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Onomastic Approach of the Names of Burkinabè

Slam Artists

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Abstract

Poetry slam represents an oratory art open to all, typically performed in public places and during various events. This verbal practice resonates particularly with young people, as each artist distinguishes himself/herself by adopting a pseudonym that often reflects his/her vision or ideals he/she defend. The aim of this study is to identify the lexical formation processes governing the structure of these artists' names and unveil their underlying semantics through an interpretative study.

Key words: Burkinabè, lexical creation, processes, semantics, slammers.

Introduction

For slam poets, the assumed name, stage name or pseudonym is the expression of their artistic and cultural identity. Through this name, they embody a value or defend a specific cause. It also serves to conceal the author's official identity in order to guarantee his or her safety. According to Jean-Marie LELOUP (1963, p. 452), "It is a fancy name freely chosen by a person wishing to hide his or her personality from the public". It is still used by literary figures to express their opinions or embody an ideal. As the assumed name is expressive and a means of communication between the poet and the community, it gives the poet notoriety. It therefore has a marketing effect. This linguistic phenomenon, which stems from the lexical creativity of the bearer, appeared in literature from the 17th century, the period of classicism, before becoming widespread in the following century.

To gain a better understanding of the morphosemantic aspects of these nouns, we ask the following questions: What onomastic analysis can be made of these names of Burkinabè artists? What modes of lexical creation did the Burkinabe slammers use to create their pseudonyms? What reference do these linguistic creations derive from?

On the basis of the questions posed above, we put forward the following hypotheses: assumed names are characterised by their motivation, their expressiveness and their particular structure. The assumed names used by Burkinabe slammers are formed from a variety of lexical creation processes. Each of these names has a particular reference and reflects the profound aspirations of its originator.

In this study, our general aim is to analyse the stage names of Burkina Faso slammers. Specifically, we would first like to study the form of artists' names in order to discover the ways in which they are created. We also hope to reveal their semantics through their interpretation.

This work falls within the field of onomastics. This theory comes from lexicology, which is itself a field of linguistics. According to Jean Dubois et al (2001, p.334), onomastics is "a branch of lexicology studying the origin of proper nouns". Gica Pehoiu (2007, p.156) specifies that onomastics "studies the general laws of the appearance, evolution and functioning of proper nouns in a language". It includes related sciences such as anthroponymy, toponymy and hydronymy. It is precisely through the morphosemantic approach that we approach these types of nouns. This approach is subdivided into two important theories: morphology and semantics. The first is morphological. According to Jean Dubois et al (2001, p. 311), it refers to "the study of word forms (inflection and derivation) [...]". In modern linguistics, it is the description of the rules of the internal structure of words and the rules for combining syntagms into sentences". Using this theory, we will examine the form of the assumed names of Burkinabe poets in order to reveal their lexical formation processes. Quantum semantics is defined by Georges Mounin (1974, p.293) as "the part of linguistics which studies the meaning or signified of lexical units". It is a science derived from linguistics, the study of which applies to the mechanisms and operations that concern the meaning of words and expressions in languages. It is a science derived from linguistics, the study of which focuses on the mechanisms and operations that

concern the meaning of words and expressions in languages. It will therefore be used to interpret the elements of the corpus in order to decipher the meaning conveyed by these lexical items, which are the adopted names. We began by analysing the linguistic expressiveness and formal characteristics of the slam artists' names to guide our selection. Accordingly, we opted for a qualitative approach. The investigation applied to fifty-eight (58) pseudonyms. On social media platforms, particularly Facebook, we identified the artists' names and subsequently filtered them based on the linguistic, artistic, and morphological rigor exhibited by the slammers in the adoption of their pseudonyms. We also participated in slam writing workshops and cultural events, where we had the opportunity to meet slam artists whose names captured our attention.

1- Graphic morphology and semantics of the assumed names of Burkina Faso slammers

On the basis of a detailed analysis, we will identify the various lexical formation processes used by Burkina Faso slammers to form their names.

1.1. Assumed names obtained by reduction

Assumed names by reduction include acronyms and hypocoristics.

