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Lexical Borrowing from Arabic to Pular: Context and Features

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Abstract

With the introduction of Islam, West Africa became a site for intense interaction and contact between the Arabic and African languages. This interaction subsequently strengthened due to West African languages borrowing substantially from Arabic for lexical expansion. However, studies of language contact between African languages and Arabic in West Africa have generally focused on the process of borrowing, and the outcomes of such borrowings have often been neglected. This article explores the language contact between Arabic and Pular in the Fuuta Jalloŋ and the ways in which Arabic has impacted the lexicon of the Pular language. Pular, a language widely spoken in West Africa, has substantially borrowed from Arabic for lexical expansion. The study of the outcomes of these borrowings shows consistent recourse to linguistic simplifications, such as the substitution and deletion of complex sounds and the addition of suffixes. In addition, Pular speakers have appropriated Arabic words to coin new words and new meanings.

Introduction

The introduction of Islam into Africa as early as the 7th century not only impacted the shape of cultural, socioeconomic and political structures, but also profoundly influenced language and language use in West Africa. Conversion to Islam and the subsequent establishment of Qur'anic education institutions created enduring language contacts throughout West Africa. According to Weinreich (1953) "two or more languages will be said to be IN CONTACT if they are used alternately by the same person" (emphasis in original, p. 79). The long-standing contact between Arabic and West African languages resulted in intense borrowing from Arabic by African language speakers both for lexical expansion and to facilitate communication between Arabs and Africans. Based on a corpus drawn from the days of the week (calendar) and common Arabic personal names (nomenclature) in Pular, and some

basic Islamic concepts, this article analyses the outcomes of lexical borrowing from Arabic into Pular and discusses the ways in which Pular speakers developed their own rules to incorporate Arabic words in the lexicon. The article is divided into three sections: the first discusses Islam in West Africa and the contact between Arabic and West African languages in general and Pular in particular; the second analyses lexical borrowing as a result of the contact between these two languages; and the third and final section explores the features of borrowings from Arabic by Pular speakers.

The corpus used in this article is based on the author's own observations and ongoing research interest in Qur'anic Arabic and Pular *Ajami* (the use of Arabic script to write in Pular) in West Africa; and status as an insider of Pular language and culture (speaker of the language and member of the Peul Fuuta speech community). Due to dialectal differences among African languages and the influences of former colonial languages—Portuguese, Spanish, French and English— the transcription of language groups, communities and places in Africa is not generally consistent. For example, Peul and Peul Fouta are commonly used in the French-speaking world while Fula and Fulani are used in the English-speaking world. For the sake of consistency, Peul Fuuta is used here to refer to the speech community, while Fuuta Jalloŋ is used to refer the place of origin of the Peul Fuuta community. As for Pular, it is the language spoken by the Peul Fuuta community. In this article, Pular refers mainly to the dialect of the Pular speech community that originates from the Fuuta Jalloŋ in the Republic of Guinea and is spoken in Senegal (the dialect the author is familiar with) and elsewhere in West Africa. This dialect is part of a large continuum that includes several other Pular dialects spoken in many West African countries.

There is a large body of research on borrowing from Arabic into Pular (see, for example, Diallo, A., 2010 & 2008; Diallo, A.T., 2000 & n.d.; Roger, 1983), but it is generally descriptive in nature and focuses only on the processes of borrowing. In fact, very little attention has been devoted to understanding the outcomes of borrowing and the ways in which words borrowed from Arabic operate within the Pular linguistic environment. My aim in this article is to address this gap by analysing the outcomes of borrowing and the ways in which Pular has incorporated Arabic words into its linguistic system. By doing so the article contributes to further our understanding of the linguistic outcomes of borrowing.

Contact between Arabic and Pular in the Fuuta Jalloŋ

This section discusses language contact between Arabic and Pular in pre-colonial Africa in order to show that the introduction of Islam in West Africa had a considerable impact on West African societies and the Pular language. It also describes the place and importance of Islam in the Fuuta Jalloŋ.

Following a program of conversion to Islam, Qur'anic education was introduced into West Africa to spread religious knowledge and strengthen Qur'anic literacy. Islam arrived in North and West Africa as early as the 7th century through contacts with early Arab traders, adventurers and Islamic missionaries and others, and rapidly spread throughout West Africa (Diallo, 2012; Diagne, 2004; Levtzion & Pouwels, 2000; Trimingham, 1980). Between the 11th and 15th centuries, Islam moved from coastal regions and river banks and spread inland. By the early 18th century, Islam was firmly established in West Africa (Trimingham, 1980).

