



Language Borrowing and Semantic Change: A Study of Arabic Loanwords in Baatonum

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Abstract: *Semantic change in language borrowing is a general phenomenon among living languages. When a language borrows lexical items from the other, some modifications occur, thus, affecting the meanings of some of the borrowed items. Scholars at different times have examined semantic change in loanwords across different languages. This current study investigates semantic change in Arabic loanwords within the Baatonum language. Through a comprehensive linguistic analysis, the study explores how Arabic loanwords have been incorporated into Baatonum, focusing on shifts in meaning and usage. The study identifies patterns of semantic transformation and sociocultural factors influencing the changes through analysis of a corpus Arabic loanwords. Adopting a qualitative case design, the study employs the native speaker intuition of the writer and interviews with fellow Baatonum speakers to gather nuanced insights into the semantic transformation of Arabic loanwords. Data for the study is collected a corpus of loan words collected by the author for a PhD dissertation. Findings have revealed that while some borrowed words have retained their original meanings, others undergo significant changes. This study is significant in the sense that it contributes to broader understanding of language contact phenomena and semantic evolution, highlighting the importance of native speaker perspectives in language research, as well as the dynamic interplay between languages in contact.*

Key Words: Borrowing; Loanwords; Semantic change; Arabic; Baatonum

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Introduction

Language borrowing or lexical borrowing is a general phenomenon among languages. It is the process of transferring linguistic elements from one language to another, this process occurs when languages come in contact with one another. According to Crystal (2008, p. 58), borrowing is a term in linguistics that refers to a linguistic form belonging to a particular language taken over by another language or dialect. In a similar statement, Campbell (1999, p. 57) captures borrowing as a process where a language takes words from another language and make it part of its own vocabulary. Perhaps, the simplest means by which languages obtain new words (Trask, 1999, p. 70).

When speakers of a language incorporate or adopt words from another language, such words are often modified to fit their own phonological and morphological systems. In addition, the process also brings about shift or change in meanings of some borrowed words, which is the focus of the present research, vis-à-vis Baatonum and Arabic languages.

Baatonum is one of the minority languages in West Africa. It is spoken as the lingua franca of approximately a million Baatombu (*sing. Baatonu*) in Baruten Local Government Area of Kwara State, Nigeria, Borgou and Alibori provinces and in some parts of Atacora and Donga provinces in the Republic of Benin. It is classified as a member

of the Gur sub-division of the Niger-Congo language family that is related to the central and the Gurunsi groups according to Manessy (as cited in Schottman, 2000, p. 79). However, later studies classified Baatonum as an isolate within the savannah languages (Dimmendaal, 2008), though studies are ongoing to unravel a more specific affiliation. The language is used by a population of around 1.5 million spread across the West-Central and North-Eastern borders of Nigeria and Benin respectively, and a small group in Togo ("Bariba," n.d. para, 1).

As a result of cultural contact with neighbouring language communities, and to some extent, the colonial languages (English and French), Baatonum has adopted and adapted a large body of vocabularies from the different languages it came in contact with into its lexis. Languages such as Hausa, Yoruba, Dendi (a dialect of Songhai), Arabic, English and French have a great deal of influence on Baatonum. While the language has been influenced greatly by Arabic, French and Dendi in the Republic of Benin, it has been heavily influenced by Arabic, English, Hausa and Yoruba languages in Nigeria. This, however, does not imply that some French and Dendi lexical items are not found in Baatonum as spoken in Nigeria, and some English, Hausa and Yoruba words in the language as spoken in the Republic of Benin. Even though the language has different dialects, coupled with the influence of other languages on it from either side of the Nigeria-Benin border, there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility among speakers.

On the other hand, Ryding (2005, p. 1) describes Arabic as the most widely spread of the living Semitic languages, a sub-family of the Afro-Asiatic language phylum). The Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is today the official language of countries in North Africa and most countries of the Middle-East, and used by more than 400 million people is a direct descendant of Classical Arabic (Jabbari, n.d., para, 1). Ryding equally states that the Classical Arabic (CA) as the name given to the literary language of the past era, or the version found in literary texts from the 6th century CE saw a vigorous flourishing of the Arabic literary language. In addition, Jabbari explains how the language played a catalytic role in the expansion of knowledge as well as

promoting and dissemination of Greek and Roman sciences and philosophies to Renaissance Europe. With the aid of Islam, Arabic has spread at an alarming rate across different parts of the world as the liturgical language of the Muslims, which they revere as a divine gift and sacred part of their culture, as it is inseparable from Islam. In the course of its spread, Arabic had contact with several languages in Europe, America, Asia and Africa etc. This contact resulted in the borrowing of lexical items from some of the languages and vice versa.

