

**DENOTATIVE MEANINGS OF NAMES GIVEN TO BUSINESSES IN
CHOGORIA TOWN: A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS**

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Abstract

Naming is an important aspect of our everyday life. Practically everything in the world has a name. This Article sought to provide a pragmatic analysis of names given to businesses in Chogoria town, Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya. The objectives of the study was to establish the denotative meanings of business names in Chogoria town. The study adopted a descriptive research design and used the Frame Semantic Theory to explain how encyclopedic knowledge can be used to arrive at the meanings of these business names. Literature was reviewed on meaning, naming, other studies on the same and how context determines meaning. Stratified sampling and purposive sampling were used to sample thirty business names from the various business types in the area of study to determine those names that would help achieve the objective. Interview schedule was used as the data collection instrument. The data was analyzed using the thematic analysis.

Key words: Pragmatic analysis, denotative meanings, naming, business, signifier and signified.

1. INTRODUCTION

All things have names for easy identification. Names are what people are known and are called by. Names communicate and tell stories about people and circumstances surrounding their birth (Fadahunsi, 2013). Names are words, which form the larger part of a language of a given community and therefore should be looked at within a linguistic context (Marjie-Okyere, 2015). Naming as a semantic process derives from the understanding that words are names or labels for things. Carroll (1985) draws our attention to the fact that people name all kinds of other things-buildings, streets, companies, computer files, events and pets.

For Gardiner (1954) names, unlike (other) words, are identificatory marks recognizable, not by the intellect, but by the senses. King'ei (2002) states that Kiswahili names that have been given to buildings, places, organizations and institutions in the present Kenya, represent a form of

linguistic creativity rather than a conventional practice because these names already exist in the language. He says that as a community continues growing, new things come up or are invented and people in the community create terms for these things.

Names embody a culture's values and philosophies. When a businessperson starts a business, they give it a name which will be used to identify it. Business people do not just give their businesses any name. They take their time to come up with meaningful names that will reflect, among other things, their values and philosophies. For instance, if a businessperson names a business as 'Mvumilivu Stores', it means that they value patience. Sometimes, the business may not be doing well but one does not quit. They press on hoping that things will change for the better.

Names also have particular meanings. Meaning is the idea a person wants to express by using words or signs. When children are born, their parents give them names that will be used to identify them and differentiate them from others. In 1st Chronicles 4:9-10, the Bible says that when Jabez was born, his mother called him so saying that she had given birth to him in pain. Therefore, the name Jabez means pain. Jabez later cried to the Lord asking him to bless him so that he will be free from pain. Among the Yoruba of Nigeria, it is generally believed that names are like spirits which would like to live out their meanings. Therefore, parents do a thorough search before giving names to their babies (Fadahunsi, 2013).

If a signifier has only a single denotation meaning, the use of the sign will always be unambiguously decoded by the audience.

Other studies have been done on naming and meaning. Marmaridou (1989) conducted an analysis of proper names from a pragmatic point of view. He found out that these names are exploited in two ways: referentially and connotatively. Njoki (2011) was out to establish the denotative and connotative meanings of names given to Pentecostal Churches in Githurai, Kenya. She concludes that these names have denotative and connotative meanings and that religion dictated the loading of these meanings.

Marjie-Okyere (2015) looks at the morphological processes used in the Babukusu names to derive for example the traditional male and female names or place names and names of things and tools. She applies a descriptive approach to analyze the names within a morphological context looking at whether these names are derivational or inflectionally derived. She found out that Kibukusu names are derived from one category of speech to another for instance place names, or are inflected for gender especially in personal names or names of things and tools. Blum (1997) focused on use of kinship terms, pronouns, and proper names in China. She examined the role of language, and especially naming, in the face-to-face interactions of everyday Chinese life. She found out that face is bestowed through naming practices, and that this can operate in terms of solidarity as well as authority.

Anindo (2016) undertakes a morphosemantic study of Lulogooli place names to find out whether toponyms have a variety of meanings and a naming system. She concluded that these toponyms connect to real life referents in the speaker's society and so carry referential meaning. She also found out that other toponyms carried a particular significance to some speakers depending on personal feelings while others had been formed from emotional reactions and so had affective meanings. None of these studies done on naming and meaning have dealt with naming in businesses. This study therefore filled this gap by analyzing pragmatically names given to businesses in Chogoria town.

Names are labels that are used in identification. Everything in the world bears a name. Among things that are named are businesses. When a business person decides to start their business, they spend a lot of time thinking about the name that they will give to their business for names are not haphazardly chosen and given. Naming in businesses is therefore very important. These names are meaningful and among other things, reflect the values and philosophies of business people. There are many studies that have been done on naming and meaning. Despite this, very little has been conducted on naming in businesses. This study therefore sought to fill this gap by analyzing businesses names in Chogoria town with a view to establishing their meanings thus adding to the existing literature on naming and meaning. The purpose of this article was to analyze the denotative meanings of names given to businesses in Chogoria town.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Meaning

Words are the chief media of human communication, and, as the diversity of language clearly shows, the link involved between words and what they signify cannot be a natural one. Words and sentences are like symbols- they point beyond themselves; they mean something. Smoke means fire, the pierced heart means love. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2015).

Meaning is what a word conveys, signifies, expresses and its inner and psychological importance. It is the idea of the word or the action (Gerba, 2014). Meaning is the idea a person wants to express by using words, signs; the thing one intends to convey especially by language. Meaning is what a sender of information wants to express or convey in their message to a receiver of information, and what a receiver deduces from the given context. (European Scientific Journal, 2013). This study focused on meaning expressed by words used in businesses.

A word meaning can be changed as many times as the author wants to use it in different contexts. This is where a word acquires new meanings. Therefore, for one to properly understand any utterance they should understand not only words and word combinations but also what stands behind them. This is called new meaning and it is subjective to a certain degree. This meaning can also be changed according to the association a thing arouses in people, the emotions and feelings it provokes in them. Linguistic semantics studies meaning in a systematic and

objective way. Since meaning as a concept is not static, a great deal of the idea of meaning still depends on the context and participants in the act of communication. It is a context where a word constantly acquires new meanings (European Scientific Journal, 2013). This study sought to find out the meanings of business names depending on context.