The growth of Islam in West Africa accelerated and by the end of the 18th century "Islam became a fully-fledged African religion and the Qur'anic schools became wholly integrated within African social structures and adapted to their needs" (Hassane, 2008, p. 111). As a result, Arabic became the dominant language for literacy and education as well as the major language for intra- and intercommunication across West Africa—especially with regard to written communication—and Islam was established as the main religion across a vast geographic area inhabited by people of different languages and cultural backgrounds.

It is important to note that, despite rapid conversion to Islam and the creation of several Islamic education institutions, Qur'anic literacy and educational attainment were proportionately low amongst African Muslims as compared to the Arab Muslim population. For example, in areas close to Islamic cities and institutions, literacy and education rates tended to be higher than in areas that were distant from Islamic hubs and resistant to Islam (see Barry, 1976). Also important to note is that education and literacy rates varied significantly across communities. However despite these variations across the region, Islam was consolidated into the dominant religion and Qur'anic education spread widely in West Africa.

The contact between Arabic and West African languages created one of the most intense language contacts and has profoundly marked many West Africa African languages (for example, Wolof, Pular, Hausa, etc.). From this language contact emerged complex sociolinguistic practices, due to the prestige of Arabic and its predominant use as the language of

religious devotion and ritual. Being the sacred language of Islam, Qur'anic education and literacy became crucial for both liturgical purposes (e.g. Islamic rituals and prayers) and access to Islamic knowledge (reading the Quran and other sacred books).

From a sociolinguistic point of view, Arabic was also critically important because it was the language for inter-and intra-group communication, especially with regard to reading and writing (*ajami*). Because of this high status, Arabic became the donor or source language, and the West African languages (including Pular) the recipient or target languages. According to Trimingham (1980), Islam "accommodated itself [in West Africa] in such a way that it became a natural aspect of its environment" (p. 41). Subsequently, the region became a site for intense language contact between Arabic and African languages, which led to a profound contact-induced borrowing process in pre-colonial West Africa. As indicated earlier, a range of West African languages borrowed from Arabic, including Pular, Hausa, Wolof and Mandinka, to name but a few. The language contact between Arabic and West African languages was strengthened because of the adaptability of early Arabs to the West African social and cultural context. Indeed, according to Trimingham (1980), the ease with which the Arabs integrated into African societies accelerated changes in sociolinguistic dynamics and deepened the infiltration of Arabic into the sociolinguistic environment of West Africa. Trimingham (1980) argued also that:

> Arabs have manifested unique characteristics of assimilation and assimilability. They are easily assimilable into another environment and coalesce with the indigenous people, and, at the same time, they impart their linguistics, religious and social characteristics (p. 99).

It is in this general context in West Africa, that Arabic, the sacred language of Islam, came into contact with Pular, which belongs to the Niger-Congo family and is one of the largest speech communities in West Africa. The contact between Arabic and Pular has had a considerable impact upon Pular because the Fuuta Jalloŋ became one of the most important Islamic sites in the region, and a hub from which Islam spread in West Africa. According to Trimingham (1980) the Fuuta Jalloŋ was the "diffusion centre for Islam in the region" (p. 70). The full impact of Islam in the Fuuta Jalloŋ has been described by a range of

studies, including Barry (1976) and Harrison (1988). For example, Barry (1976) described Islam in the Fuuta Jalloŋ in the following way:'from dawn to dusk, at prayer times, the Fuuta Djallon [Fuuta Jalloŋ], from the depth of the valleys to the highlands, was only one supplication to Allah [God], the Unique, singular tribute to his Prophet' (p. 7; author's translation from French).

It is important to highlight that studying borrowing between languages in West Africa is a complex issue. Its complexity arises not only from the situation wherein "multilingualism and language contact between African languages is dramatically under-researched" (Lüpke, 2010, p. 2) but also because of the intense and intimate contact and interaction between West Africans and their languages, on the one hand, and the impact of Arabic and European languages on West African languages in the region, on the other. Therefore, any serious study of language borrowing in West Africa should not overlook the possibility that African languages also directly borrow from one another or via a third African language. For example, in the context of this study, it is possible that Pular may have directly borrowed from Arabic, or the Arabic words may have entered Pular via other African languages, such as the previously mentioned Hausa or Mandinka, for example. Tracing language contact is challenging because "language leaves no direct traces in the archaeological record, and early historical documents seldom take an interest in the speech habits of ordinary people" (Nettle, 1996, p. 403). Thus, for the purposes of this article, it is assumed that the Pular words that constitute the corpus under discussion were directly borrowed from Arabic.

