HYPOCORISTICS AS A LANGUAGE FOR PEACE IN ENGLISH, FRENCH, BETE AND GOURO

Dr Tapé Armel SERI,
Université Alassane OUATTARA
dessehia@gmail.com

BI ZAN EDMOND GOORE,
Université Alassane Ouattara,
goorebizanedmond@gmail.com

Abstract: The world is full of conflicts and wars that are pervasive. To improve the situation and prevent conflicts, it is important to educate people for a change. The culture of peace can be observed with the use of a language made up with words that persuade people, restore peace and deter the spirit of hatred. Some words or names have the potential to calm down situations and cool down the mind of the addressee.

This article is a pragmatic study of hypocoritic names as a language of peace. It studies the functions of hypocoristics as endearment terms in the keeping of peaceful relations between people. The hypocoristic features of names and expressions used to pet and caress people are analyzed on the base of their potential to contribute to peace and love keeping in four communities including English, French, Bete and Gouro (Ivorian languages spoken in the western part of the country). The corpus comprises more than 235 hypocoristic names and expressions taken from the four languages. The method of study is based on the componential analysis as suggested by J. Lyons (1995). The semantic features contained in the hypocoristics are exposed and analyzed to explore their contribution in peace making or keeping. The semantic values of hypocoristics and the sociolinguistic circumstances of their use reveal a gap between English and French hypocoristics on the one hand and Bete and Gouro on the other hand.

Key words: community, conflict, culture, hypocoristics, language, morphemes, peace, pragmatics

Resume : La paix est une perpétuelle construction compte tenu du fait qu'il existe une pléiade de situations qui compromettent la quiétude et la paix dans les relations humaines. On peut blesser avec la langue et ces blessures de nature psychologique sont parfois plus profondes et pernicieuses. On peut également guérir avec la langue, avec les mots.

Les noms hypocoristiques sont des mots qui permettent de caresser, de chérir et de montrer son affection à quelqu'un dans le cercle familial ou celui des amis. La capacité des noms hypocoristiques à contribuer au maintien de la paix ou à sa restauration est une question d'ordre théorique qui a retenu notre attention dans le cadre de présente communication. Le corpus de l'étude est composé d'un ensemble de plus de 235 noms hypocoristiques dont 100 Anglais et Français. Les autres anthroponymes (138), en Bété et en Gouro, sont issus d'enquêtes de terrains dans des villages de Soubré et de Bouaflé. Le cadre théorique est la pragmatique linguistique. La méthode d'étude est l'analyse componentielle telle que présentée par J. Lyons (1995) sur la base des sèmes des hypocoristiques. Cette étude révèle, entre autres, au-delà du fort potentiel sémantique de ces noms à contribuer à un climat de paix, l'existence d'un fossé culturel dans l'emploi des noms hypocoristiques entre l'Anglais et le Français d'une part et le Bété et le Gouro d'autre part.

Mots clés: communauté, conflit, culture, hypocoristiques, langage, morphèmes, paix, pragmatique

INTRODUCTION

A peaceful relation is a construction and not a natural process because there are so many situations that potentially menace peace in everyday life. One of the highest threats towards a peaceful atmosphere or relation is the use of bad language. Blasphemy, cursing, malediction and all forms of abusive language are dangerous for social cohesion and peace. On the contrary, hypocoristic names are used to endear people, particularly, relatives and friends.

The question that favors this study is to know if these pet names can contribute to maintain or restore peace. The relation between hypocoristic names and peace is thus under question. The linguistic framework of the study is pragmatics and the method is a componential study on the base of the sememes of the hypocoristics. The basic assumption that favors this study is that semantic components are universal. In other words, it is possible to find a unit of content or sememe in semantic words in any language (J. Lyons, 1995). The corpus includes more than 235 hypocoristic names in English and French. The English hypocoristics are taken from Wikitionary and the French one borrowed from Tajudeen A. Osunniran Isaiah Bariki (2021). The Bete ones are the fruit of an inquiry in the field in two villages, Zergbeu and Ourégbabré in the area of Soubré. The Gouro corpus has been recorded in Konefla and Liadjenoufla in the region of Bouaflé.