Reference relates to things, people, and events in the world. It is the object or entity to which a linguistic expression relates. Thus, the referent of the word boy is a human being called boy. If meanings were restricted to reference, many words without obvious referents will be left out. It will be difficult to explain the meaning of prepositions, conjunctions and other grammatical units. Again, several linguistic expressions may relate to single referents. To avoid these limitations, semantics use the words denotation and connotation to distinguish between meaning based on ostensiveness (pointing) or reference and extension. In the case of names one has to distinguish between the denotation (reference) of the name and its connotation (intention) (New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2005). This paper sought to find out the denotative meanings of names given to businesses.

Yule (2010) makes a distinction between conceptual meaning and associative meaning. Conceptual meaning is the type of meaning that dictionaries are designed to describe. It is synonymous with primary, central, logical, cognitive or denotative meaning. It is the first ordinary meaning listed in dictionaries which is not affected by the context or emotional overtones associated with the act of communication. There is an assumed shared conceptual meaning of every word of a language and a universal implication of this meaning. It constitutes a major part of the shared system of a language for all speakers. It covers those basic, essential components of meaning that are conveyed by the literal use of a word. Some of the basic components of a word like 'needle' in English might include "thin, sharp, steel instrument." These components would be part of the conceptual meaning of needle.

The associative meaning of a word is the meaning affected by the context, background, time and the cultural realities of the users of the language. This type of meaning is not static. It is variable and open-ended. Certain words, structures and styles are usually employed to arouse some emotional reactions in the hearer. Certain attitudes and forms of behaviour are elicited by the associative meaning of the words used in communication. These different reactions are derived from the associations which the words create in the minds of language users. Indeed, associative meaning reflects individual differences. There are individualized intentions and interpretations. Different people might have different associations as connotations attached to a word like 'needle'. They might associate it with pain, illness, blood, drugs, thread, knitting, or hard to find (especially in a haystack) and these associations may differ from one person to the next. These types of associations are not treated as part of the conceptual meaning of words (Yule, 2010).

Associative meaning is therefore the connotative meaning. The connotative meaning contains elements in the conceptual meaning of a word and the individual's personal interpretation of what is communicated. That interpretation is based on the personal experience of the hearer. This means that the connotative meaning varies with the experience of people in communication. It

may also vary from society to society. There are symbols in literature which have different connotations in different cultures. For instance, among the Hausa in Nigeria, the cricket is associated with the tricks, whereas among the Yoruba, it is the tortoise that has that attribute. In the western world, it is the fox that is considered to be very cunning (Yule, 2010).

To coin a word to refer to a thing, the community must agree on a simple meaning (a denotative meaning) within their language, but that word can transmit that meaning only within the language's grammatical structures and codes. Codes also represent the values of the culture and are able to add new shades of connotation to every aspect of life.

Barthes (1957) argues that there are different orders of 'signification' (levels of meaning) in semiotic systems. The first level is that of denotation. At this level there is a sign consisting of a signifier and signified. Connotation is a second order which uses the denotative sign as its signifier and attaches to it an additional signified. An image denoting 'a child' in a context which generates the connotation of innocence would feed into a 'myth' of childhood which functions ideologically to justify dominant assumptions about the status of children in society. Connotation arises when the denotative relationship between a signifier and its signified is inadequate to serve the needs of the community. These meanings are not objective representations of the thing but new usages produced by the language group.

The addition of such meanings introduces complexity into the coding system. If a signifier has only a single denotation meaning, the use of the sign will always be unambiguously decoded by the audience.

Chandler (2002) makes a distinction between denotative and connotative meanings. He claims that while the distinction between literal and figurative language operates the level of the signifier that between denotation and connotation operates at the level of the signified. Beyond its 'literal' (denotation) meaning, a particular word may have connotations. In semiotics, denotation and connotation are terms describing the relationship between the signifier and its signified. Meaning includes both denotation and connotation. 'Denotation' is the definitional, literal, obvious or common sense meaning of a sign. It is what the dictionary attempts to provide. For Erwin Panofsky (1970), as cited in Chandler (2002), the denotation of a representational visual image is what all viewers from any culture and at any time would recognize the image as depicting. The word 'connotation' is used to refer to the socio-cultural and personal associations (ideological and emotional) of the sign. Connotation is thus the context-dependent. Signs are more open to interpretation in their connotation rather than their denotation. Connotation and denotation are often described in terms of levels of representation or levels of meaning.

Roland Bathes adopted from Louis Hjelmsler the notion that there are different orders of signification.

Table 1

Table of order of Signification

Signifier	Signified
SIGN	
Signifier	Signified
SIGN	

Source: Bathes, (1957).

The first order of signification is that of denotation; at this level, there is a sign consisting of a signifier and a signified. Connotation is a second order of signification which uses denotation sign (signifier and signified) as its signifier and attaches to it an additional signified. In this framework, connotation is a sign which derives from the signifier of a denotative sign (so denotation leads to a chain of connotations). A signified on one level can become a signifier on another level.

The Concept of Naming

The Oxford Dictionary defines a name as a word or a combination of words consisting the individual designation by which a person, place, animal or thing is known or spoken of. Names identify a class of things or a single thing, either uniquely or within a given context. Names are words by which reality is known, expressed and appreciated in every culture. They signal various forms of socio-cultural information and belief. Names are often regarded as one-time labels fixed to solid objects, useful for identifying them but without any real substance or inherent interest. Personal and place names are a small part of the phenomenon of naming.

Naming as a semantic process arises from the understanding that we use words to name or label things. For Gardiner (1954) names, unlike (other) words, are identificatory marks recognizable, not by the intellect, but by the senses. Anindo (2016) claims that names are important part of our society since they designate individual people, places and things and fulfill the desire for unique identification. Carroll (1985) claims that people name all kinds of other things-buildings, streets, companies, computer files, events and pets. The research focused on naming of businesses.

Naming proceeds from the description of the immediate and concrete objects to making abstract statements about events. The meaning of sentences requires understanding both the meaning of individual words and the syntactic context in which the words are embedded. Words can denote a literal meaning or core meaning and connote a halo of associative meanings. A central question in the philosophical controversy on names is whether names have meaning. Muzale (1998) argues that whereas in some societies names are either picked up arbitrarily or inherited and have very little semantic and socio-cultural significance, in many Bantu and Interlacustrine groups in

particular, names have synchronic meanings and are intended to play a certain role in social life. Therefore, if any kind of cultural, historical or pragmatic information is included, then names have meaning.