This section has shown that the steady growth of Islam made it an important part of West African society and facilitated language contact between Arabic and many African languages. The language contact was intensified primarily due to the ease with which the early Arabic language and culture accommodated itself to the African context, and the ways in which the Arabs themselves coalesced with the African environment. The next section will discuss some features of borrowing and the ways in which Arabic impacted African languages.

Borrowing and Arabic in West African languages
Borrowing between languages has been a subject of considerable and sustained research (for example, see Winford, 2002; Diallo, 2001; Thomason, 2001 & 1988; Van Coetsem, 1988; Weinreich, 1953). In broad terms, borrowing can be defined as "a process by which a language (or variety) takes new linguistic material from another (or

variety), usually called the donor" (Thomason & Kaufman,[1988], p.[1]). In language contact situations, 'borrowing' serves as a metaphor because the linguistic materials of the source language are not given away or loaned out to the target language; nor will the target language return these linguistic features after use. However, because of the metaphorical use of the word, and the complexities of the nature of what constitutes borrowing and the types of contact involved, the term borrowing can mean different things to different people. As a consequence, borrowing is not only used inconsistently, but it also lacks precision (Winford, 2005, p. 373). Winford (2005) argued further that this situation has created a "terminological mess" (p.376). Haugen (1950), one of the pioneers of language contact research, defines borrowing as "the attempted reproduction in one language of patterns previously found in another" (p. 212). Van Coetsem (1988) defined borrowing as follows:

> If the recipient language speaker is the agent, as in the case of an English speaker using French words while speaking English, the transfer of material (and this naturally includes structure) from the source language to the recipient language is *borrowing* (*recipient language agentivity*) (italics in original) (p.3).

In the context of this article, borrowing describes the situation where Pular uses linguistic materials that are already in use in Arabic. As highlighted by Hassane:

> Numerous languages of African Muslim communities in West Africa resorted to borrowing Qur'anic terms to express certain previously unencountered situations and ideas, to replace little-used terms, and enriched their vocabulary with new words (Hassane, 2008, p. 113).

Indeed, with the introduction of Islam, concepts and perspectives related to Islamic social, cultural, and philosophical thought—which are consistent with Islamic way of life, code of conduct and values—were introduced along with Islam in many languages in West Africa. As a result, these concepts and perspectives in Arabic—whether they had not previously been encountered or whether they existed before but were expressed differently in African languages—became part of many languages in West Africa (Hassane, 2008).

The intensity of borrowing from one language to another is determined usually by the closeness of the contact as well as the attitudes towards the language from which borrowing takes place. The contact between African languages and Arabic illustrates this observation. When Islam was adopted as the dominant religion, the sociolinguistic contact between Arabic and African languages became exceptionally intense because Arabic was (and still is) a sacred language. Thus it was a prestigious language that provided social and cultural opportunities. In addition to being the sacred language of worship, Arabic became the language of scholarship and spirituality, as well as the language for written and broader communication. As a result, it enjoyed an unprecedentedly high social, cultural and intellectual status in West Africa, thus making borrowing from Arabic to African languages not only accepted, but also a highly desirable practice. This intimate contact between Arabic and African languages created a fertile ground not only for the spread of the Arabic language and Islamic values but also as a socio-linguistic context for African languages to borrow from Arabic. Gradually, as argued by Trimingham (1980) in the context of West Africa, "few colloquial or daily words penetrated, but the language of the law books has enriched the languages of Muslims with hundreds of religious, political, commercial, and abstract words and expressions'' (p.101). In Senegal, for example, Ngom (2006) noted that "Arabic words are equated with the knowledge of Islam and are used by some people to display their religious knowledge, which is highly respected in the country" (p.104).