The study expose among other things, a cultural gap concerning the usage of hypocoristic names between English and French, on the one hand, and Bete and Gouro (Ivorian languages spoken in the western part of the country), on the other hand. However, for a methodological reason the morphology of the anthroponyms is presented before the analysis of their components.

1. Name Hypocoristics

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica (2024) "Hypocoristic forms of names are those used in familiar, friendly or intimate situations (usually shortened or otherwise modified)". The dictionary presents Tom for Thomas and Jim for James as examples of hypocoristic forms of names in English.

1.1. English Hypocoristics

In English, name hypocoristics are generally presented at the morphological level as diminutive forms of names (as stated in the dictionary supra) and semantically as pet names used to pet or to show affection to someone.

1.1.1. Presentation of English Hypocoristics

In the table that follows, there are fifty hypocoristics of English given names extracted from en. m.wikitionary.org. Some of the hypocoristics have several variants that include different morphological processes.

Table 1: List of English hypocoristic names

	NAMES	Hypocoristics		Names	Hypocoristics
1.	Aaron	Ron, Ronny	26.	Morrison	Morris, Dory
2.	Abigail	Abbey, Abbie, Nabby, Abby, Gail	27.	Malachi	Kai
3.	Aldrich	Al, Drich, Rich, Ald	28.	Nadia	Nadi
4.	Andrei	Drei, Andi	29.	Natasha	Tasha, Tash,Nat
5.	Baillee	Lee	30.	Norbert	Bert, Nobby, Burt, Nob, Bob, Bobbie, Bobby
6.	Bailley	Lee, Baz	31.	Norman	Nour, Orman, Orbie, Norm
7.	Bryan	Ian, Ryan	32.	Oliver	Ollie, Ol, Olly, Oliwa ,Oli, Oli-obabwa
8.	Byron	Ron, Ronny	33.	Olivia	Ollie, Liv, Livi, Via
9.	Callum	Cal	34.	Oscar	Ozzy
10.	Calvin	Cal	35.	Oona	Anna
11.	Cynthia	Cindy, Cin	36.	Pamela	Pam
12.	Cyrus	Cy	37.	Patricia	Pat; Patty,Tricia, Trish, Patsy, Tristha
13.	Damian	Ian	38.	Phillip	Phil, Philly
14.	Daniel	Dan, Danny	39.	Priscilla	Cilla
15.	Dwight	Ike	40.	Quincy	Qui, Quinn, Quince
16.	Dipak	Dipak	41.	Quiton	Quavie, Quavix,

						Quin, Quinn
17.	Edmund	Ed,Eddy, Ned, Neddy, Ted, Teddy	42.	Rachel		Ray, Rach
18.	Edward	Ed, Eddy, Ned, Neddy, Ted, Teddy	43.	Randolph		Randy, Rand
19.	Gabriel	Gabe, Gaby, Gabo	44.	Tyrone		Tyron, Ron, Ronny
20.	Katherine	Kathy, Kat, Katie, Kate, Kit, Kitty, Katy, Karen,Erin	45.	Yvonne		Yo, Von
			46	Mackenzie		Mac, Mack
21.	Kimberly	Kim, Kimmy	47.	Zacarias		Zachary
22.	Kristen	Krissy, Kris, Kamrul	48.	Zachariah		Zachary
23.	Lachlan	Lachy	49.	Ziggy		Zig, Zag, Zags, Sui
24.	Laura	Laurie, Lori	50.	Zoe		Zo-zo, Zoey

1.1.2. Morphological Structure and Semantic Features of English Hypocoristics

English uses various patterns to construct its hypocoristics. But, the English hypocoristics are mostly made by truncation or clipping specifically by apocope. The truncated names receive some letters such as: y, ie. However, some names can be simply shortened with no addition of affixes like Zackary = zack.

At the semantic level, we notice a sememe of intimacy inherent to the diminutives and truncated names. There is also a semantic feature of endearment. Another value is the idea of caress. To call someone by means of their hypocoristics, in English, involves these different semantic basic features. For example, to call a lady named Katherine, Kathy or Kat conveys the expression of the three main features above at least. However, other features such as friendship, teasing or joke can sometimes be activated.

1.2. French Hypocoristic and their Structures

French name hypocoristics are diminutives obtained by clipping, duplication etc. As English hypocoristics, they can be used for endearment.

