioning as a derived complement. Both loanname and the kinship term together can be described as an equivalent of a lineal relationship between the possessor of the English name and the bearer of the name as such are descriptive in nature. This is the crux that this study seeks to exemplify. First, to illustrate that Ijaw not only loans English names in their naming system but also combines English names with Ijaw kinship terms. Second, to ascertain the pragmatic facts expressed in the choice of kinship terms. This will further help in the identification of the phonological processes that crop-up in their derivation.

1.2. Background to the study

Research on extant studies and relevant literature reveals that very little attention has been given to names and naming systems in natural languages, especially with regard to the construction of identity in Ijaw. In particular, there is a paucity of information on the employment of the linguistic phenomena technically referred to as; loaning, code-mixing, conditioning and the associative phonological processes that accompany the naming system in Ijaw. A huge gap thus exists in terms of naming in Ijaw wherein a name is understood to aptly and explicitly describe the events before or during a child's birth as well as the filial relationships with members of his ascending as well as descending genealogy as the data in this study will show. For Ijaw and in particular Kalabari, the focus of investigation, names generally serve as indices for identifying the bearers of and the relationship they have with the bearer of the combined name. In which case, as is generally observed, ego³ bears a name which

³ In kinship terms, ego is indicative of the individual to whom all relationships are addressed. In which case, ego is construed of as having for instance; a brother, sister, father etc.

often is referred to as a first name in combination with a surname with which the bearer is linked and identified.

Recent observations reveal that for the Ijaw people of the Eastern cluster that Kalabari, Okrika, Ibani and Nkoro belong, (Williamson, 1983; Jenewari, 1977; Kekai, 2012 and 2011) there exists a kind of naming system which involves the concatenation of names of English and Ijaw. This creates a cultural interaction in the semantics of the combined lexemes with the identity of the bearer and affinal relation inherently deciphered from the kinship term employed. For instance, an Ijaw kinship term, e.g. *tubɔ* 'child/son' may be combined with an English name such as Brown (*brown+tubɔ*) to derive the name *Browntubɔ* 'child/son of Brown'. This explicitly identifies the bearer of the derived name as Brown's son/child. Naming systems such as these that involve loaning English names and combining them with Ijaw kinship terms, and subsequent conditioning of loanwords seem to elude linguists in the literature of Ijaw is worth examining.

Eastern Ijaw, and in particular Kalabari, the language of data collection is one of the clusters of languages collectively called Ijaw, spoken in Rivers state in Nigeria. The language cluster like its counterpart in Western Ijaw happens to fall within the group of natural languages that loan words from English. However, further to this, it is observed that the language cluster also loans English names and combines them with Ijaw kinship terms. In particular, naming in Eastern Ijaw involves;

- a. the loaning of an English name
- b. combining loan names with an Ijaw kinship term.

The results are compounds composed of English and Ijaw kinship terms. This naming process of code-mixing seems to be alien to natural languages as such worth examining for documentation. This study, therefore, examines the Ijaw naming system with particular reference to Eastern Ijaw where this trend is predominant. Emphasis is on the combination of Ijaw kinship terms and conditioning of loaned English names. The phonological process(es) that are envisaged as a result of such combinations are critically examined. The purpose is to identify and isolate the kinship terms employed and exemplify the process(es) employed in their use as naming elements, for information and documentation purposes.

1.3. Theoretical orientation

In order to identify and analyze the components of the names isolated for this study, it is imperative to choose from the myriad of available theoretical paradigms, the one that best explains the peculiarities manifested in the Ijaw naming system. The theoretical orientation that meets the peculiarities displayed as observed is operation Merge.

Merge is one of the operations proposed in Chomsky's (1995) Minimalist Program (MP) when the need for economy became significant in the derivation and computation of structures. Operation Merge is a bottom-up derivational and representational morpho-syntactic operation in which constructions are built up by the insertion and merging of morphemes. Chomsky (2000) asserts that merge is "an indispensable operation of a recursive system...". This aptly describes the Ijaw naming system examined in this study as elements are merged to derive unordered sets with labels that identify the properties of each constituent. Each build-up or concatenation provides for a new semantic interpretation of the previous one so merged.