Gerba (2014) posits that Oromo personal names have metaphoric expression or meaning extension and that Oromo society does not choose or bestow names at random without connecting something important in life. The meaning that these names carry could either be descriptive or associative and the bearers are expected to live up to their name. The meaning attached to names by the Basotho plays a significant role in the definition of personhood because it is believed that a given name does not only serve as an identity but also determines the type of person the individual will be. Names are believed to have some influence on the character of the bearer. Anindo (2016) argues that names are not meaningless signs but a cultural must for communication of ideas. Marjie-Okyere (2015) claims that it is the society that gives names and so they determine what a person, place, or thing be named. She adds that names are even more unique when they are given in relation to the tribal background: events, settlements, history and the language of the person. This study benefited from these arguments for it sought to use pragmatic information such as context to find out the meanings of names given to businesses in Chogoria town.

Smith-Bannister comments in his study of names in early modern England “Children were named and supposed to act accordingly.” (1997: 3). There are people who are known to have changed the names they were given upon birth especially because of the meaning of those names and their associations. Parents therefore take their time in selecting a name for their children because it is the most important factor that sets one apart from others. They consider the meaning of a name to be the main focus in choosing a name for if they give a name with a good meaning, they believe that the child who is given this name will adopt the qualities of the meaning. Hence, this method of naming is taken into consideration when it comes to developing a person’s nature.

Blum (1997) argues that in China, parents and grandparents select infants' names according to a given set of criteria: they should be auspicious; they are viewed as governing the child's fate in some ways; they should harmonize with the time, and often the place of the child's birth; they may be changed in case, through illness or misfortune, a diagnosis of mismatch with the name is made; they may indicate membership in a generation in a family of intellectuals; they may be female names which typically come from a much reduced and stereotypical stock, compared to that for male names; they may reflect changes in naming styles resulting from various political and intellectual trends. Similarly, businesspeople give their businesses names that have positive denotations and connotations that they want people to associate with their businesses and they make sure that when choosing names for their businesses these meanings are suitable for their businesses. This is because one’s business name has a tremendous impact on how customers view one as a businessperson.

Geeraerts (1994) argues that deciding how to name something is a matter of choice. The choice may be influenced by consideration of formality and linguistic appropriateness. Therefore, a

word structured in a certain way and carrying a given meaning can be used as a business name and not personal name since different rules govern each category. This study benefited from these arguments for it sought to find out the reasons for the choice and appropriateness of names each business person gives to their business.

According to Huddleston (1988), names can be distinguished as referring expressions and name inventories. In the case of inventories, there is no reference to any particular individual in a decontextualized sentence. In normal context-based utterances, the speaker usually employs the name to refer. Names such as John F. Kennedy, used for the former president of the United States, refer to a particular unique individual. This study focused on names used to refer to particular businesses.

As one picks their business names, they need to strive for creativity and uniqueness, but they should ensure that the name is not so obscure that the audience will not grasp what it is the name is conveying. Some businesspeople will be creative enough to come up with names that make extensive use of sound patterns. These include: alliteration (For instance, Crystal Cut and Curl- for a salon and barber shop), rhyme (For example, swirl and Curl- for a salon) and consonance (For instance, Scissors Wizards- for a barber shop). Others will use puns in naming their businesses. For example, 'Meating point'- for a butchery, 'A Cut Above' –for a barber shop and 'Shear Genius'-for a barber shop (Lehrer & Kittay, 1992). This study was interested in finding out how such creativity is employed in naming businesses in Chogoria town.

The names of many things are created from the common word classes. That is, those words that have meaning and the meaning of the word is relevant to the name. All naming traditions originate in processes of naming based on common nouns or other categories (Anderson, 2007).

Njoki (2011) established that the main group of words used in naming Pentecostal churches is nouns. This, she argued, was a confirmation of the argument by Lyons (1977) that nouns are the most important basic elements, whose semantic function is naming. She also established that in addition to nouns, other parts of speech, for example, adjectives have also been used in naming the Pentecostal churches. Anindo (2016) found that Lulogooli toponyms can be created from various word classes and could be classified along morphological patterns into derivational from nouns both proper and common, from verbs and adjectives, augmentation and diminutivization, compounding and blending, inflectional processes and those that do not undergo any processes. According to Morpurgo-Davies (2000), some business names are simple nouns while others are a combination of prefix/ suffix and a noun and some others that of an adjective and a noun. There are still others that are adjectives by nature but functionally are used to name businesses. This study endeavored to know whether the same case applies to business names in Chogoria town by finding out the grammatical categories that contribute to the business names construction.

Personal names are the source of most business establishments. Here, the genitive form of either the first or the last name can be used. Anderson (2007) argues that there are also compound

names. People have compound names made up of first or personal names and surname or family name. The two components of such a compound name may be used of the same referent in combination or singly or together with a title and other elaborations. The development of surnames illustrate that an individual may have more than one name depending on the context. The same person may be John Smith or the titled Mr. (John) Smith or the simple Smith. The title part (Sir, Mr.) of a full name indicates gender, as well as pragmatic aspects to do with assignments of status. Personal names were not used in this study since they have very few frames, if any, and hence little connotative meanings.

Studies on Naming and Meaning

Marmaridou (1989) in his study of proper names claims that they are mainly exploited in two ways: referential and connotative. The referential use of proper names is the function of identifying referents. For example, 'Judas was Jesus Christ's disciple who betrayed him' is used to refer to the person who betrayed Jesus Christ. In contrast, with connotative use, proper names are metaphors used to offer shortcuts for ideas and thoughts, which are expressed implicitly. For instance, "*Judas* in every great man nowadays has his disciple, but it is always Judas who writes the biography" does not specifically refer to anyone. It only refers to a kind of a person who is likely to betray their master. Whereas her study was on proper names, this study focused on business names. Her study benefited this study in that it looked at the connotative meanings of business names and analyzed these names from a pragmatic point of view.