1.2.1. Presentation of French hypocoristics

The following corpus of names are borrowed from Tajudeen A. Osunniran and Isaiah Bariki (2021, p73)

2. Table 2: List of French hypocoristic names

	NAMES	Hypocoristics		Names	Hypocoristics
1.	Aaron	Ron, Ronny	25.	Morrison	Morris, Dory
2.	Abigail	Abbey, Abbie, Nabby, Abby, Gail	26.	Malachi	Kai
3.	Aldrich	Al, Drich, Rich, Ald	27.	Nadia	Nadi
4.	Andrei	Drei, Andi	28.	Natasha	Tasha, Tash,Nat
5.	Baillee	Lee	29.	Norbert	Bert, Nobby, Burt, Nob, Bob, Bobbie, Bobby
6.	Bailley	Lee, Baz	30.	Norman	Nour, Orman, Orbie, Norm
7.	Bryan	Ian, Ryan	31.	Oliver	Ollie, Ol, Olly, Oliwa ,Oli, Oli-obabwa
8.	Byron	Ron, Ronny	32.	Olivia	Ollie, Liv, Livi, Via
9.	Callum	Cal	33.	Oscar	Ozzy
10.	Calvin	Cal	34.	Oona	Anna
11.	Cynthia	Cindy, Cin	35.	Pamela	Pam
12.	Cyrus	Cy	36.	Patricia	Pat; Patty,Tricia, Trish, Patsy, Tristha
13.	Damian	Ian	37.	Phillip	Phil, Philly
14.	Daniel	Dan, Danny	38.	Priscilla	Cilla
15.	Dwight	Ike	39.	Quincy	Qui, Quinn, Quince
16.	Dipak	Dipak	40.	Quiton	Quavie, Quavix, Quin, Quinn
17.	Edmund	Ed,Eddy, Ned, Neddy, Ted, Teddy	41.	Rachel	Ray, Rach
18.	Edward	Ed, Eddy, Ned, Neddy, Ted, Teddy	42.	Randolph	Randy, Rand
19.	Gabriel	Gabe, Gaby , Gabo	43.	Tyrone	Tyron, Ron, Ronny
20.	Katherine	Kathy, Kat, Katie, Kate, Kit, Kitty, Katy, Karen,Erin	45.	Yvonne	Yo, Von
			46	Mackenzie	Mac, Mack
21.	Kimberly	Kim, Kimmy	47.	Zacarias	Zachary
22.	Kristen	Krissy, Kris, Kamrul	48.	Zachariah	Zachary
23.	Lachlan	Lachy	49.	Ziggy	Zig, Zag, Zags, Sui

24.	Laura	Laurie, Lori	50.	Zoe	Zo-zo, Zoey

1.2.2. Morphological Structure and Semantic Features of French hypocoristics

At the morphological level, French names undergo diverse manipulations such as truncation, clipping, as stated above (Tajudeen A. Osunniran, Isaiah Bariki 2021, p 73). Tomescu (2001, as cited in Avram, 2015, P8) presents hypocoristics as a secondary form of names that results from a formal modification of proper names with an affective value.

As far as the semantic values are concerned, French hypocoristics have some similar basic features with their English counterparts. According to Obeng (1997), they are used to express, love, friendship, tenderness, solidarity, or the belonging to a social group between people who have equal social statute or between a superior and his or her subordinate. Another main criterion about the use of hypocoristics in social or professional context is the direction of the vector for their usage. It goes from up to down. However, a superior can sometimes break the hierarchical barrier to tease their subordinate. In similar cases, the use of hypocoristic names must be interpreted as a privilege on the part the subordinate and the break of the barrier as an honor.

1.3. Bete Hypocoristics

Bete hypocoristics are names associated to each given name. These hypocoristic name are shared within the community or the family.

1.3.1. Presentation of Bete Hypocoristics

The Bete hypocoristics presented below were recorded in two villages: Ourégbabré and Zergbeu in the region of Soubré. This dialect of Soubré presents two varieties /gblɔkwɛ/ in Zergbeu and / badakua/ for Ourégbabré.

