Domestication of Arabo-Islamic Words in the Ilorin Dialect of Yorùbá

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Abstract

Language is a dynamic phenomenon which develops-among other things-with the introduction of new concept. Yoruba language-like many other living languages- has developed for its ability to accommodate new concepts into its vocabulary. With the introduction of Islam to many parts of the world, Arabic becomes the instrument to convey its concepts. Some of these concepts are either adopted as a loan word or being literally translated. However, Yoruba dialect spoken in Ilorin adopts a strategy of domesticating some of the Arab-Islamic words despite the fact that some of these concepts do not exist in Yoruba Language. This work therefore aims at identifying and trace the origin of the domesticated Arabic of Islamic concept popularly used in the dialect of Ilorin people. Forty (40) of such words are selected in the areas of Islamic doctrine, civilization and materials. Meanwhile simple percentage is used to analyze some variables in the work. After the study it is discovered that the heterogenic composition of Ilorin assisted in the domestication of Islamic concept from Arabic. A sizeable of them are from Yoruba origin coined and adopted from Yoruba while some of these words are from other Languages. Interestingly these words only do not find their ways in Yoruba dictionary but are also regularly used among Yoruba people in Nigeria. It is recommended that further studies should be conducted in this area for the purpose of enriching relationship between Arabic and Yoruba Languages.
Keywords: Arabic language, Ilorin Dialect, Arabo-Islamic, Islamic Words, and Theory of Domestication

Introduction

Language is one of the socio-cultural phenomenons. It is basically confined to human beings in their environment or society. Language develops when new concepts, ideas, and technologies are introduced into the society and the people are ready to accept and adopt them into their lexicon. This is done by either to translate, borrow or create another word for the new concept. With the introduction of Islam in the 7th century which is built upon Arabic socio-cultural and linguistic background. Most of its belief, activities and ideologies are derived from Arabic language which are commonly adapted and adopted by the receiving communities. However, it is noticed that many Islamic concept words used in Ilorin are neither borrowed nor translated from Arabic which require some investigation on how these words emerge and from which source.

Therefore, the main concern of this work is to identify some of these Arabic- Islamic words that are domesticated in the Ilorin Yoruba dialect. It will also trace the origin of the domesticated word, state and explain the Arabic words of the concept and analyze how prevalent these words are used in relationship with others. The data were collected from the Yoruba dialect spoken in all the areas that form the Ilorin emirate. The impact of this work, after its completion, lies on the fact that it will erase the erroneous belief that all Arabic of Islamic concepts are totally adopted and adapted in Arabic. In addition to these it will also show how Arabic words enrich the local dialect of Ilorin people which later extend to other Yoruba speaking societies in Nigeria. Finally, this work will show how Arabic has contributed to the expansion of Yoruba vocabularies not only by borrowing but by forcing the language to create new words to express the new concept. This research shall make use of sources and resources from Arabic, Islamic and Yoruba.

Concept of Islamic Words and Theory of Domestication

The origin of Islamic words is traced to the advent of Islam in the Arabian peninsulas in the early 7th century through Prophet Mohammed. The followers were made to believe in the new concept of the creator and act of worship. This new development metamorphosed into either introduction of new lexicon or restructuring of semantic level of the already existing Arabic words. For example, the word Allah, Salat, Sawm, Hajj etc. existed and frequently used by Arabs before the advent of Islam but later their meanings were redefined
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to suit the new religion (Islam). Meanwhile, words like Janat, Jahanam, Malaiqa, Iman, Quran etc. are among selection of new words introduced to Arabic lexicon. The two types of the two groups are termed Al-fadh-Islamiyyah (Islamic words) (Daf, 1986). Each community embracing the religion (Islam) automatically embraces the Arabic words to express all the aspect of the religion. Subsequently the Arabic words become part of the religion.

As time goes on, the receiving communities adopt different linguistic strategies to domesticate the Arabic Islamic words to suit their psycho-social linguistic level. The adaptation of Arabic words comes at different levels which include: Phonologically such as replacement of non-available Arabic sound in the receiving language eg. Q to K as in Quran to Kuran, Z to S as in Zakat to Saka. Hajj to Ajj etc. The phonological differences between Arabic and most African and Nigerian languages has been studied at different levels of Arabic studies and in all academic stages. Among whom are Katibi (2013) and Abdulraheem (2016). Meanwhile, this writer observes that non-Arab communities usually adopt three strategies for the domestication of Arabic Islamic words in their languages namely: Translation, Borrowing from Arabic sources and Creation of new words.