Njoki (2011) analyzes names given to Pentecostal churches and concludes that these names have both denotative and connotative meanings and that religion dictated the loading of the meanings. She also establishes that the main groups of words used in naming Pentecostal churches are nouns, though other parts of speech such as adjectives have also been used to name the churches. This study sought to find out whether the same case applies in naming businesses. It is similar to that of Njoki (2011) in that it also sought to analyze names denotatively and connotatively, and in terms of research instruments. However, it differs from Njoki's (2011) in terms of the theoretical framework; she used Social Semiotic Theory. Whereas her study was concerned with Pentecostal churches, this study dealt with businesses.

Marjie-Okyere (2015) looks at the morphological processes used in the Babukusu names to derive for example the traditional male and female names or place names and names of things and tools. She applies a descriptive approach to analyze the names within a morphological context looking at whether these names are derivational or inflectionally derived. She argues that names given to children, places, things and objects are very essential because a lot of factors are taken into consideration during such activities. She realized that Kibukusu names are derived, from one category of part of speech to another. For instance, place names, or are inflected for gender especially in personal names or names of things and tools. Among the Babukusu, children inherit the clan of their father and that the first son of the first wife is usually the main heir to his

father and he has a special name denoting this status: *Simakulu*. There are names with affixes and parts of the names of the events or activities. She refers to these names as indirect reference since the names of events are not directly lifted and given to the child.

According to Marjie-Okyere (2015), another type of names is the direct reference, where names given to people are names referring to other things but are lifted directly to refer. Kibukusu personal names have roots and affixes. These affixes are usually prefixes: male names frequently begin with *Wa*, while female names usually begin with *Na*. For example, a boy born during famine is named *Wa-njala*, while a girl is named *Na-njala*. Both names share the root word *njala* from *enjala*, the Kibukusu word for hunger. The *wa* or *na* is the prefix while the root word is the name of the event or period the activity took place. Most names of things are borrowed from Kiswahili and English. The names begin with prefixes of class of things plus the name of the borrowed word depending on the thing that is being talked about. For example *e-nguo* and *li-shati*. Her study differs from this study in that hers is morphological while the present one is pragmatic. However, the study benefited this study in terms of approach used to analyze these names and also the parts of speech used to derive the names. This study used descriptive approach to analyze business names and was also interested in finding out the various parts of speech used in naming these businesses.

Blum (1997) focuses on use of kinship terms, pronouns, and proper names in China, in an overall framework termed "naming" that demonstrates the performative power of uttering relational terms, especially by the junior in the relationship. She examined the role of language, and especially naming, in the face-to-face interactions of everyday Chinese life. She claims that names are one element to be deployed in strategies of giving, withholding, and exchanging face. She goes ahead to show that face is bestowed through naming practices, and that this can operate in terms of solidarity as well as authority.

According to Blum (1997), Chinese naming practices reveal a view of the Chinese person as thoroughly embedded in a world of speakers and hearers whose relationships to each other and the world are constituted through speaking certain terms, and where sound, object, and name are in some important senses combined. She found out that Public figures had names that were public currency. By the Song dynasty (960-1279), writers commonly selected 'style names' or 'courtesy names' that indicated something about their character that they wished to have known, or about their biography. Su Shi, for instance, selected his style name as Dongpo 'Eastern Slope'; a famous dish is known as "Dongpo's soup" after a recipe he described in an essay. She concluded that the place of naming has had significant ramifications for much of public life throughout China's long history. This study was of use to our study for the researcher was out to find out how the shared knowledge of the speaker (business person) and the hearer (general public) in terms of the context, help business people to come up with business names and how the public understand the meanings of these names.

Malande (2006) seeks to identify the different meanings found in the Lulogooli toponyms and it was noted that toponyms do have meanings. A number of meanings were identified and they included referential meanings, which related to the culture of the speakers, and the affective meanings. Malande (2011) investigates the meanings of Lulogooli personal names. He claims that nearly all Lulogooli personal names have denotative meaning. He claims that for the meaning of these words to be realized, one needs to learn the origin of the names. That is, place names, names of natural phenomenon such as famine, poverty and so on. He claims that all these factors inform the meanings of Lulogooli personal names. This study was of importance to the current one in that it was also focused on denotative.

Olenyo & Malande (2013) examine the place of language after the 2008 Kenyan political crisis. They claim that the language, a tool that had divided the populace, was used to initiate a co-existence through a generation of multilingual terminologies that united Kenyans. The terms that came up then have acquired circumstantial meanings and have gained widespread use in Kenyan social discourse. These words were used both at denotative and connotative levels. For example, Form 16 A, which denotatively was a controversial form for tallying ballots, connotatively became any piece of hidden or withheld evidence; Annan, denotatively is a name for former United Nations Secretary General, was used connotatively to mean a mediator, peace maker, savior or arbitrator; political responsibility, which denotatively means accountability and transparency, was used connotatively to mean resignation or stepping down. Their study benefited this study in terms of the two meanings: denotative and connotative meanings, for business names have the two levels of meaning.

Anindo (2016) undertakes a morphosemantic study of Lulogooli place names to find out whether toponyms have a variety of meanings and a naming system. She found out that Lulogooli place names fit into a naming system based on the people's motivations. These, together with their sub motivations include: From proper names; water sources, prominent persons, pioneers/ clan, a unique death: Descriptions of the characteristics of the place; local insects, local terrain, local plants, local trees: Medicinal plants and trees: Activities/occupation: Incident/event; disease outbreak, war: Evaluate; condemnatory: Shift: Linguistic innovation; blending/compounding, humour: Unknown. She also found out that the toponyms do have meanings. The meanings identified included referential meaning. She claims that these Toponyms connect to real life referents in the speaker's society and so carry referential meaning. It was noted that some toponyms carried a particular significance to some speakers depending on personal feelings and sometimes for a whole group of people while others had been formed from emotional reactions and so had affective (connotative) meanings.

Similarly, it was found that Lulogooli toponyms can be created from various word classes and could be classified along morphological patterns into derivational from nouns both proper and common, from verbs and adjectives, augmentation and diminutivization, compounding and blending, inflectional processes and those that do not undergo any processes. Her study was of benefit to the current one in terms of the theoretical framework. This study also benefited from

Anindo's on the analysis of the two meanings since it also aimed at finding out the two meanings of business names and the parts of speech used in naming them.