1.1.1. Initialisms/ Acronyms

initialism is a lexical formation process that consists in reducing a syntagmatic or phraseological unit to leave only some initial letters of which it is composed. According to Jean Dubois et al (2002, p. 429), "initialism is the formation of an acronym from a word or a group of words". From all these definitions, it is clear that the acronym is the product of this process of lexical formation. According to Alou Keita (2005, p.47), it refers to "the initial letter or group of initial letters abbreviating the names of organisations, states, political parties, associations, sports clubs, famous people, etc." Acronyms are generally used to name international institutions and bodies. They are also used in the fields of culture and literature, in the case of authors' assumed names. Burkina Faso's slam artists have used acronyms to form their stage names. Mohamed Bagré, for example, calls himself M.H.B. in order to conceal his real identity, since his slam is virulent against the political authorities.

1.1.2. Hypocoristics

Speakers use hypocoristics to show their benevolence, familiarity or affection for their loved ones. According to Jean Dubois et al (2002, p. 236), in semantics and pragmatics, a hypocoristic designates "a word expressing tender affection, addressed to the addressee of the communication or designating a being or object about which the speaker is speaking about". These terms, which express a caressing intention, have become common in the language of French speakers and are often used in the popular or colloquial registers or in children's language. They are obtained by shortening the first names of the person being spoken about or to. This lexical formation process was used by Burkina Faso's slammers when choosing their artists' names. This lexical operation was carried out by apheresis,

i.e. by reducing their first names to the initial, or by apocope, i.e. by deleting certain final syllables from their first names. We therefore come across names of poets such as Tony, Lati and Gessi that derive from changes in their respective identities, such as Antony, Latifatou and Gessica. Another process is sometimes used to form hypocoristics: this is the suffixal derivation. This is the case with Marcelo, which is created from the apocope followed by the suffixal derivation. These names express tenderness and indicate these lyricists' feelings of attachment to slam, which tends to be the poetry of young people.

1.2. Assumed names obtained by addition

This category of artist names includes compounds and derivatives.

1.2.1. Compounds

In linguistics, the concept of composition refers to the juxtaposition of two or more autonomous or free lexemes to form another meaningful word called a lemma. A compound word is therefore a lexicon made up of several autonomous units. According to Alise Lehmann and Françoise Martin-Berthet (2014, p.139), "composition forms a word by assembling two or more words". Some of the autonyms of Burkinabe slammers are formed from this morphosemantic operation. Indeed, to reveal her passion for slam, Rasmata Diallo opts for the artist name Rama la slameuse. Even if this artistic identity is initially achieved by syncope and then apocope of Rasmata, we should recognise that the addition of the qualifier 'la slameuse' makes it a compound lexicon. DK the slammer and Diarez the rebellious poet are created by the same linguistic process. In the first, DK comes from the acronym of David and Klafougo, the poet's real identity. It is then added to the words 'le slameur'. Secondly, we note the agglutination of Diabougou Arzouma and the addition of a determinative indicating the artist's moods. Another autonym is conceived through several processes dominated by composition. It is Naël Melerd, which derives firstly from the apheresis of the first name Nathanaël and then from the abbreviation of the adverbial phrase "I Eliphel the Chosen Child of the Kingdom of God". B. Rangé is also one of the pseudonyms used in Burkinabe slam. It is obtained by shortening the adverb Bien and adding a past participle: Rangé. It should be noted that this poet has some virulent slam texts. The political context of the time was particularly atrocious for critics of power, so his pen brothers begged him to tone down his temperament, hence the name B. Rangé. This name also has a phonic equivalent, i.e. a pun of Bérenger. Le slameur charmeur is a compound of derivated words. In M.T. First, the first lexical unit 'M.T.' is an abbreviation of M'ba and Toast (an Anglicism meaning 'to speak well'). The lyricist later added First (meaning first). SLIM Premier is also an acronym of slam in me, followed by Premier. All these artist names denote each speaker's passion, enthusiasm and satisfaction with poetry slam and their own work. Through these artistic and cultural identities too, these slammers embody romantic poets, possessors of the verb, men of verve.