This paper investigates borrowed Arabic lexical items into Baatonum with particular focus on semantic change. As languages adopt and adapt words from other language or languages, the linguistic constructions (phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics) of such words in most cases are modified to conform to forms of the recipient language. The concern of the current paper therefore is to examine the aspect of shift or change in meaning of adopted Arabic words into Baatonum.

Theoretical Framework

The study employs two models: the Thomason and Kaufman's Socio-cultural linguistic criterion of language maintenance, in analyzing the type and effect of language contact between Baatonum and Arabic languages, and Blank's Typology of semantic change in analyzing the mechanisms of semantic change in the Arabic borrowed words in Baatonum language.

Thomason and Kaufman (1988) expressed the fact that linguistic borrowing is precipitated by contact-induced interference based on the socio-cultural linguistic criterion of language maintenance; similar to Van Coetsem (1988), whose model based on the psycho-linguistics criterion of language dominance. The difference between these models is that while Van Coetsem's approach to language contact identifies two fundamental different types of language contact; borrowing (recipient language agentivity) and imposition (source language agentivity), the Thomason and Kaufman approach distinguishes between borrowing and interference through interference.

In their model, Thomason and Kaufman (1988) described linguistics borrowing as the incorporation of foreign features into a group's native language by speakers of that language, while the native language is still maintained by due to addition of the incorporated features. They added that that in most cases, the features to enter the recipient language are words which are treated as stems. This depends on both social and linguistic factors such as typological capability between languages; leading to casual contact, which leads to mainly lexical borrowing, covering nouns or items related to culture, religion or trade, intense contact leading to structural, phonological, syntactic borrowing or even creation of a new language.

The linguistic contact between Arabic and Baatonum can be described as a casual contact which resulted to borrowing of a number of Arabic lexical items by the recipient language.

The Typology of Semantic Change by Blank (1999) is a model that incorporates the traditional mechanisms of semantic change into his typology and categorization of semantic change. According to this model, there are two causes of semantic change; these are the Extra-linguistic and Linguistic causes. The extra-linguistic causes includes psychological, sociocultural and cultural/encyclopedic factors, while the linguistic causes include factors that occur in the system of the language spoken. The kind of changes tend to take longer than the extra-linguistic causes and these are metonymy, metaphor, ellipsis, narrowing, broadening, amelioration, pejoration euphemism, hyperbole, litotes, shift in denotation etc.

This framework is important as it is employed in categorizing mechanisms of semantic change of Arabic loan words in Baatonum language; covering broadening, narrowing, amelioration, pejoration, metonymy and metaphor.

Baatonum Contact with Arabic

Contact between languages in human history started since the time when language communities started moving from one place to another in search of better living conditions or in a bid to extend their dominium over other communities; in other words, as a result of the exploratory and

colonizing enterprises (Finegan, 2008, p. 452). Language communities sometimes migrate from their original and ancestral dwelling as a result of wars, diseases, famine and other natural disasters to places of relative peace and better weather conditions. In some of these cases, they find themselves living side-by-side with other language communities. For example, when the

English, French, Portuguese and other Europeans colonized Africa, Asia, the Pacific and other places; they forced their languages over the populace making them learn the foreign languages. In addition, the slave trade brought people of different languages to live side-by-side (Finegan, 2008, p. 452). Religion, education and commercial activities are also catalysts for language contact. For instance, the spread of Islam to different parts of the world made the Arabic language to come in contact with many languages spoken by Muslims. In the same vein, education and business activities have placed languages in contact either directly or indirectly.

Baatonum, like many other languages of the world, had in its history come in contact with indigenous and neighbouring languages such as Hausa, Yoruba, Bokobaru, Fulfulde and Dendi as well as international languages like Arabic, English and French. Established historical records contain evidence showing how and when the Baatombu came in contact with various peoples and cultures, e.g. the ethnic families of *Mande*, *Kumate*, *Traore*, *Ture*, *Fofana*, *Mansa*, *Jerma*, *Sira*, *Sisse*, etc., some of whom initially settled peacefully as traders in various foreign caravan quarters at the outskirts of some Baatonu cities known as the *Wangara* quarters. Others were migrants known among the Baatombu as the *Wasangari* who fled their bases due to hostilities. These people later became part of the Baatonu society as commercial and political migrants respectively. Based on the observation of Hegeman (2001, p. 67), the aim of the Baatonu was to enjoy ethnic actualization through the least possible contact with the surrounding armies of the *Gurma*, *Mossi*, *Mali*, *Songhai*, *Fulbe* and *Hausa* kingdoms.