A. Translation: This is a situation where the Arabic-Islamic words have equivalent in the receiving language. Therefore, the local language is fully adopted with no reference to Arabic. This is due to the fact that the local language possesses similar ideology, concept and adequate lexicon. Examples include Rasul, Òjíṣẹ́ (Yor.) (Messenger)

B. Borrowing from Arabic Sources: This is applicable where there are no equivalent words in the receiving languages, thereby forcing them to borrow the Arabic words in the phonological restricted form to suit the receiving language. Al-muhajir (al-majiri); the needy traveller, al- Quran (al-qurani); quran, Sadaq (sadaqi), As-Subh (Assubah); early morning prayer, A'sr (àlàsàrì); pre dusk prayer, Maghrib (magribi); evening prayer, I'sha (Ìṣáì); night prayer, du-a (àdúhà); supplication, Imam (lèmámù); Prayer leader, kabah (kàábà); Holy mosque in Makkah.

C. Creation of New Words: This is a condition where another word is completely created by the non-Arab community to represent Islamic word. Examples of such are:Sawm (ààwè́) Fasting, Salat (ìrun); Prayer.

Ilorin-Yoruba Dialect

Ilorin is presently the capital city of Kwara state and also the capital of Ilorin emirate which comprises of five local governments of Kwara state namely: Asà, Ilorin East, Ilorin South, Ilorin West and Mòrò. It is located in the north central geo-political zone of Nigeria. The indigenes of this area
Katibi consist of Arabs, Bárùbá, Borno, Fulani, Gwari, Hausa, Kemberi, Mali, Nupe, and Yorùbá. The conglomerates of these ethnic groups choose the Yorùbá dialect for communication for social and commercial interaction. According to Ọlọṣọ (2017) in her study opined that the Yorùbá dialect of Ìlọrin is distinct to other dialect of Yorùbá in the areas of lexical variation. Even though, phonological difference could be observed from the dialect. Presently, with the influx of people and proximity of the area to Yorùbá land, most of linguistic features known for Ìlọrin dialect are gradually fading away but still retain and maintain the major facts of them (Katibi, 2011). It is pertinent to note that the dialect of Yorùbá has greatly influence other Yorùbá dialect being the major source for the spread of Islam in the area. Nevertheless, the Yorùbá language which is spoken in the south western part of Nigeria and spread across other areas like Kogi, Kwara, Edo, and Delta states. Although, the language has its root in the Niger-congo language family and of kwa-sub family group and commonly characterized as tonal language despite this, the language contains a lot of Arabic words. Some scholars such as: Ogunbiyi (1984) and Al-Ilori (2012) opine that this is so because of genetic relationship between the Arabs and the Yorùbá in the Pre-historic era and that quantum of the Arabic words in the Yorùbá lexicon are far beyond the spread of Islam in the area. However, globalization, education, commercial trips and electronic media are among other minor factors that further enrich Yorùbá language with Arabic language and culture. Furthermore, scholars of Arabic studies have proven that Arabic and Yorùbá shared some morphology and syntactic relationship which include the position of adjective and adverb, transitive and intransitive verbs, and in some areas of rhetoric (Abubakr, 2004). With the above analysis, Ìlọrin dialect of Yorùbá derives its lexicon from Yorùbá root and from other languages spoken in the area which are, Hausa, Nupe, Fulfulde and Arabic.