1.2.2. Lexical derivatives

Derivation is part of lexical morphology, in this case derivational morphology, which consists in adding an affix to a stem. This is the minimal element that contains the main meaning of the word. For Nicole Tournier and Jean Tournier (2017, p. 99), "derivation groups together the processes of forming prefixed derivatives and suffixed derivatives, as well as the processes of infixation, which consist in joining words by infixes to form a new word". The latest generation of Burkinabè orators have adopted this lexical process to form their artistic identities. In fact, Dabross is derived from the suffix of his surname Dabré and oss, itself of slang origin (oss is the apheresis of Boss, which designates a gang leader). With this name, the lyricist marks his membership of a social class that includes poets.

1.3. Assumed names obtained through lexical transformation

Some of the assumed names of Burkinabè slam poets are obtained through lexical transformation processes, including logograms, agglutination and graphic slang.

1.3.1. Logogram

The logogram, is a special lexical structure. It consists in replacing one or more syllables of a word with another symbol, usually a number with the same phonetic sound as the substituted segment. This playful lexical structure is well known in the language of young people and artists, as well as in new languages such as SMS. This lexical formation process is used by Burkinabè artists to form their pseudonyms. Logograms serve both cryptic and identity functions. The use of this process by Burkinabè slammers shows their desire to break away from monotony. They therefore tend to create their own norm by transgressing the standard French language, which is considered too complex. This social group also adopts this type of graphic form for aesthetic and creative reasons. Ax'100 Grave, Kpr6 and 2kavas, for example, are initiated by poets of the current generation to prove their artistic identity and their membership of the social group of orators.

1.3.2. Agglutination

Agglutination is a linguistic process that takes place through phonetic modification by merging phonetic elements that were originally distinct. For Arnold Zwicky (1977, p. 10), agglutination "is a process which moves cliticizable grammatical morphemes from the domain of inflectional morphology to the domain of derivational morphology, reducing step by step the freedom of occurrence and the morphological motivation of the morpheme affected". This operation sometimes results in neologisms. This process of lexical formation has been used by slammers to create autonyms. Mochaud is the product of a fusion of words and chaudières. With this name, the user indicates the virulence of the slam, the "rebellion" of his pen. Kouturmo comes from the union between couturier and words. Through this "blasé"/ pseudonym (another designation of the artist's name adopted by (an appellation by Camille VORGER, 2015), this slammer embodies a craftsman of words. To form their names, the slammers Adao and Alasca have linked their official identities. The first blase is a fusion of Adama Ouédraogo. The second is the agglutination of Alassane and Kaboré. Triksha, beyond lexical

agglutination, is made from two metaplastic operations such as apheresis and apocope. While Trick is derived from the initial of Patrick (the artist's first name), "sha" is derived from the final of Shalom (a word of Hebrew origin meaning peace). He presents himself as a man of peace, of non-violence in slam in a world of endless quarrels. He advocates harmony between peoples. The recurring themes in his poetry include social cohesion, unity, tolerance and reconciliation. L'ArmAtemps is also an autonym produced from agglutination. It is the fusion of the expression "l'arme à temps". The user of this name first protests against social ills through his slam before calling for living together, equality and justice between people. For him, his pen is a weapon that he cannot part with. Hamtusin is a combination of "ham", part of the author's first name (Mahamat), and "tusin", itself a borrowing from Fulfulde (the language spoken by the fulani), meaning junior. This name denotes the slammer's youth, serenity and self-confidence. The agglutinated form of the different artists' names indicates the playful nature of slam. It also demonstrates the artistic and creative talents of the authors in transcribing slam texts.

1.3.3. Graphic backslang/centre slang

Originally, backslang was the result of metathesis, i.e. the permutation of morphemes such as (à) l'envers to become (à) vers-l'en and then verlan. This process of lexical structuring is purely backslang and consists in inverting the syllables of a lexicon to form others, particularly neologisms. Slam, a verbal practice that has its origins in the streets of Chicago, has used this lexical formation process. Poets have used it to form their artistic identities. Rhoufa, Tifla and La Chemar are the result of syllabic permutations of lexical units such as Rahouf, Latif and La marche. The graphic backslang allows these poets to identify with the social group of slammers.