Table 3: List of Bete hypocoristic names (100)

	MEN			**WOMEN**	
1	Tape	Sejie	1	Zohonon	Bazia
2	Celi	Djati, Wuguehi	2	Zuzia	bheky
3	Guie	Bate, Zaka	3	Gouza	Zoua
4	Oupoh	Dayie	4	Ada	Okouasoli
5	louo	Guissi	5	Agouzou	Rouwa
6	Siomio	Guiri	6	Rouwa	Degni

7	Saki	Gbame	7	Dégré	Kakpe
8	Dadje	Gohi	8	Siomio	Degni
9	Djopoh	Kuegbou	9	Lehonon	Gouri
10	Sayere	Siobhio	10	Bika	Ziakou
11	Zadi	Guigbakou	11	Wanuale	Bika
12	Kipre	Gbotou	12	Gueme	Wassia
13	Neme	Kape	13	Naase	bhika
14	Logbo	Zoro	14	Oyiri	Koko
15	Lougbo	Guelie saki	15	Yohou	Zike
16	Kelie	Djekou	16	Aholi	debhle
17	Naounou	Madi	17	Deguehi	Vagbe
18	Avri	Guialigbela	18	Sawoua	Blime
19	Gbale	Douba	19	Lagoke	Kolia
20	Madou	Zegui	20	Bhoudou	Ogo
21	Guede	Kabhou	21	Padre	Okia
22	Ble	Vavi Gbotu	22	Tchietchieni	Yohou
23	Digbeu	Zadji	23	Tchiebelu	Zoukobeyi
24	Kipre	Gbotu	24	Gouza	Zadou
25	Gnaziri	Bozi	25	Yibo	Makoula
26	Djedje	Douna	26	Gnazeohon	Djako
27	Maguy	Gohourou	27	Kpokouhonon	Tikpizere
28	Wondji	Douba	28	Djidja	Ligbehi
29	Abe	Gougbo	29	Nako	Gbelia
30	Bayele	Ouguehi	30	Okia	Kiplezegbe
31	Lognon	Zoukou	31	Owoua	Ogo
32	Oupoh	Nanignon	32	Bhougouhonon	Gbeli
33	Kouadjo	Ziza Gbagbahi	33	Ayala	Zougbougbeli
34	Laki	Gadje	34	Djrolou	Zeble
35	Djika	Bate	35	Bhika	Ziakou
36	Okrou	Beto	36	Dasse	Dohou
37	Sayere	Siobhio	37	Deguehi	Yagbe
38	Magui	Gohourou	38	Dasse	Dohu
39	Aguy	Gobou	39	Zikobehi	Kogo
40	Goze	Kiegbe	40	Yila	Zignlogua
41	Gnali	Gogoseti	41	Djeza	Otcheli
42	Doudou	Liaglo	42	Adjeli	Gognlo
43	Ble	Gbotu	43	Djeli	Bhedi
44	Boga	Gobhle	44	Lagoki	Kolia
45	Kouko	Gnokou	45	Tchietchieni	Yohou
46	Gbagbo	Zikpe	46	Yipi	Djagba
47	Diopoh	Kiegbe	47	Djolohonon	Ziagbolou

48	Doudou	Liagbo	48	Atchele	Datcheli
49	Yaba	Gnadou	49	Glime	Djagba
50	Mahi	Duabhli	50	Zadihonon	Ziabolou

1. 3.2. Bete Hypocoristics in Social Networks

Contrary to English and French, Bete hypocoristics are formed by means of a neologic process. Many of them are newly coined names or phrases that express a contextual, personal message or need. Moreover, the hypocoristics of famous or important people from the family or the community can be given to individuals. For instance, a bride can receive a new name with a hypocoristic value in the community she becomes a member of. A hypocoristic such as /jɔlʊŋlɔ /(that means wife that brings happiness) can be coined and used to call her in her new community. These hypocoristics are used in the framework of social networking and are essential to maintain unity and peace. Troubles and problems that arise within those communities are easily solved as they are supposed to get under control by the members of the community. Interpersonal problems within networks are thus supposed not to be extended out of the network.

1.4. Gouro Hypocoristic Names and Social Cohesion

There are three different categories of hypocoristic names or expressions with high hypocoristic value in our corpus. The first group is used in the family to praise some members or to express one's love or bond. As such, they are part of the Gouro social codes that are used to maintain peace and unity among people in the family cell as well as in largest communities such as villages, tribes and regions.