The Concept of Context

Context refers to the situation, events or information that is related to something and that helps one to understand it. It is the surroundings, circumstances, background or setting that determines, specify or clarify the meaning of an event or other occurrence (Werth, 1999). It refers to the setting or background information that is linked to something.

In linguistics, 'context' means the previous and subsequent linguistic material in a given text. The term is used for anything in the indefinitely large surrounding of an utterance, from the intention of the speaker to the previous topic of conversation to the objects discernible in the environment (Werth, 1999). This study dealt with context in written texts and not in utterances.

Werth, (1999) argues that meaning is created through what speakers say to each other and also through what they do with words to satisfy the needs of their social environment. Meaning involves linguistic and situational factors where the context of language use is important. This contextual use of language is what makes language unique to human beings.

Context can be linguistic, involving the linguistic environment of an item. It can also be situational, involving extra linguistic elements that contribute to the construction of meaning. This study was concerned with both linguistic and situational context to determine the meaning of names given to businesses.

Pragmatic or situational context makes a text have coherence. This is achieved by using features such as the use of deictic, anaphoric and cataphoric elements and other information implied in the text. Meaning can also be related to social variables involved in the use of language. Aspects of politeness, shared beliefs, cultural features and social organization play an important role in the interpretation of meaning. (Werth, 1999). In this study, we were concerned with how shared beliefs, cultural features and social organization influence the naming of businesses in Chogoria town.

Context provides important information in the interpretation of meaning. One does not need to just understand meaning of words to get the meaning of discourse. One needs also to know why one has to say what to whom and where. Werth (1999) summarizes this as follows:

The context of a piece of language is its surrounding environment. But this can include as little as the articulatory movements immediately before and after it, or as much as the whole universe with its past and future (Werth, 1999: 78-79). This study endeavored to do exactly that- focus on how context is depended on in interpreting the meanings of names given to businesses in Chogoria town.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Charles Fillmore's (2006) Frame Semantics Theory. Fillmore (1982) argues that meanings are relativized to scenes. This means that the meaning of a linguistic item interacts with the scene activated by it. Frame Semantics is a cognitive theory of linguistic meaning developed by Charles. J. Fillmore that extends his earlier case grammar. It relates linguistic semantics to encyclopaedic knowledge. The basic idea of this theory is that one cannot understand the meaning of a single word without access to all the essential knowledge that relates to that word. For example, one would not be able to understand the word 'sell' without knowing anything about the situation of commercial transaction, which involves among other things, a seller, a buyer, goods, money, the relations between money and the goods, the relations between the seller and the goods and the money, the relations between the buyer and the goods and the money and so on. Therefore, a word activates or evokes a semantic frame of encyclopaedic meaning relating to the specific concept it refers to.

Frame semantics is the study of how linguistic frames evoke or activate frame knowledge and how the frames thus activated can be integrated into an understanding of the passage that contains these forms. The pairing of a word with one of its meaning evokes a frame and profiles some aspect or component of the frame (Cruse, 1986). The Frame Semantics Theory has frame and frame elements, prototype and profiling as its theoretical principles. Fillmore defines frame as "any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one of them, you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits...a system of categories structured in accordance with some motivating context" (Fillmore, 2006). A text evokes a frame when a linguistic form or pattern is conventionally associated with that particular frame. For example, 'Julia will open her presents after blowing the candles and eating some cake'. Although there is no mention of a birthday party, interpreters sharing the requisite cultural background invokes a birthday party scene. Fillmore (1985) uses the following sentences to illustrate the different frames evoked by the use the following bolded words.

- a) I can't wait to be on the **ground** again.
- b) I can't wait to be on the **land** again.

Sentence (a) evokes a speaker who is in the air (on a plane). Sentence (b) evokes a speaker who is at the sea (on a ship). Fillmore says that 'land' is understood within a conceptual frame of sea travel and within that frame, it is opposed to 'sea', while 'ground' is understood within a conceptual frame of air travel, and within that frame it is opposed to 'air'. A frame element is a regular participant, feature or attribute of the kind of situation described by a frame. Therefore, frame elements of the wedding frame will include husband, wife, wedding ceremony, wedding date, best man and maid of honor for example.

Prototype is a fairly large slice of the surrounding culture against which the meaning of a word is defined and understood. Fillmore (1977) illustrates the use of prototypes within frame semantics by an analysis of the concept widow. This word is specified with respect to a background scene

in which people marry as adults, they marry one person, their lives are affected by their partner's death and perhaps other properties.

Croft & Cruse (2004) in defining a profile, shows the relationship between profile and base. They thus define them as: The profile is "the concept symbolized by the word in question" and its base is "that knowledge or conceptual structure that is presupposed by the profiled concept" (Croft & Cruse, 2004). For example, hypotenuse is based on, or presupposes, the right-angled triangle frame, with its conception of three sides spatially coordinated in a particular way.

The theoretical principle that came in handy in this study is the principle of frame and frame elements. In frame semantics, meaning can only be described based on human experiences as well as on the set of knowledge that comes from them. In giving the denotative and connotative meanings of business names, human experiences and the background knowledge of the word(s) used in the business name was of great importance.

Every message contains another message: the meta-message. This is located at a higher level and frames the message, so, it houses connotations. Business names have a message (denotative meaning) and a meta- message (connotative meaning).

The interpreter of a text invokes a frame when assigning an interpretation to a piece of text by placing its contents in a pattern known independently of the text. A text evokes a frame when a linguistic form is conventionally associated with that particular frame. In the interpretation of the business names, one invokes the concepts that are related to the name(s) used in naming businesses depending on the context of these word(s). This interpretation yields connotative meaning.

Frame elements stand for those entities or properties that must be present in any instance of a given frame: in a sense, they stand for the things worth talking about once a frame has been entered into a conversation. The connotative meaning of business names are explained well when the interpreter of these names uses the frames invoked by the words used in naming these businesses to invoke other concepts that are associated with these words. These are the frame elements.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study uses the qualitative research approach, in particular, the descriptive research design. The purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This design was appropriate for this study since the researcher was out to collect information from business people that would aid in describing meanings of business names. This research design used an interview schedule to collect the data from the respondents who were business people.