The syntactic operation takes two semantically distinct elements, *a* and *b*, merges them and creates a new element, *G* out of them. The new syntactic element *G* copies the features of the elements, often the head having projected its features. The basic trust in operation Merge posits that two objects like the Ijaw kinship term 'bau' 'daughter' and the English name *James* can be merged to generate a new phrase *Jamesbau* pronounced *jemisiba* by native speakers of Ijaw and glosses as 'Jamesdaughter'. This resulting derivation is construed as having the label of at least one of the components of the combined elements.

The morpho-syntactic processes exhibited in deriving the names espoused in this study conform to operation Merge as the naming system enables a set to be formed and can further be merged with other constituents to derive new sets analogous to syntactic frames. Operation Merge thus serves as the theoretical tool to handle the combinations observed in the Ijaw naming system. In the following section, Ijaw kinship terms of the first generation namely; parents of ego are provided since they function as vectors in the derivation of names.

2. Kinship terms of ascending genealogy

Ascending genealogy is a bottom-up investigation of an ancestry proceeding from oneself and family to find out about one's ancestry. Generally speaking, certain kinship terms are inalienably associated with ascending genealogy and just like other natural languages Ijaw conceptualizes lineal relationships with terms corresponding to those found in other languages as regards kinship terms of ascending genealogy. Dwight (2015) aptly observes that all societies have terms that are used to refer to one's kin, which often corresponds to address terms used in social discourse and reflects the relationship between speaker and listener. The output of each kinship term for Ijaw is semantically equivalent to and naturally consists of properties of lexical relationships found in most natural languages. Hence, as Kraska-Szlenk (2018) asserts, Ijaw can also be said to conceptualize the family as a unique entity as such places high values on it.

However, unlike some natural languages such as English, Ijaw kinship terms can easily be described as structural arrangements or structural strings (syntactic frames) of lexical information, derived by applying the Merge operation. In this case, the citation forms of members of the ascending genealogy from the bottom such as; *yin* 'mother', *dau* 'father' *bina* 'sibling' *tubou* 'son', *ba(u)* 'daughter' combine to derive kinship terms of descending genealogy⁴ and affinal names. This implies that the citation forms of kinship terms of ascending genealogy serve as vectors for the derivation of names of the descending generation. Consider the example below where for instance, the kinship term *bina* 'relation/sibling' merges with *dau* 'father' and *owe'i* 'boy' to derive *dabinaowe'i* 'uncle'. Observe the application of the elision process at the final segment of the morpheme *dau* 'father' to break the vowel sequences. Such elisions abound in the derivation of compound names as we shall see.

For understanding and ease of reference, the kinship terms of ascending genealogy in Ijaw are provided in 1 below. These kinship terms serve as vectors for the derivation of the kinship terms of descending genealogy in 2 through the process of merging as the illustrations show.

2.1. Ijaw kinship terms of ascending genealogy

These terms express filial relations between ego and some common ancestry beginning from the bottom up to the top

- 1a. *tubou*
'child/son'
- b. *ba(u)*
'daughter'
- c. *(m)bina*
'relation/siblings'
- d. *da(u)*
'father'
- e. *yin*
'mother'
- f. *(m)bina-owe'i*
'brother'
- g. *(m)bina-ara(u)*
'sister'

As can be seen, choice is made between the bilabial nasal and bilabial plosive in *c*, *f* and *g*. the Kalabari Ijaw obviously prefers the bilabial plosive to the bilabial nasal, hence the choice of *bina* rather than *mina* in most cases. However, the bilabial nasal is also used

2.2. Ijaw kinship terms of descending genealogy

⁴ This examines the descendants of an individual beginning from the top to the bottom

The kinship terms of descending genealogies are derived by the combination of different kinship morphemes of ascending genealogy with gender specific lexemes. Specific affinal relations are derived by employing and merging the numeral *kəni* ‘one’ with the kinship terms as shown in 2a, b and i below.