As regards contact with Arabs, there is no authentic historical record pointing to the fact that the Baatombu had any direct contact with Arabs.

The only available records people rely on are based on oral traditions about the legendry Kisra migration to Borgu, which were narrated in different versions to the colonial masters at different times by informants of diverse interests. These traditions are deposited at the National Archives in the Northern Nigerian city of Kaduna (Akinwumi, 1998, pp. 2-3). Jones (n.d., pp. 4-6) captured two different versions of the oral tradition. One of the narrations written by Hoskyns Abrahall who served as colonial officer in Borgu from 1917 to 1925 stated that the said Kisra was the outstanding figure of the exodus from Arabia (Akinwumi, 1998, p. 2). Meanwhile, the name Kisra (Khosrau) was a Persian ruler, not an Arab and never lived in Arabia.

Arabic Lexical Items in Baatonum

In the course of its spread across the world, Arabic came in contact with many languages either directly or indirectly. The interaction that emerged as a result of the contacts conditioned the language to borrow from other languages and vice versa. Since there was no direct contact between Baatonum and Arabic, it is only the former that borrowed lexical items from the latter.

The adoption of Arabic words into Baatonum and the subsequent nativization of those words is not a mere coincidence. Several factors were responsible, these are: trade relationships between the Baatombu and Malian and Hausa traders which started around the 15th century, immigration of some Muslim communities, the advent of Islam among the people, business activities and cultural interaction between the Baatombu and Hausa as well as the Dendi, and the establishment of Arabic and Islamic learning centres.

The adopted Arabic lexical items are spread over different areas of human endeavours, which according to Ahmad (2016) cover religion [24.1%], education [13.4%], common/personal descriptions [10.1%], social and moral [8.1%], household materials [2.5%], days of the week [1.9%], trade (1.6%), clothing [1.4%], miscellaneous [18.2%], clipped personal names [12.6%], special expressions [4.8%] and those considered coincidental [1.1%]. This excludes unclipped Arabic personal names used by Muslims. Based on

the study, over 350 Arabic lexical items were found making up part of Baatonum vocabulary, some of them were adopted through Hausa language, such as: *walaa* – wooden slate, *aluwala* – ablution, *alaamari* – affair, *yaafeewa* – pardon, *liisaafi* – calculation etc., for *lawh*, ‘*al-wuḍū’*, *al-‘amr*, *ya’fuwa* and *ḥisāb* respectively. Similarly, days of the week are also adopted from Arabic through this language. Some other few words found their way in to Baatonum through another neighbouring language community (the Yoruba); words such as *alaaji* (masc) *alaaja* (fem) for one who performed the pilgrimage in Makkah are common examples. Meanwhile, a larger percentage of the words were adopted through Islamic practices and Arabic learning.

Language borrowing and Semantic Change

Language borrowing is defined by Bussmann (1996, p. 134) as “an adoption of a linguistic expression from one language into another language, usually when no term exists for the new object, concept, or state of affairs.” A borrowed word is therefore a word or phrase which has been taken from one language and used in another language (Richards and Richard, 2002, p. 56). This phenomenon is a common practice with all living languages of the world. No language is an island on its own; throughout history, languages are found to be dependent on one another to meet up with development trends and enriching their lexicons. When two languages or language communities are in contact, for whatever reason, the consequence is that speakers adopt lexical items from a source language into their native language.

The use of the word ‘borrowing’ to mean the adopted lexical items is metaphorical, because there is literally no formal lending process, no formal transfer from one language to another and no returning of the items to the source language, and the lending language does not lose the use of the word. This act of borrowing words can go in both directions between the languages in contact; particularly in a situation where the two language communities are of equal prestige. However, if one language community is dominant over the other, borrowing is uneven, with the less prestigious borrowing much more from the dominant. There is also a case of borrowing that is

one-sided; a situation where the borrowing language only takes from the dominant while the latter does not take from the former.

However, contact between speakers of languages does not necessarily have to be physical; neither should there be much interaction among them for borrowing to take place. It could be through writing, just like the case of classical Latin which has influenced English very heavily even though there was virtually no physical contact between speakers of the two languages. This type of contact is established between Arabic and Baatonum.