Table 4: List of Gouro Hypocoristic names related to family

Hypocoristics	Semantic structures (semes)	Meaning
/ nɛ̃zimã	/nɛ̃ /(son)/ zimã /(good)	Good son
/ bagluba /	/ baglu /(champion) ₊ /ba /(very)	Hero
/ nɛ̃ti /	/ nɛ̃ / (son or daughter) ₊ / ti /(dad)	Good Dad
/ nɛ̃bu /	/nɛ̃ /(son or daughter) ₊ / bu / (mum)	Good Mum
/ glɛ̃biblɛ̃ /	-	Hero
/ zɛ̃zi /	/ zɛ̃ / (surrounder) ₊ /zi / (road)	beautiful
/ soãlɛ /	/ sɔ / (love) ₊ /ãlɛ / (me)	beloved

259

/ zrãɟɛmã /	/zrã / (game) + / ɟɛ / (play) + mã(with)	My doll
/ fɛblɛzi /	/ fɛ /(thing) /blɛ / (eat) + / zi / + (road)	Success
/ nẽsojɛ /	/ nɛ /(child)+ / sɔjɛ / (beauty)	Beautiful

Names of communities or places can be recalled in order to express a solidarity relation. People from the same village or tribe proudly use a name with a very high hypocoristic potential, to evoke their identity, their pride. In such cases, belonging to the same village or tribe can create a solidarity relation, a brotherhood bond or a friendly atmosphere between people.

Table5: List of Gouro hypocoristic names in relation with village or tribe

Name of village or tribe	Hypocoristics of villages or tribes	Hypocoristics of the inhabitants	Meaning
Bouafle	/jimãbɛ̃ /(water dwellers)	/biatibi/ or /biatilu/	Those who come from rivers
Blanfla	/apli /(numerous)	/jaubi/ or /jaulu/	Lucky sons or daughters
Suefla	/duflɛ/ (buffalo) Big market	/jaubii or/ jaulu/	Lucky sons or daughters
Konefla	/ zawaɟei / (warriors or strong men)	/jaubi /or. jaulu/	Lucky sons or daughters
Bonon	/ɟaɟie/ (lucky people)	-	-
Plologouli	/zacɛ̃guli/ (village of those who revenge)	-	-
Gonan	/ɟãɟi/ (village of people in bush) /powuo /(those who live in the center)	-	-
Sinfra	/segbesiã / -	/ɟaubi/ or/ ɟaulu/	Lucky sons or daughters

The Gouro language resorts to some specialized nicknames in relation with love affairs. These hypocoristics function as some particular names used to caress one's beloved. The hypocoristics under question can be used to show one's love or affection too. When conflicts appear within a tribe, they can be used to remind the belligerents that they have the same blood. That recall is intended to calm down tensions and restore a peaceful atmosphere or relation.

Table 6: List of Gouro hypocoristics in relation with love and feelings

Hypocoristics	Structure (semes)	Meaning
/ ãbuɛ /(my love)	/ ã /(my) +/ buɛ /(amour)	My darling
/ lɛbuɛlu /	/ lɛ /(women) +/ buɛ /(amour)	My darling
/ zrãɟɛmã /	/ zrã /(game) /ɟɛ /(play) amã (with)	My doll
/ zɛ̃zi /	/ zɛ̃ /(to surround, to come around,+ / zi/ (road)	beautiful
/zrorirõ /	/zro/ (bee)+ / irõ /seed)	honey
/ ãjuɛ/	ã(my) juɛ	Apples of my eyes
/fewe /	/fɛ/(thing) /we/ (rare,uncommon)	Precious
Hypocoristics	**Structure (semes)**	**meaning**
/Klɛwrlɛ/	/klɛ/(pepper)+/ wrlɛ / (seed)	Awesome
/glaoli /	/gla /(male) +/ goli /(lion)	Chef, male lion
/laworlɛ/	/la/(rain)+ /wrlɛ/(hail)	The rain
/cɛwrlɛ/	/cɛ/ (fire)+ / wrlɛ /(seed)	Stately
/tozan/	/to/(name) +/zã /(owner)	Man or woman of glory
/mubi/	/mu/ (mum) +/bi /(son)	brother
/tibi/	/ti /(father)+/ bi /(son)	brother
/ãzie /	/ã /(my) + /zie /(homonym)	My homonym
/ ãbee /	/ã / (my)+/ bee / (friend)	My friend
/ãblu /	/ ã /(my) /blu /(sister)	My sister
/gloɛ̃/	/gloɛ̃/ (man, strong)	Champion
/jri golɛ̃ bi /	/jri/(tree) / golɛ̃/(chief) bi (son)	Son of warrior
/waklaplawaclapa/	/wa/(they)/ clap /(do) /pla /(nothing)	Unstoppable