- 2a. *kəni - da(ɥ) -bɔ -owei*
same father human male
‘half-brother’
- b. *kəni -da(ɥ) -bɔ -araɥ*
same father human female
‘half-sister’
- c. *da(ɥ) /yin* *-(b)mɪna* *-araɥ*
father / mother sibling female
(paternal/maternal)
‘aunt’
- d. *da(ɥ) /yin* *- bɪna* *-owei*
father/ mother sibling male
paternal/maternal
‘uncle’
- e. *da(ɥ) /yin -kəni - da(ɥ) -bɔ zi tɔbo*
father / mother same father human birth child
paternal/maternal uncle/aunt’s child
‘cousin’
- f. *fuɔ*
in-law
- g. *duu* *araɥ/owei*
inherited female/male
‘sister/brother in-law’
- h. *fuɔ -owei /araɥ*
in-law male /female
‘sister/brother, father/mother in-law’
- i. *kəni da(ɥ) /yin bɔ* *owei /araɥ*
one father /mother person male /female
‘half-brother/sister’ (paternal/maternal)
- j. *bɪna -bɔ zi owei /araɥ*
brother person deliver male /female
‘nephew/niece’
- k. *yabi*
‘uncle’

As can be seen in 1, all kinship names of ascending genealogies have their direct equivalents in Ijaw. In contrast, the kinship terms of descending genealogies and affinal relations in 2 with the exception of *yabi* ‘uncle’ do not have. They are structural strings derived by merging various kinship terms of ascending generation such as; *da(ɥ)* ‘father’, *yin* ‘mother’, *(m)bɪna* ‘sibling’ etc. as can be seen in 2c for example where *da(ɥ)* or *yin* ‘father or mother’ merges with *bina-araɥ* ‘sister’ to derive *aunt*

Readers will observe that the kinship terms *bau* ‘daughter’, *dau* ‘father’ and *(m)bina* ‘sibling’ have two variants each. Though not the focus of this study it seems as though there is a clear preference for the voiced bilabial nasal /m/ as against the voiced bilabial plosive /b/ used by the Eastern Ijaw cluster. In addition to this, the final vowel segments in *dau* ‘father’ in 2i is also elided.

These combinations are normal for the language users as they show how the kinship terms tie to derive the expressed literal meanings as conceptualized by the users of the language. This explicates the language as exhibiting a derivational word formation order. This

derivational process is also observed and thus translates to the naming system examined in the pages that follow as names with semantic contents that elucidate speakers' intended meaning are derived by employing the merging of one or the other of the kinship terms of ascending generation with loaned names (henceforth loan names).

3. Loaning as a strategy for naming

Kekai (2013) asserts that lexemes in Izón, one of the clusters of languages along with Eastern Ijaw that are collectively called Ijaw, are grossly inadequate. This inadequacy is more apparent when viewed from scientific and computer terminologies since they are not naturally experienced as such, not conceptualized and lexicalized in the language. This accounts for why words such as *phone* and *apple* are pronounced as *fonu* and *apulu* have been loaned, conditioned and integrated into the language. While this is actually the case, recent observations reveal that Ijaw also loans names with meanings indicative of the existence of exact equivalents in the language. The implication is that Ijaw speakers naturally experience and conceptualize such phenomena but the morphemes are simply not used. Some good examples can be found in names such as; *Sunday* and *Monday* which are preferred for children born on those days rather than *Akinbai* and *Akinbumbai*, the exact equivalents of the names. Choices such as these lead to the position taken in this study that, loaning may not only be to make for the inadequacies brought about by lack of lexical equivalents but for solidarity as well as prestige -the latter owing to the institutionalized status of English.

Though a good number of Ijaws bear English names as shown above, recent observation reveals that names such as; *Sunday*, *Solomon*, *Romeo*, *Saturday* etc. are extended to co-occur with Ijaw kinship terms to derive compound names. In some instances, English size adjectives are combined with Ijaw appellations in naming. However, in such cases, the bearer(s) simply modifies the appellation to suit their rankings in the scheme of affairs and that becomes the appellation they bear. To explicate our meaning on the loaning and merging of adjectives with Ijaw appellation, consider the adjective *big*, merged with the appellation *Alabo* 'Chief' below as borne by a Chief in the Okrika axis of Eastern Ijaw.