Semantic change refers to semantic shift where the meaning of a word differs in current usage from its original meaning. According to Bussmann (1996, p. 1041), semantic change is the “changes in the meaning of linguistic expressions, seen from a historical perspective, where semantic change refers both to changes in the relation between linguistic signs and extra-linguistic reality and to changes in the relations between signs.” While Bloomfield (1973, p. 425), considers the phenomenon as innovations which change the lexical meaning of a linguistic form rather than changing its grammatical function. This change is found everywhere and can affect any word regardless of where it comes from; as rightly highlighted by Riemer (2010, p. 372), in respect to the English word ‘*and*’ whose meaning has changed overtime. It was polysemous with ‘*if*’ during the pre-modern period. The word ‘*with*’ in old English meant ‘against’; explode used for ‘to drive out’ (Millar, 2015, p. 32).

Linguists have identified factors responsible for semantic change in languages. Uluman (as cited in Riddell 2019, p. 2) identified two factors: change due to linguistic conservation, which is a non-linguistic change (social, psychological) and change due to linguistic innovation, which is a linguistic change (metonymy, ellipsis, metaphor, etc.). According to Traugott (1982, p. 9) the causes of semantic change in languages are the linguistic, which parallels Ullman’s linguistic innovation and extra-linguistic factor, which parallels Ullman’s linguistic conservation. However, Meillet (as cited in Millar 2015, pp. 39-40), proposed three principles of semantic change, the first being occurrence of change and development in the world, the second is change in the linguistic

context and third is change resulting from borrowing. And just like Meillet, other scholars identified language borrowing as a viable and major cause of semantic change. Luján (2010, p. 303) highlighted language contact which results to borrowing as a frequent cause of semantic change in which both linguistic and non-linguistic factors are involved. It is therefore clear that semantic change can either be internally (linguistic and non-linguistic) motivated or externally (language contact/borrowing) motivated.

Various categories or types of semantic change have also been identified by linguists; among them are: specialization or narrowing, generalization or broadening, melioration, pejoration, metonymy, metaphor, semantic shift etc. These can also be referred to as results of semantic change. Meanwhile, Luján (2010, pp. 289-296) grouped these categories into three; the first being mechanisms of semantic change comprising metaphor, metonymy, ellipsis and folk etymology. The second is change in scope of meaning, comprising broadening and narrowing; and lastly, changes in connotation, covering pejoration and melioration. All these categories of semantic change as mentioned above are basically traditional classification of the phenomenon of semantic change, which is being criticized by modern linguists.

In modern linguistic research, the traditional categories of semantic change are referred to as results of semantic change by Hock (1991, p. 301) and Fortson IV (2003, p. 650). According to Fortson IV (2003, p. 652), the assumption that an old meaning becomes the new meaning as a fundamental flaw of the traditional categorization of semantic change, and the categorization is equally problematic because certain changes in meaning are not accounted for by any of these categories and considered. He argued that changes in meaning that cannot be classified under the traditional categories are referred to as reanalysis, which according to him, rests on meanings not being available, until one was assigned, citing the example of change undergone by the English word ‘*bead*’ which originally meant prayer. Similar, Hock (1991, p. 296) put forward an argument when he used the term ‘reinterpretation’ to refer to changes in meaning not accounted for under the traditional categories of semantic

change. This, according to him, is “probably the most important mechanism of semantic change” as it is precipitated by linguistic and extra-linguistic developments.

Another critic of the traditional categorization of semantic change is Riemer (2010, pp. 377-379), who described the traditional categories as very general, often vague and purely taxonomic, and therefore do not offer adequate explanatory perspectives into how the changes happen. He stressed on the role of conventionalization of implicature theory as source of semantic change, which allows for addition of a stage to earlier grammaticalization about the role of polysemy in semantic change. Another issue with the traditional categories is the fact that, they are either too powerful or not powerful enough: in the case of broadening/narrowing and melioration/pejoration, there are many meaning changes which do not seem to fit, and in the case of metonymy/metaphor, the categories seem not to be able to explain any change.

These are few arguments against the traditional typology of semantic change by modern linguists.

However, for the purpose of this study, the examination of semantic change in Arabic lexical items in Baatonum is based on the traditional classification. Five of these categories are identified and examined.