Borrowing is the most common way to ensure lexical expansion in language contact situations. Borrowing is a linguistic process that all languages in the world go through. For example, languages such as French and English borrow from each other and from Latin and Greek; Hindi from Sanskrit; Urdu and Persian from Arabic; Swahili and Wolof from Arabic; and Japanese from Chinese. In this context, as with the examples given, Pular borrowed from Arabic mainly for lexical expansion. As indicated, the introduction of Islam in a completely different context and culture posed particular linguistic and cultural challenges for West Africans, as Islam came along with its own concepts and world views. To address these challenges, borrowing directly from Arabic to express these new concepts and perspectives was the most practical way to expand the lexical domains of West African languages. Borrowing was used to minimise the linguistic and cultural gap between Arabs and West Africans, as well as to facilitate

intelligibility between the different non-Arabic speaking Muslim communities in West Africa (Hassane, 2008; Trimingham, 1980).

From this section we can see that borrowing is a natural linguistic process. In West Africa, many languages, including Pular, borrowed from Arabic, not for lexical expansion alone, but, as discussed above, to reduce the linguistic and cultural gaps between Arabs and Muslims and to facilitate mutual intelligibility among the Muslim communities spread across West Africa. A typology of borrowing in West Africa has identified three categories: unincorporated, partially incorporated and fully integrated. As discussed in this and the previous section, language contact between Arabic and West African languages resulted in extensive borrowing in a range of domains, including religion, laws, sciences, etc. The next section discusses examples of borrowing from Arabic by the Pular speakers of the Niger-Congo region of West Africa.

Features of Arabic in Pular

This section is dedicated to discussing cases of borrowing from Arabic into Pular and exploring the features of these lexical borrowings in Pular. A number of Arabic and Pular words are examined in three keys areas: the calendar (days of the week and months), nomenclature (Arabic personal names), and broad Islamic concepts. Before examining these three areas, I have provided a phonological sketch of Pular by giving an inventory of all consonants and vowels. Broadly speaking, the Pular alphabet can be divided into 37 letters. There are 5 short vowels : i, u [ʊ], o, a, and e and their corresponding long vowels: ii, uu [ʊʊ], oo, aa, and ee) and 26 consonants: b, ɓ, c [tʃ], d, ɗ, f, g, h, j[dʒ], k, l, m, mb (as in a**mb**ition), n, nd (as in ca**nd**idate), ng (as in ha**ng**er), nj (as in e**nj**oy), ñ (as in te**n**ure), ŋ (ki**ng**), p, r ,s, t, w, y , y[ʔ] (as in **y**ellow) and the glottal stop (').

Days of the weeks

Pular has borrowed from Arabic names for six days of the week (see Table 1). While these words have undergone phonological changes to fit Pular linguistic features, their semantics have not been affected. Some words borrowed from Arabic have remained relatively close to their original phonology and morphology: a*th thalatha'* (Tuesday) and a*l khamis* (Thursday) and to a certain extent *alarba* (Wednesday) and *aljuma* (Friday) while for others they have changed considerably: al' iθnain (Monday) and *al 'ahad* (Sunday).

Ath thalatha[h]   [aθ'θalata'a[h]] (Tuesday) and *alarba* [al'arba'a[h]] (Wednesday) in Arabic have become *talata* [talata] and *alarba* [alarba]

in Pular respectively. When we look at *talata*, we notice that the *th*[θ], which occurs three times in the Arabic word, has changed to *t* [t] and the glottal stop ء [ʔ], referred to as *Hamza* in Arabic, is not pronounced in the Pular word. Similarly, in the word *alarba*, which is Wednesday in Pular, the glottal stop ء [ʔ] in the original Arabic form is omitted in Pular. Interestingly, in this word the complex long *a* [a:] followed by the glottal stop ء [ʔ] in Arabic are replaced with a simple vowel –*a* in Pular. This phonological simplification or reduction in phonological complexity is a case of substitution where complex standard Arabic phonological features (such as the complex sounds of [θ], the glottal stops [ʔ], and vowel sounds combined with glottal stops), are substituted with the closest possible sounds in Pular.