1.4. Assumed names obtained through lexical appropriation

We have grouped together the names of slammers whose forms correspond to lexical anglicisms, africanisms, hybrids and those obtained through codic alternation under a heading that we call 'assumed names obtained through lexical appropriation'.

1.4.1. Lexical anglicisms

An anglicism is the result of an appropriation whose linguistic origin is English. Maurice Pergnier (1989, p. 19) considers it to be "an English word or an English turn of phrase that is occasionally encountered in a French utterance". There are several types of anglicism in the French language: semantic anglicisms, syntactic anglicisms and lexical anglicisms. It is this last type of anglicism that concerns the present work. There are assumed names of Burkinabè slammers that have forms of lexical anglicisms, in this case Yellow Slam. The bearer of this name presents himself in slam as a preacher of knowledge, a defender of human rights. He fights against ignorance. The name also indicates the geographical origin of poetry slam. It originated in the American suburbs thanks to the idea of non-classical poets.

1.4.2. Africanisms

In this work, we use the term Africanisms to refer to assumed names whose linguistic origins are African languages. Here, we are referring in particular to Lingala, a language that is widely spoken in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In fact, the artist's name, obtained by borrowing from African languages, is Monkonzi, which means "a prince" in the local language. As the user of this name comes from a royal family in Burkina Faso and advocates African unity, he adopts this designation to raise African values on an international scale through slam, which is known and practised throughout the world.

1.4.3. Lexical hybrid

Jan KORTAS (2009: 532) defines a lexical hybrid

"as a neologism resulting mainly from hybridization, considered as a specific process of lexical creativity, which combines the mechanisms of derivation and direct borrowing. This process is achieved by the addition of an allogeneic element (full word, confix or affix), borrowed directly from language A, either from an indigenous base, or from an allogeneic element coming directly from language B."

This definition shows that a hybrid is a lexicon whose lexical elements are of foreign linguistic origin. In the case of Burkinabè slam, one of the hybrid assumed names is "moorephone". It's made up of "moore", a language spoken mostly in Burkina Faso, and "phone", which refers to the voice, to speech, and comes from French. With this name, the user wishes to show the slam-loving public that he has mastered his mother tongue (moore). The other alias is Ouattson, the components of which are Ouattara, which represents a patronymic in the Dioula ethnic community, and son, which comes from the English language and refers to a son. These names reflect the bearers' attachment to their respective cultures.

1.4.4. Codical alternation

Codical alternation presupposes contact between languages. It is also the result of a plurilingual speaker's ability to use the different languages he or she has acquired in the same discourse. According to Maria Causa (2002: 2), code-switching represents "dynamic shifts from one language to another in the same verbal interaction; these shifts can occur both at the interphrastic and extraphrastic levels". In culture, and particularly in slam, we come across assumed names whose lexical building blocks have diverse linguistic origins. Burkinabè poets have adopted this lexical process to create their pseudonyms. The various languages used include English, Arabic, French and the local languages. Firstly, the alias Malika la slameuse contains three languages: Arabic, French and English. The first element, 'Malika', is an Arabic first name meaning queen. The second, 'la', is a definite article of French origin. The third part, "slameuse", is a determinative that comes from English and is derived by suffixation using the French suffix -euse. There's also King le rêveur, which is made up of the word "King", an Anglicism for king, and the term "Le rêveur", which is a determinative. It is of French origin and refers to the slammer. The term also indicates the artist's