3. *big+Alabo* 'Bigalabo'
big chief

As is obvious in 3, the adjective *big* is merged with the Ijaw appellation *alábo* which glosses as Chief to derive *bigalabo* indicating that in the hierarchy of Chiefs, he is of a higher rank than some others. The combination in 3 is quite straight forward as the closed syllable condition of the loaned adjective *big* which Ijaw does not permit is accounted for by the presence of a vowel at the initial segment of the target language.

Instances abound where phonemes are totally deleted to make for the inadequacies caused by merging, thus, leading to modification of the word structure through some morpho-phonological processes. These processes are meant to ensure that the words loaned conform with the structure of the target language, Ijaw. This is the case with the derivations found in the naming system espoused in the next section.

4. Ijaw kinship terms used as vectors

In this study, I identify three kinship terms belonging to the ascending genealogy employed by Kalabari speakers of Ijaw to derive EngIjaw compound names. These vectors always function as heads of the noun phrases (NPs) with the loaned names functioning as complements and in particular, possessors of the nouns they merge with. The vectors include;

- 4a. *bau*
'daughter',
b. *túbo*
'son/child' and
c. *mína*
'sibling'

The kinship terms in 4 above often combine with English loan names such as; *Samuel*, *John*, *Solomon*, *Peter*, *George*, *Joseph* etc. Where a name ends with a closed syllable, the

constraint on close syllable pattern bars its co-occurrence and by default, an epenthetic⁵ vowel is inserted automatically (Kekai, 2016). For Ijaw, this is done so merging may conform to the syllable structure of the language. The vectors considered in 4 are merged with English names in 5, 6 and 7.

4.1. English + Ijaw kinship Derivations

In what follows, we examine each kinship term of ascending genealogy as they interact with loan names. The resulting semantic implication and phonological processes are also examined to determine the factors that prompt them.

a. *bau*+ English loan names

The term *ba(u)* translates as daughter and refers to a filial relationship existing between a female ego of an ascending genealogy and a biological parent belonging to the descending genealogy. *bau* is often merged with loan names to derive compound names. When this, occurs, the nominal (loan name) to which the kinship term of ascending genealogy is merged functions as a possessive noun. That is, *bau* ‘daughter’ is construed of as the daughter of the bearer of the loan name, the possessor. For Kalabari speakers, the final vowel segment in *bau* is elided⁶. The examples below exemplify.

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 5a. | <i>Solomon</i> + <i>ba</i> | ‘ <i>Solomoniba</i> ’ |
| | Solomon daughter | |
| | ‘Solomon’s daughter’ | |
| b. | <i>George</i> + <i>ba</i> | ‘ <i>Georgiba</i> ’ |
| | George +daughter | |
| | George’s daughter’ | |
| c. | <i>Peter</i> + <i>ba</i> | ‘ <i>Peterba</i> ’ |
| | Peter daughter | |
| | Peter’s daughter | |
| d. | <i>Romeo</i> + <i>ba</i> | ‘ <i>Romeoba</i> ’ |
| | Romeo daughter | |
| | Romeo’s daughter | |
| e. | <i>Raphael</i> + <i>ba</i> | ‘ <i>Raphaeliba</i> ’ |
| | Raphael daughter | |
| | Raphael’s daughter | |

In 5a to e, all loan names are merged with the morpheme *ba* ‘daughter’ to derive possessive phrases. Hence, in a, *Solomon* merges with *ba* to derive *Solomoniba* and glosses as Solomon’s daughter. The same applies to 5b to e.

A close look at the derivations reveal that epenthesis takes place in a, b and e. wherein, a vowel segment is inserted at word boundary for each loan name that has a closed syllable. This accounts for why the high front vowel /i/ is inserted in the listed examples. This is not the case in c and d where the loan names have open syllable and conform with the pattern of Ijaw as such do not require epenthesis.

b. *tubo* + English loan names

The term *tubo* ‘child/son’ is a kinship term belonging to the ascending genealogy. Like *ba* ‘daughter’, it is also merged with English loan names. Mention must be made that these kinship names also merge with Ijaw names. Thus, names such as *Ngotubo* and *Datubo*. The examples below illustrate the merging of English names with the kinship term *tubo*.