Location of the Study

The study was conducted in Chogoria Town, Maara District, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. The researcher comes from the area and so was familiar with the place, hence convenience in carrying out the study. Another reason for choosing Chogoria town as the study site is because it is a cosmopolitan town with various business types. According to the records at Chogoria Town Council offices, there are 262 traders with different business types in Chogoria town. These business types include hotels and cafes, bars, general shops and supermarkets, salons, barber shops, hardware shops, butcheries, boutiques and chemists among others.

Target Population

A population is a group of individuals, objects and items from which samples are taken for measurement. It is an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The target population for this study was business names. Chogoria town has various business types. For the purpose of this study, only thirty names sampled from various business types were used.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The researcher used stratified random sampling and purposive sampling as the sampling procedures. As already stated, there are 262 traders with different business types in Chogoria. The researcher first listed the various business types in the location of the study that were used in the study and their number, and then used stratified random sampling to sample 20% of the number of these business types. This sampling procedure was used to ensure that there is representation from the various business types. Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) argues that the goal of stratified random sampling is to achieve desired representation from various subgroups in the population. From this number, purposive sampling was used to sample the number of those names that were used in the study. Kombo & Tromp (2006) argues that the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied. Purposive sampling was used to sample the names considered to have frame elements. These are the names that were used in the study. Njoki (2011) analyzed a total of twenty Pentecostal churches in her study. Anindo (2016) analyzed nine toponyms in her study. In this study, a total of thirty business names were sampled purposively from various business types for analysis as indicated in the table below. This sample was deemed to be diverse, representative and effective in meeting the objectives of the study, and also enough for an in-depth analysis (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

Table 2

Table of Sample Size

Business Type	Number	Number using stratified sampling	Number Sampled Purposively	Sampled %
General Shops	80	16	12	40
Boutiques	25	5	4	13
Salons	18	3	3	10
Bars	18	3	2	7
Hotels and Cafes	17	3	3	10
Barber shops	15	3	2	7
Butcheries	12	2	2	7
Hardware Shops	7	2	1	3
Chemists	5	1	1	3
Total	197	38	30	100

Source: Researcher Generated

Research Instruments

The researcher used an interview schedule as the research instrument. The researcher interviewed business people so as to get the meanings they attach to the names that they have given their businesses. The questions in the interview schedule were leading questions.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using the thematic analysis. Here, the researcher categorized the business types and business names from these business types and analyzed the meanings of these names independently. Description, which involved explanation of denotative meanings.

The following table shows how data was analyzed using the Frame Semantic Theory.

Table 3

Table of Data Analysis

Objective	Tools of Analysis
1. To establish the denotative meanings of names of businesses in Chogoria town.	Description

Source: Researcher Generated.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and analyzes the denotative meanings of names given to businesses in Chogoria town. The data presented was elicited from the interviews conducted among the business people in the town. From the data collected, it was realized that all business names have denotative meanings. This is the literal meaning; the meaning not affected by the context of the word. The names of different business types are analyzed independently. In the analysis of the denotative meanings, descriptions which involves explanations of these meanings was used.

4.1 Denotative meanings of Shops

This section presents the denotative meanings of shops.

4.1.1 Ebenezer Shop

The shop is named from the noun 'Ebenezer' which is a biblical concept that comes from 1st Samuel 7. Israel experienced revival under the leadership of Samuel. This is after the nation repented its sins, destroyed its idols and began to seek the Lord. Samuel gathered the Israelites at Mizpah where they confessed their sins and he offered a sacrifice on their behalf. During this period of repentance and renewal, the enemy (Philistines) attacked the Israelites. The Israelites fought with them and God sent Supernatural help which made them defeat the invaders. Several cities that the Philistines had captured were restored to the Israelites. To commemorate this divine victory, Samuel named the place Ebenezer, saying 'Thus far the Lord has helped us'. 'Ebenezer' means 'Stone of help'. From then on, every time an Israelite saw the stone erected by Samuel, he would have a tangible reminder of the Lord's power and protection. This name denotes that the shop was given the name based on the place that Samuel named 'Ebenezer' following God's help to the Israelites to triumph against their enemies.

4.1.2 Jerusalem Shop

The shop is named from the noun 'Jerusalem' which is a place name. Jerusalem is considered a holy city in the three major Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. According to the Bible, the part of Jerusalem called the city of David was conquered by King David from the Jebusites and he established it as the capital of the United Kingdom of Israel. His son Solomon commissioned the building of the first temple. Jerusalem's old city is a spiritual lightning rod, sacred to Jews, Muslims and Christians. Wide-eyed with awe pilgrims flood into the walled city to worship at locations linked to the very foundation of their faith. Denotatively

the name means that the shop was given the name based on the holy city which is the capital city of Israel.

4.1.3 Grace Spring Shop

This shop is named from the nouns grace and spring. In Christian belief, grace is the divine help and strength that Christians receive through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Through grace, Christians are saved from sin and death. In Romans 11:6 Paul says, "It is by grace that you are saved and if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, and otherwise grace would be no longer grace." Divine grace is the goodwill of God that is made manifest and given to man. Gifts, love and assistance are given freely to man without his deserving them. In addition, grace is an enabling power that strengthens Christians from day to day and helps them to endure to the end.

A spring is a place where water emerges naturally to the surface from the ground. This name therefore denotatively means the source of divine help, favour and strength.

4.1.4 Milele Stores

This shop is named from the Swahili word 'Milele' meaning 'forever'. If something is forever, it is not limited in terms of time. It is there for all time; for an infinite amount of time. Denotatively the name means a shop that is long lasting or living for long.

4.1.5 Golden Shop

This shop is named from the adjective golden meaning 'relating to gold'. Gold is a heavy yellow elemental of great value. In its purest form, it is bright, slightly reddish yellow, dense, soft, malleable and ductile metal. Great human achievements are rewarded with gold in the form of gold medals, gold trophies and other decorations. Winners of athletic events and other graded competitions are usually awarded a gold medal. Many awards such as Nobel Prize are made from gold as well. The name denotatively means a shop that is valuable.