Gouro hypocoristics are not diminutives of names. They are full names that contain many sememes that express pride, glory, praise and other semantic elements that can be used to please, caress, complement or get people's ego boosted. They are used in the family cell between relatives and between lovers. As it appears in the semantic programs of the items above, they can be used to praise a community, a village or a tribe, to recall their identity and unity or boost their loyalty and integrity.

2. Hypocoristics and their Contribution to Peace

Hypocoristic names are used in the setting of social and cultural codes. They are part of social norms meant to contribute to the keeping of social cohesion and unity among the different members, male and female, youngers and elderly.

2.1. Sociolinguistic Contrasts and Social Cohesion

Above the terminology of hypocoristic that refers to similar realities in the languages under study, there are some sociolinguistic and cultural coloring of the linguistic item that can

vary from one language to the other. For example, English and French speakers resort to names with high hypocoristic value to caress, express endearment or love to their relatives and friends. Lexemes such as darling (English) or Chéri (French) can be associated to hypocoristic names like Bob or Suzy like in darling Bob and Chérie Suzy. Such constructions can be used to ease the atmosphere, calm down tensions and create a harmonious and peaceful relation in families or communities. Similar strategies are used in Bete and Gouro too, for similar purposes. However, besides that, it is usual in Bete and Gouro that a speaker resorts to a spontaneously created hypocoristics to break the ice and prepare the way to a close and friendly relation.

2.1.1. Spontaneous Hypocoristics

Spontaneous hypocoristics are some names or expressions with high hypocoristic value created by individuals when they meet someone for the first time and have to introduce themselves in the process of ice breaking. In greeting rituals for example, people who meet for the first time, ask each other: /ɓɪ zɪ ɲlɪ o/ what's your pet name? Generally, they shakes hands just after they have introduced themselves to each other by means of some hypocoristics. An example of such spontaneous hypocoristic is: / a mə ə tapɛ ɲlɪ zɛlɪ luwli/ I am Tape, darling of women with fair complexion. Spontaneous hypocoristics expressions are thus used to break the ice, to lighten the mood and create a friendly atmosphere.

2.1.2. Hypocoristics associated to one's Given or First Name

Bete hypocoristics that are associated to first names have a shared sociolinguistic background for people living in the same village or the same tribe. Although, the hypocoristic may vary from one area to another, we notice that most of them are stable. As for a forename like Seri, the associated hypocoristic, is exactly the same in all the Bete regions. All the people named Seri are called Djati that is the associated hypocoristic name. The use of that kind of hypocoristics can favor a solidarity relation between people within the same network.

2.1.3. The Bride's Hypocoristic Name

In the Bete culture, the bride receives a special treatment. She receives some particular care, presents, specific clothing and food during some weeks after the wedding celebration.

However, one the most important ceremony is the name giving one (/jukwlukpe ɲlʊpəpu /). The aim of the ceremony is to provide the bride with a new name. Most of the time, a name with an important hypocoristic value in relation with the ideal of marriage is preferred. Some of the hypocoristics for brides (recorded in Zergbeu) include /joliŋlɔ/(that means wife that brings happiness) and/ glɩmƎ/(let me be too).The family of the bridegroom thus expresses their wishes for the new couple. This fact is attested in Gouro speaking communities where the bride is proudly called / ãvolinã/, our sister in-law, a wish for a privileged brotherhood relation with the new comer.