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activity. Through this name, the artist evokes his entry into the muse he uses to create his texts. Majesty La Parole is another artistic identity formed from a mixture of words from two different languages. Majesty" is a word of English origin, while "La parole" has its linguistic source in French. This poet has chosen to magnify the spoken word through his stage name. He also points out the role that poetic language plays in society. For him, the various problems undermining today's society (political and intercommunity conflicts, famine, etc.) can be eradicated through words. Through verve, the speaker mitigates the harm that humanity suffers. He also combats ignorance and social ills such as religious extremism through his highly instructive messages. Verbal Kalash is the result of codical alternation. Its constituent elements come from the Russian and French languages. In fact, Kalash is an apocope of Kalashnikov, a weapon named after its manufacturer Mikhail Kalashnikov. The other two elements (la and verbale) are French words. The name reflects the original meaning of slam: the slam of words, the virulence of language, the sudden impact. Like a gun that shoots bullets, this artist spits out words, defending the truth and conveying very meaningful messages. Malika la Slamazone alternates between Arabic, English and French. Malika is an Arabic first name and slamazone is a combination of slam, an English word, and amazone, which comes from French. With this nickname, she claims to be the Amazon of slam, in other words, she defends poetry slam in her country and in the artistic world. She sees herself as the standard-bearer of slam in Burkinabè culture. Pendo La slameuse is derived from the alternation of Fulfuldé, a national language of Burkina Faso spoken by Fulani people (Pendo is a feminine first name), French (the article la), and slameuse is a lexical anglicism derived using a feminine suffix (euse) that specifies the artist's activity. Dalla le slameur is adopted by alternating the local language san, French and derived English). Dalla (meaning the Dioula people in San) is a patronymic of the Samo (an ethnic group known in the western part of Burkina Faso). "Le" is a determiner in the French language. The word slameur is an Anglicism derived by suffixation with -eur and specifies the poet's activity. Nuage du Faso is a literal translation of a family name from the Moaga ethnic community (a well-known ethnic group in Burkina Faso): Sawadogo. The first two elements of this pseudonym (Nuage and du) are of French origin. The other (Faso), meaning homeland, is a Dioula word (a national language of Burkina Faso). Others have preferred to keep their family names. This is the case with Miss Sorgho, which is a combination of the English Miss (meaning a lady) and the author's surname Sorgho (a term derived from the national language moore). Finally, we have Rama la slameuse, whose components are derived from Arabic (Rama), French (la) and English (slameuse, which is derived with a French suffix). Like the slammers whose names we studied earlier, these poets show their attachment to their respective cultures and their passion for slam.

1.5. Pun

Pierre Guiraud (1979: 26) sees the pun as "a phonetic equivocation, intended to be "pleasant" and more or less abusive". This process is appropriate to the French language, which is not very stressed and is rich in homophones. It is used by poets for its playfulness and comic effect. This process, based on homophony and polysemy, is also used by slam artists to form aliases. Indeed, the pseudonym B. Ranger is the phonic equivalent of the first name Béranger (the author's first name). Qu'on sonne and Voix-ails come from the interplay of consonant and vowel sounds. It also represents a metaphor. We mentioned earlier that L'ArmAtemp is an agglutination. But we also have to recognize that its pronunciation means that it is a phonetic play on the phrase "l'art m'attend" or "l'arme à temps". Hamtusin is also a pun on the expression "holy soul". Mot Dit Beau is a pun on the first name Modibo. It refers to the Muslim in the Fulfulde national language. The use of this lexical formation indicates the slammers' desire to incorporate humor into their art.

1.6. Metaphor

According to Olivier Reboul (1991: 235), metaphor is the representation of "one thing by another that resembles it or shares with it an essential quality". It is a figure of analogy used by slammers to form their artistic identities. These convey messages and are, for poets, presentative. Like poetry, slam contains a codified language. According to Bernard DUPRIEZ (1984: 236), poets use metaphor because "the passage from one meaning to another takes place through a personal operation based on an impression or an interpretation that must be experienced by the reader". Artists' names such as La Canne du Sage, Ombr Blanch, Le poète, La Griotte, La cartouche, La Base, Plume Céleste, La sève, Albatros and La syllabe are highly expressive messages conceived through metaphorisation.

1.7. Phrasal assumed names/aliases

Adopted names such as Le choix qui échoit and La consonne qui sonne have phrasal forms. Their meaning is more evocative and more accessible to the poetry-loving public in general, and slam poetry in particular.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of our research reveal that artists' names represent a significant linguistic phenomenon within oratory art in general, and in slam poetry in particular. These names are used by slam poets as identifiers, which explains the distinctive nature of their morphology. Their creation adheres to rigorous principles, namely various lexical formation processes. The most recurrent processes include hypocoristic, compounding, suffixation, acronyms formation process, various forms of borrowings, logograms, back slang, puns and metaphors. The language employed by these artists diverges from standard referential French, encapsulating highly meaningful messages. Some names reflect the artists' moods, whereas others express their vision.

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