Table 1: Days of the week in Pular borrowed from Arabic

Arabic	Transcription	Pular	Transcription	English
الإثنىنا	[al' iθnain]	Teneng	[teneŋ]	Monday
الثلاثاء	[aθ'θalaθa'aʰ]	Talata	[talata]	Tuesday
الأربعاء	[al'arba'aʰ]	Alarba	[alarba]	Wednesday
الخميس	[al'hamis]	Alkamʊsa/ kamʊsa	[alkamʊsa]/ [kamʊsa]	Thursday
الجمعة	[al'dʒʊma'aʰ]	Aljʊma/ jʊma	[aldʒʊma]/ [dʒʊma]	Friday
السبت	[as sabt].	*asewe*	[asewe]	Saturday*
الأحد	[al'ahad]	alat	[alat]	Sunday

Note: * Saturday which is asewe in Pular does not seem to be borrowed from the Arabic word السبت [as sabt]. Therefore, it is not considered here given the significance phonological differences between these two words.

Another type of simplification occurs with the Arabic word *al khamis* [al'hamis] (Thursday). Two variants exist in Pular which are *alkamusa* [[alkamʊsa] or *kamusa* kamʊsa]. Note that, in both words, Pular speakers substituted kh [x] with k [k], since Pular does not have the kh [x] sound. Thus to overcome this phonological gap between the two languages, the Pular sound k [k], which is the most approximate sound to kh [x], is used (Diallo, 2012). Similarly, the prefix *al-* is deleted in the second variant and the suffix *-a* is added at the end of both variants. This is a case of phonological deletion.

Similarly, *al juma'ah* [al'dʒʊma'aʰ] (Friday) in Arabic has two variants in Pular: *aljuma* [aldʒʊma] and *juma* dʒʊma]. Both can be used to refer to Friday, the day of the week, but *juma* can be used to refer to the Friday prayer as well. The combination of '[ʕ] (pharyngeal fricative) with the *ta marbuta* gives the complex sound *'ah* [ʕah]. This complex

sound *'ah* [ʕah] is simplified and reduced to a simple *a* [a] sound. The deletion of the prefix *al-* in the second variant can also be interpreted as a case of reduction of complexity. In both *(al)juma* and *(al)kamusa*, like in *ath thalatha^h* and *al arba'a^h* before, the final *ta marbuta* are not reproduced in Pular. These are also cases of reduction of complexity by eliminating the final sound stress for ease of pronunciation. Also, it is important to note that the loss of the article in some cases (*kamusa*) or its fusion with the noun (such as *Alarba*) may be due to differences in education level rather than a strictly phonological variation.

For words that are more distant from their Arabic morpho-phonology, the same observations made with words that are close to their original sources apply. Complex sound categories are simplified. For example, *al ithnayn* [al' iθnain] (Monday) in Arabic becomes *teneng* [teneŋ] in Pular. The initial *al-* is deleted and the *-i* is removed from the original Arabic word. In the same word, the th[θ] is replaced with *t* [t]. The final *-ayn* [ajn] sound is also replaced with *-eng* [eŋ]. Similarly, the word *al' ahad* (Sunday) in Arabic is simplified to a*lat* in Pular. The *'ah* [ʕah] sound is deleted and *aha* sound is replaced with *la*. Thus, the reduction a complex sound to its simplest form *alat*. In Arabic, after the *al* (or its variant *ath-* before *thalatha* and *as-* before *sabt*) a short pause is marked before pronouncing the rest of the word, but in Pular this pause is not observed at all in any of the six days of the week. The pause between *al-* and the remaining part of the word and the pronunciation of the ﺖ */ta/* [as t*a marbuta*] are generally observed only by people with knowledge of Arabic.

To summarise, it can be seen from Table 1 that the days of the week borrowed from Arabic are have been subjected to the Pular phonological system in their appropriation into Pular. In addition to the changes due to phonological differentiation between Pular and Arabic (Arabic sounds that are not found in Pular), simplification strategies such as deletion of prefixes (e.g. deletion of complex Arabic sounds) and substitution (replacing complex sounds with their closest approximation in Pular) have been used to incorporate the days of the week into Pular.

Arabic personal names *in Pular*
The second case of borrowing from Arabic to Pular is derived from the use of Arabic personal names in Pular. Most common personal names in Pular are borrowed from Arabic, but, like the days of the week, they have also undergone phonological changes to fit the phonological features of Pular. However, names borrowed from Arabic have undergone less morpho-phonological changes. In other words,

personal names borrowed from Arabic have remained relatively close to their Arabic sources than the days of the week. Table 2 shows examples of common Arabic personal names found in Pular.