2.1.4.   Hypocoristic Names and Peace through Social Networks

Hypocoristics are important elements in the construction and keeping of unity in communities. In Bete and Gouro for example, some particular hypocoristics are used in the construction of social cohesion. For such a purpose, values such as courtesy and respect for elders are very important qualities. Therefore, using a given name to call an elder, an in-law or someone from one of our social networks would sound impolite. This implies that using a hypocoristic is a sign of one's commitment in maintaining social norms and cohesion. On the contrary, the use of given names, in those circumstances, can be perceived as challenging social norms and denying respect to elders.

2.1.4.1. Hypocoristics and Respect

All the hypocoristic names in bete are closely linked to the expression of respect and the wishing of peaceful relationship. In fact, it is prohibited to call somebody by his or her hypocoristic name when he or she is your elder or when you do not belong to the same sphere. Consequently, the fact of calling them by means of their given or first name can be taken of a declaration of belligerence.Variables such as age and social relationships are thus very important factors in community norms and codes.

2.1.4.2.   Age as a Trigger of Hypocoristics

Bete and Gouro are gerontocratic societies contrary to English and French. Consequently, age is one of the most important criterium in the use of hypocoristics within those societies. Age is taken into account in the use of hypocoristics given that, only people who are in the same social network can use hypocoristics to call one another. So, when you are jounger than someone, you use a specific hypocoristic that is a marker of both age

hierarchy and respect. The name hypocoristic under question is / jizi/.It is used in phrases such as / jizi gie/, elder Guie.

2.1.4.3.   In-laws and Hypocoristics

Between in-laws, the title /wutɔŋlɔ/, for female and /wutɔwli/, for male is used. These terms are associated to many taboo deeds and words. For example, you do not talk to our in-laws the same way we talk to ordinary people. In Gouro, the in-laws are called /ãvoli/ for men or /ãvolinã / for women. In both Bete and Gouro communities, those terms are used as some particular codes of respect and consideration for in-laws. The fact of not resorting to those hypocoristic titles can create some incidents and be subject to penalties. The hypocoristics terms participate thus to the existence and keeping of peaceful relations within the In-laws network.

2.1.4.4.   Hypoocoristics and Solidarity

There are many social networks in bete and Gouro. Normally, the codes between people in a given network stipulate a peaceful and discrete solving of interpersonal problems. Some of the networks are based on criteria such as having the same maternal village, the fact of being married or not, the belonging to the same tribe, etc. Within those networks, there is a name with a high hypocoristic value used to refer to the members or to call them. The fact of sharing the hypocoristic name under question is favorable to a solidarity bond.

2.1.4.5.   The Social Network of / àɣlamǝ /

Between people whose mothers come from to the same village, there is a special bond. To show the fact that they have the same maternal village, they call one another /aɣlamǝ/(that means we come from the same village in Bété). In Gouro, the lexeme used to refer to people from the same maternal village is / ɓuɓi/. It means my brother. Therefore, people from the same village or maternal village consider one another as brothers or sisters. On that ground, they are supposed to be tolerant, to live together in peace. Moreover, they must solve any conflict that arises between them peacefully before it reaches the village traditional court.

2.1.4.6.   The Social Network of / tua / in Bete and /ãzie/ in Gouro

Literally, / tua / means my homonym. This name is used as a marker of a special bond or sign of a solidarity relationship among people who have similar given names. In Gouro, /ãzie/.means my homonym and is more common that the use of the person's given name. In

traditional Bete and Gouro societies, homonyms belong to a large social network cemented with the hypocoristic shared regarded as social link.

2.1.4.7.   The Social Network of /glɪgbidayuo/

This name refers to people belonging to the same village or tribe. Normally conflicts as well as marriage are forbidden between people who belong to the same / gligbe,/ tribe. /jimãbɛ̃ / (water dwellers) are people from the city of Bouafle, a Gouro city in Côte d'Ivoire. That hypocoristic functions as a factor of identity, regional pride and unity.

In sum, the sociolinguistic triggers for the use of hypocoristics vary from one language to another. Consequently, there is a big gap between the Ivorian languages studied (Bete and Gouro) on the one hand, and western languages (English and French) on the other hand. In Bete and Gouro, it sounds disrespectful to use an elder's given name. Consequently, there is a need for a title, a class or network hypocoristic presented above to soften or avoid the cultural shock. Moreover, the use of title or network hypocoristic emphasizes a solidarity relation that contributes to social cohesion and peace. The use of network hypocoristics in Bete and Gouro are part of the social codes that contribute to peace and unity within the community.