**List of Domesticated Islamic words of Arabic Origin**

It is the particular concern of this work to identify words of Ìlọrin origin used to describe some aspects of Islamic belief, doctrine, act, civilization, name and material. These words must not be in Arabic form or transformed and solely confined to Ìlọrin. For example, words like Álùbáríkà, Álijánnà, Làdánni, Mosáláṣí etc. because they are of Arabic origin. Meanwhile, these domesticated Islamic words of Arabic origin may include borrowed word from other languages which form Ìlọrin dialect.
| S/N | ARABIC | DOMESTICATED WORDS | ORIGIN | ENGLISH MEANING | CONCEPT | TYPE |
|-----|--------|-------------------|--------|----------------|---------|------|
| 1.  | Solat  | Ḣiron             | Yorùbá | Prayer         |         | Doctrine |
|     |        |                   |        | A five times daily prayer which every Muslim must observe. Non observers shall be punished in the hereafter. |         |      |
| 2.  | Sawm   | Ààwè              | Yorùbá | Fasting        |         | Doctrine |
|     |        |                   |        | Muslim must fast for 29 or 30 days during Ramadan. Whoever intentionally refuses to observe it shall be punished, while the observer shall be rewarded greatly. |         |      |
|   | Thamar | Lābĩdìn | Hausa (from dàbinù) | Palm date | Doctrine |
|---|--------|---------|---------------------|----------|----------|
| 3. |        |         |                     |          | The faithful is encouraged to break his fast during Ramadan with Palm date. As it is reported from Prophet Muhammad (S. A.W). |
| 4. | Sodaqah | Sàràà   | Alms giving         |          | A non-compulsory alms given to the needy at any time. The reward for it is believed to be great. |
| 5. | Rihutoy-iba | Tũrâré | Hausa Incense |          | Islam encourages Muslims to be clean and smell nice with the use of perfume |

Doctrine
| No. | Arabic Word | Hausa | English Description                                                                 | Doctrine |
|-----|-------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 6.  | Madhu       | Yọ̀nbọ̀ | Every Muslim is mandated to praise prophet Mohammed (S.A.W) any time his name is mentioned or being remembered. | Doctrine |
| 7.  | Dirʻu (Kharuf) | Hūdā  | Some Muslims believe that slaughtering a two colored Ram during Eid-l-Adha is more rewarding than any other sacrifice. | Doctrine |
| 8.  | Solatul Zuhr | Āilā   | One of the five daily prayers usually observed during the noon time.                | Doctrine |
| #  | Tradition | Language | Language | Description | Category |
|----|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| 9. | Zakatul fitr | Jákàà | | End of Ramadan Alms | Doctrine |
| 10. | Jazau | Láádá | Hausa | Reward | Doctrine |
| 11. | Tasua/ Ashurah | Káyó-káyó | Yorùbá | Ninth and Tenth of Muharram (First Islamic Calendar Month) | Doctrine |
| 12. | At-tahara | Tàábà | Hausa | Purification of the private part | Act |
|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. | Kibla | Gábásì | Hausa | Direction of the holy mosque (Kaaba) | A place where all Muslims face during prayer everyday | Doctrine |
| 14. | Rajab | Àawè Arúgbó | Yorùbá | Ninth month of Islamic calendar | Some Muslims fast part or whole of this month | Doctrine |
| 15. | Dhul qada | Ràg-bò-ràgbò | Yorùbá | The eleventh Month of the Islamic calendar | Muslims start buying rams for sacrifice for the month that follows (Dhul-hijja) | Civilization |
| 16. | Haddu | Taàrà | Hausa | Punishment | Punishment described for offenders by Islamic law | Act |
| 17. | Manar | Sóró | Minaret | One or more pillar built on the top of the mosques | | Civilization |
| 18. | Qirah | Kéhú | Fulfulde | Reading | Act of reading or learning Arabic or Islamic Studies | Civilization |
| 19. | Shaikh | Àlùfāà | Madingo | Islamic scholars | Somebody who is learned and teaches Arabic/Islamic studies | Civilization |
| 20. | Diwan | Kùndi | Hausa | File | Files where documents are kept | Civilization |
| No. | Term 1 | Term 2 | Language | Term 3 | Description | Category |
|-----|--------|--------|----------|--------|-------------|----------|
| 21. | Ama’mah | Láwàní | Hausa | Turban | A long cloth material usually tied around the head, mouth and nose | Civilization |
| 22. | Gina’u | Wéré | Yorùbá | Islamic song | A type of Islamic band usually performed during Ramadan midnight meal to awaken Muslims | Civilization |
| 23. | Gina’u | Wákà | Hausa | Islamic song | A popular Islamic song usually performed by Muslim scholars or women during an Islamic occasion | Civilization |
| 24. | Haqibah | Gááfákà | Fulfulde | Bag where Qur’an or Islamic books are kept | A small bag usually made with leather and used to keep or convey Qur’an or Islamic books | Civilization |
| 25. | Tahjiha | Ajítú | Yorùbá | Spelling | Art of spelling of joined letters in Arabic | Civilization |
| No. | Word     | Translation | Meaning                                                                 | Type   |
|-----|----------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 26  | Tasawur  | Báárà       | A condemnable act of begging people for financial assistance            | Act    |
| 27  | Tarawih  | Aásámú      | Special prayer during Ramadan usually in the night                     | Act    |
| 28  | Fa’siq/Fajir | Pòkìì   | Impious                                                                | Act    |
| 29  | Nikkah   | Yìgì        | Act of joining married couples in Islamic way                          | Act    |
| 30  | Dhibhu   | Dúnbú       | Act of slaughtering animals in Islamic way                              | Act    |
| 31  | Ibrahim  | Déndè       | A prophet of Allah, known as Father of Faith in Islam                  | Name   |
| 32  | Abdullah | Gógá        | One of the preferred name of Muslim and encouraged by prophet Mohammed | Name   |
| 33  | Maryam   | Màiró/Mèró  | The mother of prophet Issa                                            | Name   |
| 34  | Aliyu    | Dòdó        | The fourth caliphate of Islam                                          | Name   |
|   | Name          | Language | Region | Description                                           | Category |
|---|---------------|----------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 35. | Abubakr      | Gárúbà   | Fulfulde | The first caliphate of Islam                         | Name     |
| 36. | Muhammed     | Gídádò, Tukur, Kúrángà, Sámbo, Bélò | Fulfulde | The last prophet of Islam                            | Name     |
| 37. | Umar         | Sàndá    | Hausa   | The second caliphate of Islam. The Rich and powerful | Name     |
| 38. | Kitab        | Tírà     | Fulfulde | Collections of Arabic words sheet bound together     | Civiliza-
| 39. | Ibrik        | Àgé      | Yorúbá  | Brick/Plastic water Container used by Muslims to perform ablution | Material |
| 40. | Jumu’ah      | Ojó-ńlá  | Yorúbá  | A special day of Islamic Week. It is presumed that the World will end that day. Allah accepts Prayer during the day. | Doctrine |