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6a. | <i>Johnbull</i> + <i>tubo</i> | ‘ <i>Johnbullutubo</i> ’ |
| | Johnbull child/son | |
| | Johnbull’s child/son | |
| b. | <i>Briggs</i> <i>tubo</i> | ‘ <i>Briggsitubo</i> ’ |

⁵ A phonological process involving the insertion of a phoneme within a word and meant to break illicit phonological structures.

⁶ The deletion of a vowel segment. Especially when there are vowel sequences.

- Briggs + child/son
 Briggs' son/child
 c. *Romeo* + **tubo** *Romeotubo*
 Romeo daughter
 Romeo's child/son

As can be seen, the kinship term, **tubo** is a generic term for both males and females, but specifically used for male children. Hence, all names to which the morpheme is merged translates as either son or child. When specifics are intended, choice is made between the two and attached to **tubo**. For instance, *owei* merges with **tubo** 'child' to derive *oweitubo* 'male child' while *eyoro* merges with **tubo** 'child' to derive 'female child'.

In *ba*, rather than inserting the high front unrounded vowel /i/, the preferred choice is the high back rounded vowel /u/. It seems to be the case that the choice of /u/ is prompted by the presence of its copy at the final vowel segment before word boundary of the loaned name.

c. **m(b)ina** + **English loan names**

The term *mina* is a generic term for relation and kinsman (relative) in Ijaw. While the Izon cluster prefers the voiced bilabial nasal, the Kalabari speaker makes a choice of the voiced bilabial nasal. Since the focus of this study is on the latter, all data under this set shall be in the Kalabari choice.

- 7a. *Samuel* + **mina** *'Samuelimina'*
 Samuel relation/kinsman
 b. *Young* + **mina** *'Youngimina'*
 Young + relation/kinsman
 c. *Willy* + **mina** *'Willymina'*
 Willy's relation/kinsman

In *7a* and *b* the epenthetical /i/ is once more inserted. The velar nasal /ŋ/ is absent in the language so the voiced velar plosive is erroneously interchange for it.

The data in *4 through 7* show the merging of English syllable timed loan names with Ijaw kinship terms of the ascending genealogy. Hence, *ba* 'daughter', **tubo** 'child' and **mina** 'relation' merges with loan names to derive English/Ijaw names.

A close look at the derivations reveal, especially for loan names with closed syllables, the insertion of /i/ and /u/ epenthesis where there are constrains caused by merging loan names with closed syllables. This occurs in order to conform to the open syllable structure of the language. Where the coda of the English loan names are open, by default an -i- or -u- epenthesis. An open syllable name conforms with the syllable structure of the languages as such, does not require the insertion of any epenthetic vowel to break consonant clusters. All loan names are conditioned to conform to the syllable structure of the language by insertion of an -i- or -u- epenthesis if the loan name violates the language's pattern.

It is worth noting that the derived names, just like the loan names used in combining the kinship terms, have been integrated into the lexicon of Ijaw hence, speakers now officially bear them. This naming system in Ijaw can thus, be said to undergo four linguistic processes in their derivation namely;

- i. loaning,
- ii. merging with kinship terms
- iii. conditioning if necessary and
- iii. integration.

5. Conclusion

This study sought to examine recent trends observed in the naming system of Ijaw, particularly the Eastern Ijaw cluster in which English names are combined with Ijaw kinship terms. Data for the study was collected mainly from primary sources and subjected to the

theoretical lens of operation Merge, one of the operations proposed in Chomsky's (1995). The Reason for this choice was predicated on its adequacy in capturing the morpho-syntactic as well as phonological modulations exhibited in the naming system. Data revealed that there is a concatenation of lexemes from two diametrically opposed languages; English and Ijaw. Computations revealed that only kinship terms of ascending generation functioned as vectors for the derivation of the compound names.

Since Ijaw is an open- syllable language, loan names from English, with closed syllables were conditioned to conform to the pattern of Ijaw. This is done by the insertion of -i- or -u- epenthesis for any closed syllable loan name merged with an Ijaw kinship term.

Being the fact that the derived names consisted of both English names and Ijaw kinship terms, the study proposed and named them EngIjaw names. A fallout of this study is the observation that size adjectives are also employed in naming especially for appellations. It is hoped that this study will prompt this and other researchers to examine related areas in natural languages.

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