Table 2: Some common Pular names borrowed from Arabic

	Arabic name	Transcription/ Male (M) or Female (F)	Pular names in Arabic*	Transcription
1	عائشة	[aiʃah] (F)	Aissatou	[aisatʊ]
2	أمينة	[aminaʰ] (F)	Aminatou	[aminatʊ]
3	حليمة	[halimaʰ] (F)	Halimatou	[halimatʊ]
4	خديجة	[hadijaʰ] (F)	Khadiyatou/ Kadidiatou/ Kadiatou	[hadidʒatʊ]/ [kadidʒatʊ]/ [kadʒatʊ]
5	خليفة	[kalifaʰ] (M)	Kalifatou	[kalifatʊ]
6	حسن	[hasan] (M)	Hassanatou (F)	[hasanatʊ] (F)
7	حسين	[Husein] (M)	Hussaynatou (F)	[husajnatʊ] (F)
8	سليم	[Sali:m] (M)	Salimatou (F)	[salimatʊ] (F)
9	أحمد	[ahmad] (M)	Amadou; Ahmadou	[a:madʊ]; [ahmadʊ]
10	حامد	[ha:mid](M)	Hamidou	[ha:midʊ]
11	بشير	[baʃi:r] (M)	Bassirou	[basirʊ]
12	سعيد	[sai:d] (M)	Saidou	[sajdʊ]
13	سعد	[Sa:d](M)	Saadou	[sa:dʊ]
14	علي	[ali] (M)	Aliou	[aliʊ] ([alijʊ])
15	زينب	[zeinab] (F)	Dieynabou/ Seynabou**	[dʒejnabʊ]/ [sejnabʊ]
16	محمد	[mohamad] (M)	Mohamadou	[mohamadʊ]
17	محمود	[mahmu:d] (M)	Mamadou; Maamoudou	[mamadʊ]; [ma:mʊdʊ]
18	مريم	[marjam] (F)	Mariama	[marijama]
19	إبراهيم	[Ibra:him] (M)	Ibrahima /Ibourahima	[ibrajima]/ibʊrahima
20	حسن	[al' hasan] (M)	Alasana	[alasana]

* As generally written in French-speaking West Africa.
** This variant exists but rarely in the Futa Jallon dialect.

Table 2 above shows that when Arabic (male or female) names end in the vowel -*a^h* (with *ta marbuta*), Pular adds the suffix – *tou* [tʊ]. As shown in Examples 1-5, female names Aicha, Amina and Halima have become Aissa**tou** , Amina**tou** and Halima**tou** respectively; while Khalifa (a male name) has become Kalifa**tou**. Khadija has three variants in Pular which are Khadiya**tou**, Kadidia**tou**, and Kadia**tou**. In a similar way, Pular has borrowed from Arabic male names to make female names (see examples 6-8). In this category, the suffix -*atou* is added to the male names: Hassan, Hussein, Salim are male names in Arabic but

they have become female names in Hassan**atou**, Houssseyn**atou** and Salim**atou** respectively. In other words, the suffix *-tou* [tʊ], as in the previous five names, is added to the male names after they have been changed into the feminine in Arabic by adding an *-a* in the final consonant of the names. It is important to note that the suffix *–atou* [atʊ]which seems to be used mainly for female names—either used to feminise masculine names or as the intrinsic ending of female names—does not carry any particular meaning in Pular.

With personal (female and male) Arabic names of less than three syllables that end in consonants such as *-d*, -r, *-i* and *-b*, the suffix *-ou* [ʊ]is simply added to the final consonant in Pular. Examples 9-15 show that Ahmad, Hamid, Bachir, Said, Saad, Ali and Zeinab in Arabic have become A(h)mad**ou**, Hamid**ou**, Bassir**ou**, Said**ou**, Saadou, Ali**ou** and Dieynab**ou** respectively in Pular. In the same way, Mohamed has become Mohamad**ou** and Mahmoud has become Mamad**ou** or Mamoud**ou** (Examples 16-17). When the Arabic name has three or more syllables and ends in the consonant *–m* or *-n* the suffix *-a* [a] is added to the consonant as in Mariam**a,** Ib(ou)rahim**a** and Alassan**a** in Pular which are Mariam, Ibrahim (please note that the *-ou*[ʊ]), and Al Hassan in Arabic (see Examples 18-20).