4.1.6 Waciama General Shop

This shop is named from the Kimeru word 'Waciama' meaning 'of miracles' and the adjective 'general' meaning 'involving every part of implied entity'. This shop therefore sells a variety of goods. God is the performer of Miracles, in Christian belief. A miracle is a wonderful event occurring in the physical world attributed to supernatural powers, in this case, God. This name denotatively means that the shop is named from the understanding that God is the performer of miracles and that the shop sells various goods.

4.1.7 Jericho Farm Machinery Shop

The shop is named from the nouns Jericho, farm and machinery. Jericho is a place name. It is a city located near the Jordan River in the west bank of the Palestinian territories. It is the capital of Jericho Governorate. A farm is a place where agricultural and similar activities take place,

especially the growing of crops or the raising of livestock. Machinery refers to the machines constituting a production apparatus. When these nouns are taken together, the name denotatively means that the shop is named from the place name Jericho and deals in machines that are used in a farm for production.

4.1.8 Msafiri Shop

The shop is named from the Swahili word ‘msafiri’ meaning ‘one who is travelling’. The shop is located next to the main road. When one is travelling they buy things that they need on their journey. Denotatively, the name of this shop means that the shop mainly stocks goods that are needed in a journey and therefore targets those costumers that are travelling.

4.1.9 Mutethia Mali and Utensils Store

The shop is named from the Kimeru word ‘Mutethia’ meaning ‘one who helps’. ‘Mali’ is a Swahili name meaning ‘things’. Utensils are instruments or devices for domestic use in the kitchen. When these names are taken together, the name therefore denotatively means that the shop deals in utensils and that the business is out to help the customers.

4.1.10 Baraka Animal Feeds Shop

This shop is named from the nouns baraka, animal and feeds. ‘Baraka’ is a Swahili word meaning ‘blessing’. A blessing is a divine or supernatural aid or reward. An animal in this case means livestock, while feeds is plural form of the noun feed meaning food given to animals especially herbivorous.

Denotatively, the name means that the shop deals in livestock feeds that are a blessing to the livestock farmers.

4.1.11 Wapendwa Shop

This shop is named from the noun wapendwa. ‘Wapendwa’ is a Swahili word meaning ‘friends’. This name therefore denotatively means that the shop is a shop of friendship to the customers.

4.1.12 Wakulima Supermarket

This shop is named from the Swahili name ‘Wakulima’ meaning ‘farmers’. A farmer is a person who owns a farm and grows crops and/or keeps livestock in it. The shop doubles up as a grocery and a supermarket. As a grocery, the shop sells farm produce such as cereals and vegetables. These produce are grown in farms by farmers and then sold to the owner of the business who then retails to the customers. This name of the business therefore denotatively means that the business deals in farm produce that are got from farmers.

4.2 Denotative Meanings of Hotels

The denotative meanings of hotels are discussed in this section.

4.2.1 Morning Glory Hotel

This hotel is named from the noun 'Morning Glory', which is a common name for over 1,000 species of plants. These plants are annual climbers with slender stems, heart-shaped leaves and trumpet-shaped flowers of pink, purple, Ipomea, blue or white. Their big fragrant, colourful flowers attract butterflies and humming birds. Most of them unravel into full bloom in the early morning. This name of the hotel therefore denotes those species of flowering plants that bloom early in the morning.

4.2.2 Safari Café

This café is named from the Swahili word 'safari' meaning 'journey'. A journey is a set amount of travelling, seen as a single unit. When one is traveling, some of the necessities are food and drinks. One may also need to get accommodation while on a journey. The name denotatively means that the café provides services that targets mainly those customers on a journey.

4.2.3 Eden Fruits and Juice Café

This café is named from the noun Eden, fruits and juice. A fruit is a seed-bearing, part of a plant, often edible, colourful and fragrant produced from a floral ovary after fertilization, while juice is a liquid from a plant especially a fruit. Eden is a place name. Biblically, Eden refers to the garden that was planted by God. After God was through with creation on the seventh day, He formed man from dust and put him in the Garden of Eden. God then made to grow every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food in this garden. These trees would bear fruits that would be eaten by the man. Denotatively therefore the name means that the name of the café is borrowed from the Garden of Eden in the Bible and deals in fruits and juices.

4.3 Denotative Meanings of Salons

This section presents the denotative meanings of salons.

4.3.1 Pink Rose Salon

This salon is named from the adjective pink and the noun rose. Pink is a colour name that denotes the colour between red and white. A rose is a woody perennial flowering plant of the genus of Rosa. Traditionally, the rose is considered the flower of love. Roses are grown for their beauty and fragrance. Pink roses are used to convey gentle emotions such as admiration, joy and gratitude. Light pink rose blooms are indicative of sweetness and innocence. Deep pink rose blooms convey deep gratitude and appreciation. The name of this salon therefore denotatively refers to a rose flower that is pink in color.

4.3.2 Kinky Divas Salon

The salon is named from the adjective kinky and the noun divas. Kinks are twists, tight curly bends in a length of hair. Kinky hair is tightly coiled and has a zig-zag pattern. It can be course and wiry, soft and spongy and thick or fine and is versatile. A diva is a celebrated female singer, a woman of outstanding talent in the world of opera and by extension in theatre cinema

and popular music. When used as an adjective, diva is used to describe a person who exudes great style and personality with confidence and expresses their own style and not letting others influence who they are or want to be. The name therefore denotatively means that the salon plaits using natural kinky hairs and mostly targets young female celebrities.

4.3.3 Glorious Salon

The salon is named from the adjective glorious which means exhibiting glory. Glory means worshipful praise, honour, and thanksgiving to God. In the Bible, glory is very important for it is seen as the reason behind creation. In Exodus 33: 19-20, Moses was told that no one can see the glory of God and continue living. Jesus taught his disciples to do good so that when people see it, they glorify God (Matt 5:16). In another instance, Jesus was seen by his disciples filled with glory together with Moses and Elijah (Luke 9: 29-32).

God's glory is his goodness in his heart. It is the goodness that results from his character. Isaiah 43: 7 says that God created us for His own glory. Psalms 19: 1 says that the heavens declare God's glory and skies proclaim the work of His hands. The name therefore denotatively means that the salon is named in recognition of God as the one who deserves worshipful praise, honour and thanksgiving.

4.4 Denotative Meanings of Butcheries

This section analyzes the denotative meanings of butcheries.