2.2.   Similarities about the Usage of Name Hypocoristics

There are some similarities in sociolinguistic and cultural use of hypocoristics in the four societies and linguistic communities that have been studied through the subject of name hypocoristics.

One the main point is that hypocoristics are used as an alternative, an option in naming. Given names are the first option. They appear as the main option to call someone. On this ground, given names are those that generally appear on identity cards as elements of individual identification. Hypocoristics are, most of the time, restricted to familiar use. In that circumstances, they sound cute, affectionate and are mostly used for children or in the family cell.

Another similarity is the intimacy paradigm in the use of given names and hypocoristics. In fact, the vector of intimacy in the use of anthroponyms goes from the less intimate represented by the given name to the more intimate, the hypocoristic. Consequently,

there is more solidarity associated to the use of hypocoristics and more power or distant with given names.

CONCLUSION

This pragmatic study conducted on a corpus of more than 235 hypocoristic names and expressions in English, French, Bete and Gouro has questioned the relation between hypocoristics and peace. The analysis of the morphology and semantic features contained in the hypocoristics has revealed some basic differences in both coinage and use of the anthroponyms under question.

Hypocoristic names are coined differently according to cultural backgrounds. French and English resort to morphonological processes such as truncation, duplication and affixation. They thus use, mostly, diminutive forms of names or given names in the expression of endearment. As for African languages such Bete and Gouro, they use neologism or associate other names with hypocoristic values to first names.

The analysis of the semantic features of name hypocoristics shows some common properties in the four languages studied. The hypocoristics display intimacy, endearment and love as the main features in the use of name hypocoristics or expressions with high hypocoristic potential.

Beyond the terminology of name hypocoristic, it appears a gap in the cultural and social coding that structures the use of name hypocoristics. If in western societies such as English and French, it does not sound disrespectful to call someone older by their name or given name, the social codes in Bete and Gouro totally prohibits that usage. Younger people have no right to call their elders by their names. Therefore, the use of titles or network hypocoristics offers an option to avoid that impoliteness. The structure: title or network hypocoristic + Name or Given name is thus used to address elders.

The use of hypocoristics can contribute to maintain or restore peace thanks to their calming potential. Hypocoristics are used to avoid to embarrass, to frustrate or to get people uncomfortable. Moreover, they contribute to uncover one's feelings or bond. The sememes contained in hypocoristic names or expressions in the four languages studied render affection, tenderness, intimacy and even friendship. English and French speaking communities use

hypocoristics mainly to pet, endear their relatives and lovers. In addition of that possibility, Gouro and Bete speakers can express respect and solidarity in accordance with their social norms related to age, in-law relations and traditional social networks. In those Ivorian languages hypocoristics are part of the social norms and codes established to keep or restore peace within communities.

Bibliography

ABODUNRIN Osunniran Tajudeen, BARIKI Isaiah, 2021, « la formation des hypocoristiques en Français et en Yoruba », *Studii de Gramatica Contrastiva*, pp 72-99.

BASSIL Mashaqa, & al., 2023, "Hypocoristic in the Ammani-Jordanian context: A Construction Morphology perspective", *Cogent Arts and humanity, pp1-17.* Consulted online 12 April 2024, https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2180877.

 BEARDSLEY Dianne and SIMPSON Jane, 2009, *Hypocoristics in New Zealand and Australian English*, New Zealand dictionary center/university of Sydney.

Encyclopaedia Britannica**:** https://www.britannica.com/topic/hypocoristic-name consulted online on july 23rd 2024.

LAHROUCHI Mohamed, 2021, "Minimality, weight and melodic content: The view from French and Berber hypocoristics", *Radical: A Journal of Phonology*, 3, pp1-44.

LYONS John, 1995, *Linguistic Semantics: Introduction,* Cambridge, England, Cambridge University Press, pp.376.

SIMPSON Jane, 2001, *Hypocoristics of place names in Australia English*, in Peter Collins and David Blair (Eds), varieties of English: Australia English.

WIERZBICK Anna, 1984,"Diminutives and Depreciatives: Semantic Representation for Derivational Categories", *Quaderni di Semantica 5,* pp123- 130.