In addition to the rules consisting of adding suffixes (-*tou* [tʊ], -*atou* [atʊ], -*ou* [ʊ], and -*a* [a]) to Pular names derived from Arabic, phonological changes also occur in initial and middle positions. For example, the sound z [z] as in **Z**einab is substituted with *-die* [dʒ] as in **Di**eynabou or s [s] as in **S**eynabou; the sound **ch** [ʃ] in Ba**ch**ir is substituted with **s** [s] as in Ba**s**sirou. Similarly, the ***ch*** [ʃ] in Ai**ch**a changed to s [*s*] as in Ai**ss**a in Pular. As mentioned before, kh [h] in both **Kh**adiatou (and its variants) and **Kh**alifa are replaced with k [k] as in **K**adiatou (and its variants) and **K**alifatou respectively. These changes (substitution and reduction) are not only governed by the phonological features of Pular and ease of pronunciation, but also may be largely influenced by the education levels in Arabic of the speakers. People with some Arabic education generally tend to emulate the native Arabic models, in contrast with people with less or without formal education in Arabic who generally resort to ease of pronunciation or simplification as phonological strategies. Table 3 summarises phonological substitution of Arabic names in Pular. Tables 2 and 3 in this section show interesting features of the ways in which Pular has borrowed personal names from Arabic. Pular speakers have developed their own rules by adding suffixes (such as *-tou*, *-atou*, *-ou*, or *-a*) to Arabic personal names to better integrate them into their linguistic system. To summarise, in

addition to suffixation, complex sounds in Arabic personal names are substituted with simple sounds in Pular because of phonological constraints as well as ease of pronunciation.

Table 3. Sound substitution of Arabic names in Pular

	Arabic sounds	Pular
1	z [z]	[ʤ] or [s]
2	ch[ʃ]	s[s]
3	kh[h]	k[k]

Basic Islamic concepts in Pular lexicon

Pular words borrowed from Arabic show two major tendencies. The first is a set of words in Pular that have maintained their Arabic lexicon and have experienced minor morpho-phonological changes. The second is about words borrowed from Arabic that have experienced major lexical changes in Pular despite minor morpho-phonological changes.

As already mentioned there are words borrowed from Arabic that have experienced only minor alterations in their morpho-phonology and their original meaning in Arabic has remained relatively the same in Pular. These include, among others, common Arabic words and Islamic concepts such *zakat* [zakat] (obligatory almsgiving), *shariah* [ʃariah], hadith [hadiθ]*, khutba*[h] [hʊtbah] (sermon), *sadaqah* [sadaka[h]] (voluntary almsgiving)*, sunnah* [sʊnna[h]]**,** *sujuut [sʊjʊt]* (prostration) and *masjid* [masʤid] (mosque)*.* It is important to note that in Pular these words: [z] (as in **z**akat) is generally pronounced [s]; [ʃ] as in **sh**ariah becomes [s]; th[θ] as in *hadi**th*** becomes [s], the kh [h] as in **kh**utba is pronounced k [k] and the final -*h*, as in sharia**h** and sunna**h** known as *ta marbuta*, is not generally pronounced. As already mentioned, level of education and context of speech largely determine the pronunciation of these letters. Table 4 summarises phonological substitution of basic Islamic concepts in Pular.

Similarly, a word like *kaafir* [ka:fir] which means a 'non-believer and non-believing in God' in Arabic (by extension a non-Muslim) has become *kefero* [kefero] (with an -o added) in Pular but retained its original meaning. Other words that have kept the same meaning but with minor morpho-phonological changes include the Arabic words *waliy* [walij] and *baraka* [baraka]. *Waliy* means a 'saint' in Arabic but has become *waliyou* [walijʊ] in Pular. *Barakah* 'blessing' in Arabic [baraka[h]] (Baraka in English) has become *barke* [barke] in Pular. Similarly, the word *al jannah* [al ʤanna[h]] which means 'paradise' in

Arabic becomes *aljannah* [aldʒanna']in Pular; **j**inn [ʒi:n] in Arabic has become *jinna* [dʒinna] in Pular and *Allah* [alla^h] which means 'God' in Arabic has become *Allahou* [allahʊ] in Pular.