4.4.1 Neema Butchery

The butchery is named from the Swahili word 'neema' which means 'grace'. In Christian belief, grace is the divine help and strength that Christians receive through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Through grace, Christians are saved from sin and death. Gifts, love and assistance are given freely to man without his deserving them. The name denotatively refers to the undeserved favour that God bestows to humanity.

4.4.2 Tumaini Butchery

The butchery is named from the Swahili word 'tumaini' which means 'hope'. Hope is the belief or expectation that something wished for can or will happen. It is an optimistic state of mind that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes with respect to events and circumstances of one's life or the world at large. As a verb, its definitions include "expect with confidence" and "to Cherish a desire with anticipation." A person's determination to achieve their goal is their measured hope. Hope in the holy Bible in Titus 1:2 means 'a strong and confident expectation' of future reward of eternal life. In Christianity, hope is one of the three theological virtues of the Christian religion, alongside faith and love. Denotatively, the name therefore means that the business is founded on hope.

4.5 Denotative Meanings of Barber Shops

This section presents the denotative meanings of barber shops.

4.5.1 Prince Cut Kinyozi

The barber shop is named from the nouns prince and cut. A prince is a male ruler, a sovereign; a king while a cut is a shave. Prince is also a title of nobility. Nobility is a social class that is more privileged than other classes in the society. When the two nouns are taken together, the name denotatively means that the customers in this barber shop are given a princely shave.

4.5.2 Fine Touch Kinyozi

The barber shop is named from the adjective fine and the noun touch. The adjective fine means 'of superior quality, satisfactory, delicate and showy'. The noun touch means 'an act of touching, especially with the hand or finger'. When one is being shaved, it is the hands that do the touching. Therefore the word 'touch' here denotatively means 'a shave'. The business name therefore denotatively means that the shaving done in this barber shop is of high quality.

4.6 Denotative Meanings of Hardware Shops

This section presents the denotative meanings of hardware shops.

4.6.1 Omega Hardware Shop

The hardware shop is named from the noun Omega. Omega is the last letter of the Greek alphabet. In Christian belief, the term Alpha and Omega is a title of Jesus Christ in the book of Revelation 1:8, 21:6 and 22:13. The first part of this phrase (I am the Alpha and Omega) is found in chapter 1 verse 8. It is further clarified with the additional phrase "the beginning and the end" (Rev 21: 6, Rev 22: 13). The first and the last letter of the alphabet were used because the book of Revelation is in the New Testament, which was originally written in Greek. The phrase is interpreted by many Christians to mean that Jesus has existed from all eternity or that God is eternal. Among the Jewish rabbis, it was common to use the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet to denote the whole of anything, from the beginning to end. Jesus as the beginning and end of all things is a reference to no one but the true God. This business name therefore denotatively means that God is the beginner and one who ends everything.

4.7 Denotative Meanings of Chemists

This section analyzes the denotative meanings of chemists.

4.7.1 Chogoria Apex Chemist

This chemist is named from the nouns Chogoria and apex. Chogoria is a place name; the name of the place where the business is located. Apex means the highest point of something; the peak. This business name therefore denotatively means that the chemist is located in Chogoria and is out to provide high quality services to the customers.

4.8 Denotative Meanings of Bars

The denotative meanings of bars are analyzed in this section.

4.8.1 Friends Corner Bar

This bar is named from the nouns friends and corner. Friends is the plural form of the noun friend. A friend is a person other than a family member, spouse or lover whose company one enjoys and towards whom one feels affection. When people are in a friendship, therefore, they have a stronger form of interpersonal bond than an association. Friendship in adulthood provides companionship, affection as well as emotional support. A corner is a point where two converging lines meet. This name therefore means that the bar is a place where friends meet to share and keep each other company as they drink.

4.8.2 Munyaka Bar

This bar is named from the Kimeru name 'Munyaka' which means 'luck'. Luck refers to success or failure brought by chance rather than through one's own actions. It could also be said to be the experience of positive, negative or improbable events. When one starts a business, they do not foresee failure but believe they will succeed. Therefore luck here can only be that wish of success or positive outcome rather than failure or negative events. The business name therefore denotatively means that the bar is founded on luck.

4.9 Denotative Meanings of Boutiques

This section presents the denotative meanings of boutiques.

4.9.1 Global Fashions Boutique

This boutique is named from the adjective global and the noun fashions. Global means concerning all parts of the world while the noun fashion means a popular style, especially in clothing, foot wears, lifestyle products, accessories, make up, hairstyle and body. Fashion is a distinctive and often constantly changing trend in the style in which a person dresses. Fashion trends are influenced by several factors including cinema, celebrities, climate, creative explorations, political, economic, social and technological. The name denotatively means that the boutique deals in clothing and shoes that are found all over in the world.

4.9.2 Royal Pride Boutique

The boutique is named from the adjective royal and the noun pride. Royal means 'relating to a king or their family', while pride is the state of being proud. A royal family belongs to a high social class and therefore has privileges than most of other classes. Due to the status that the family has in the society, it could be said to be proud. Denotatively, the name therefore, means the pride of a royal family.

4.9.3 Classic Fashions Boutique

The boutique is named from the adjective classic and the noun fashion. The adjective classic means 'exhibiting timeless quality or exemplary of a particular style', while the noun fashion

means ‘a popular style, especially in clothing, foot wares, lifestyle products, accessories, make up, hairstyle and body.’ The boutique sells ladies’ clothes, shoes and handbags. Denotatively the business name means that the boutique deals in ladies clothing, foot wares and handbags that are exemplary.

4.9.4 Blessed Boutique

The boutique is named from the adjective blessed. In religion, a blessing is the infusion of something with holiness, spiritual redemption or divine will. Therefore to be blessed is to be favored by God, the source of all the blessings. God’s original design in creation was for His creatures, including mankind, to experience prosperity, peace and fulfilment. In Genesis 1: 22, God blessed the sea creatures and birds, telling them to be fruitful and multiply in the earth. In verses 26-28, He gave the similar blessing to Adam and Eve, adding that they were to exercise dominion over the creatures. Blessings, therefore, are directly associated with, or believed to come from God. The Bible also specifies that obedience to the law of God brings God’s blessings. The name therefore denotatively means that the business is favoured by God.

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