**Comments and Analysis**

Among the major objectives of this work is to investigate how prevalence of Islamic words in the Yorùbá dialect of Ìlọrin and how the people are able to localize those words and use them in their daily expressions. Meanwhile, in the cause of compiling those words certain facts emerged. Simple percentage is used to extract some information for analysis. In an effort to domesticate these foreign Arabic words in to the Yorùbá dialect of Ìlọrin, some strategies were adopted which conform to Adeniran A.S theory.
Domestication of Arabo-Islamic Words in the Ilọrin Dialect of Yorùbá (1992). These are: borrowing, special coinage and loan words. For instance, words like:  Aires (noon prayer), Ààwẹ̀ (fasting), Wéré (midnight song) are derived from Yorùbá language. Meanwhile, words like: Ìrun (prayer), Káyó-káyó (9th day of the first month of lunar calendar), Ràgbò-ràgbò (11th month of lunar calendar), Oṣù Arúgbó (7th month of Lunar Calendar) are examples for special coinage. For instances ìrun (prayer) is coined from Yorùbá word Ọrún (five) to indicate that major Muslim prayers are performed five times daily. While Ààwẹ̀ (fasting) is presumed to have being from cleansing or meaning cleanliness from all sins during the period of fasting. The meaning of other examples given reflects from the word itself. The remaining words are borrowed from existing dialects spoken in Ìlọrin. The languages are Yorùbá (9) (22.5%), Hausa (13) (32.5%), Fulfulde (9) (22.5%), Madingo (1) (2.5%). The word may have sneaked into Ilọrin dialect because of the presence of Mali communities (Ímàle). The remaining 8 words which constitute 20%, are yet to be identified with any language. These inform the facts that Ilọrin is a Heterogeneous and Multilingual setting which derives its principle of Islam controlling the social cultural entity of the area. Some other facts include: frequent use of this domesticated Arabic words of Islamic concept both at oral and written expressions. Also, there is no alternative words for most of these localized words such as: Ìrun (prayer), Àawẹ̀ (fasting), Kéwú (Arabic reading), Àlúfáà (Islamic scholars) etc. However, word like Àgé is presently used in Ilọrin dialect to replace Al-kidiri or Sẹ́ńtẹ̀ lí meaning kettle. In the same vein names like Gídádò, Tukur, Déńdè, Gógá, Dòdò, Gárúbá etc. which serves as cognomen for Muhammed, Abdullah, Ali, Ibrahim, Abubakr are fading away and mostly beard by elderly people or sometimes serves as surname for people in Ilọrin emirate. This category constitutes 15% of the total domesticated words.