Table 4. Sound substitution of basic Islamic concepts in Pular

	Arabic sounds	**Pular**
1	z [z]	s[s]
2	sh[ʃ]	s[s]
3	th[θ]	s[s]
4	Kh[h]	[k]

In contrast, there are Arabic words used in Pular that have changed both their morpho-phonology as well as their meaning. Pular has appropriated Arabic words and used them creatively to enrich its lexicon. For example, in Arabic, *so'om [sawm]* means 'the act of fasting or to fast' and is used to refer to the 'month of Ramadan', the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Pular has used the Arabic word *so'om* to create two months in its Muslim-based calendar. The first is the month of Ramadan which in Pular is called *soomaye* [sʊmaje]. The second is the month before Ramadan or the eight month of the Pular calendar which is called *sabordou [sabordʊ] soomaye*. In Pular it means literally the 'month-in-waiting of Ramadan'. It is made up of two words: first *sabordou* which is derived from the Arabic adjective *sabr* [sabr] and means 'waiting or to wait, to be patient, etc.' The second word is *soomaye* which, as discussed, means 'the month of Ramadan' derived from the Arabic word *so'om.* In combining these two Arabic words to obtain the month *sabordu soomaye*, Pular has created a new meaning which is the eighth month of its Islamic-influenced calendar. Interestingly, from the same Arabic adjective *sabr*, Pular has created the verb *sabbagol* [saɓɓagol] which means 'to wait'.

In Pular there are also cases where the meaning of words borrowed from Arabic is extended. For example, the Arabic word *bint* [bint] which means 'daughter of' in Arabic has become the female name *Binta* [binta] in Pular. Similarly, *um*[ʊm], which means mother in Arabic, is used for the common female name *Oumou* [ʊmmʊ]in Pular. Sheikh (the title in Arabic) has given the Pular male name *Saik(h)ou* [Saikʊ] (note the -ʊ in the name). Other examples of words which have been extended include the Arabic word *Sobbah [sobba^h]*. In Arabic *sobbah* means 'tomorrow morning' but it has become s*ubaka* [sʊbaka] in Pular and it means 'morning'. *Fitnah* [fitnah] means 'civil strife' in Arabic, but in

Pular it may refer to a 'conflict', 'trouble', 'worry', 'concern', 'problem', etc. Similarly, *musalahah* [mʊsalah], means in Arabic, among other definitions, 'the intervention of an external party or an outsider to engage in conflict, dispute, etc.' or 'resolution of a conflict or dispute for common or public benefit', or 'to reconcile different Islamic traditions or schools', but in Pular the word has become *maslah* [masla^h] and means 'to negotiate', 'to act in a diplomatic way' etc., but generally at inter-personal level.

This section has shown that Pular has borrowed from Arabic a range of concepts and words stemming from Islam. These words too have been integrated into Pular with morpho-phonological changes in order to adapt them to the phonological features of Pular and respond to the need to simplify complex Arabic sounds. Changes involved deleting complex sounds (e.g.: *ta marbuta*) or substituting them with simpler ones. Also interesting in this section is that Pular has created new words and meanings based on words borrowed from Arabic.

Conclusion

This article has shown that the contact between Arabic and West African languages since Islamisation has had an enduring impact on African languages. West African languages borrowed from Arabic for lexical expansion as well as to facilitate communication between Arabs and African Muslims, as well as amongst the different non-Arabic speaking Muslim communities across the region. The article has shown that Pular, the language of one of the largest speech communities in West Africa, has substantially borrowed from Arabic to cover a range of areas, including its calendar (days of the week and months), nomenclature (Arabic personal names), and basic Islamic concepts. Analysis of the days of the week and names revealed interesting findings. It demonstrated consistent recourse to linguistic simplification in order to integrate complex words borrowed from Arabic into Pular. The simplification process includes deletion of complex Arabic sounds or substitution with their simplest form or the closest Pular sounds. As for personal names borrowed from Arabic, Pular has created its own internal rules which consist of adding suffixes to integrate Arabic personal names into the language system. The analysis of basic Islamic concepts borrowed from Arabic reveals that while some of these words have kept their original Arabic meaning, with minor morpho-phonological changes, others have been restyled: not only has Pular coined new words based on words borrowed from Arabic, but it has also created new meanings.

Even though the corpus used to establish borrowings from the language contact between Pular and Arabic has been limited to specific areas, it is an important contribution to the literature on language contact in general and language contact between Arabic and Pular in particular. It has analysed the underlying features of the outcomes of borrowing in order to provide insights into how words borrowed from Arabic operate in Pular, a topic which has been largely overlooked in the studies of language contact between African languages and Arabic in West Africa.

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