Another issue of concern in this research is the availability of some of these Arabic words in the Yorùbá dictionary even though there are numerous others which could not be found. However, some of the available ones are not properly given the right meaning. This is largely due to the fact that the Arabic words studied are strictly religious (Islamic) and confined to Ilọrin dialect of Yorùbá which are yet to be adapted to Yorùbá lexicon. This also confirmed the argument that in the process of domesticating a foreign word, there is tendency that the source language may not be properly captured either by indicating semantic shrinking or semantic extension. All these factors are noticed from the work under study. At this juncture, scholars of Arabic and Yorùbá are advised to collaborate for the purpose to correct an imbalance between the two Languages.

Furthermore, this research endeavors to categorize all the domesticated Arabic words used in this study into five (5) namely: Doctrine, Act,
Civilization, Name and Material. This is done to discover how extensive the Islamic words cum Islamic concept permeate through Ilorin culture and its dialect. The table indicates that out of 40 words identified in the study. Doctrine has (14) representing 35% while Act has (7) equal to 17.5% out of the total amount. While, words that are related to Islamic civilization (11) representing 27.5% while common Islamic names have (7) representing 17.5%. Islamic material commonly used by the people of Ilorin is just one (1) representing 2.5% the least of this category. A further analysis of this category reveals that doctrine and civilization take (25) out of (40) words representing 62.5% close to two third ($\frac{2}{3}$) out of the words studied. This may be due to symbiotic and interactive relationship between doctrine and civilization. More so, all Islamic civilizations are extracted from Islamic belief. Interestingly, one may not see direct connection between Islamic acts and Islamic names but the two are inseparable. This is better explained with the fact that the two categories have the same number of words 7 each representing 17.5% if the two are merged together they represent 35% more than one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the total domesticated Arabic words from Islamic concept.

**Conclusion**

This work is aimed at identifying and analyzing how some Arabic words from Islamic concept are domesticated and used in Ilorin dialect of Yoruba. More importantly, it is aimed at investigating how Arabic language generally has contributed to the expansion of Yoruba lexicon. In order to achieve this, the researcher reviewed some that are related to the subject matter which include: Islamic concept, theory of domestication, Ilorin dialect among others. The list of the identified domesticated Arabic words into Yoruba was given containing some variable which include: list of Arabic words, domesticated words, origin, English meaning, concept and type. The data are collected from the Ilorin dialect commonly used by contemporary Ilorin people. All the major facts are extracted from the table using observation and sometimes by using simple percentage.

After the discussion and analysis, it was discovered that Arabic and Yoruba have linguistic relationship far beyond loan words. And that effort to domesticate some Islamic concepts of Arabic origin commenced very long time ago through the effort of the local communities. Moreover, the domestication of these Arabic words has greatly impacted on Yoruba lexicon i.e. adding to Yoruba words. In the same vein, it could be concluded that Ilorin dialect of Yoruba has also influence the domestication and borrowing of Arabic words relating to Islamic concept because of the prevalence of Arabic language in Ilorin, its Islamic setting and its proximity to Yoruba land. The study also
revealed categorically that non Yorùbá words from the local languages are freely used in the process of domestication of those Arabic words which some of them are easily formed in the Yorùbá dictionary. Therefore, it is recommended that effort should be made by the concerned authority to regularize some linguistic anomalies especially in the areas of lexicon-semantic between Arabic and Yorùbá in the areas of expressing Islamic concept.

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