Semantic Change in Borrowed Arabic Words in Baatonum

Semantic Broadening

Broadening, also known as widening, generalization or extension is the shift in meaning of a word to encompass a wider class of referents (Reimer 2010, p. 374). In other words, it is the result of semantic change in which the meaning of a word extends and grows over time to cover a wider range of contexts. For instance, the word *dog* was once used to denote only a particular type of *canine*, but now it is a generic term for all *canines*. In the process of borrowing Arabic words into Baatonum, some words went through the process of broadening where they take extra meanings not in the original Arabic words. Some examples are given below:

Table I. Semantic Broadening

S/N	Arabic	Gloss	Baatonum	Gloss
1	وجل / <i>wahila</i> /	Get stuck in the mud	wahala	General suffering, having difficulty in carrying out a task, problem, troublesome
2	شهر / <i>šahr</i> /	Month	suru	Month, moon
3	شريعة / <i>šarī'ah</i> /	Law, code	seriya	Law, code, penalty, punishment, basis
4	غفر / <i>ʿafara</i> /	To forgive, pardon, overlook	gaafara	To forgive, pardon, overlook, seek permission, create space, part of the greeting tradition.

In table (1) above, it shows that some Arabic lexical items borrowed into Baatonum have acquired extra meanings in addition to the original meanings in Arabic from which they are borrowed. It is a clear evidence of semantic broadening. For instance, the word '*wahala*' in Baatonum means general suffering in life, difficulty in carrying any task, it also denotes problem as well as harshness one suffers under a superior etc. In Arabic however, the word '*wahila*' is a verb that means 'to be stuck in the mud' and finding it difficult to get out of it. While the Arabic word is specific, the borrowed word in Baatonum

has a general and wider connotation. Likewise the word '*suru*' in Baatonum means 'month' as does the word '*shahr*' in Arabic. However, the Baatonum word '*suru*', in addition, also denotes the 'moon', indicating a wider connotation. Similarly, the word '*seriya*' in Baatonum denotes law just like the original Arabic word '*sharī'ah*', but in addition, the Baatonum word encompasses referents that are related to law, such as punishment, penalty as well as truth. The word *seriya* therefore has broader connotation compared to the Arabic *sharī'ah*.

Semantic Narrowing

Narrowing is the opposite of broadening. It is also known as specialization, restriction and reduction is a situation where the meaning of a word is restricted or reduced to specific number of contexts. In other words, the meaning of a word

becomes less general than before. For example, the word *girl* was used to mean *young person of either sex*, but it is now used to mean a *young female person*. Similarly, some Arabic words adopted into Baatonum are now having less inclusive meanings than the original Arabic words. Below are some examples:

Table 2. Semantic Narrowing

S/N	Arabic	Gloss	Baatonum	Gloss
1	خط /khatt/	Writing, script, inscription, line, stripe, handwriting, calligraphy	Hantum	Arabic writing
2	مدرسة /madrasah/	School, college, academy, doctrine	Madirasa	Arabic school
3	وظيفة /wazifah/	Job, post, work, position, office, employment, service	Waziifa	Sufi (tijaniyyah order) rituals
4	آية /āyah/	Verse, sign, miracle, example, masterpiece, pattern	Aaya	Verse of the Qur'an
5	أجل /'azal/	Period, term, moment of death, due date, yes, fixed time, deadline	Ajali	Time of death
6	القدر /'alqidr/	Pot, kettle, jar for cooking	Alikidiri	Kettle for ablution
7	طريقة /ṭarīqah/	Means, way, method, process, order, religious brotherhood, school, creed, belief etc.	Tariika	Sufi religious order
8	فريضة /farīdah/	Duty, task, religious obligation/ duty, obligatory prayer, prescribed share (inheritance),	fariila	Religious obligation

Table (ii) above shows clearly that some Arabic words borrowed into Baatonum have limited their meanings to specific referents therefore making them less general, as against their original Arabic meanings which are more general and used for wider referents. This is semantic narrowing. For example, the Baatonum word '*hantum*' (*ḥatt* in Arabic), denotes writing in Arabic script, excluding writing in any other language and also excluding all other denotations of the word in the source language. This is limiting or narrowing the semantic scope of the word '*ḥatt*' in Arabic which denotes, among other things, writing as shown in the table. In the same vein, the word '*tariika*' is used in Baatonum only to refer to the sufi religious order, the tijaniyya order in particular, while in Arabic, it means 'way', 'pattern', 'creed', 'mode', 'school', 'brotherhood', 'religious order' etc. Similarly, in Baatonum, the word '*madirasa*' which is from the Arabic '*madrasah*' means an Arabic school or college excluding schools of Western education, while in Arabic, '*madrasah*' denotes any school, college or academy regardless of the type of education being offered. It is also

used to mean a doctrine. All of the above indicate semantic restriction or narrowing in the borrowed words as against the original Arabic words.

Semantic Pejoration

Pejoration (Latin *pejor* 'worse') is the opposite of melioration. It is a situation where a word takes on a derogatory meaning; it is frequently seen with words for animals which can be used to refer to people negatively or insultingly, when for instance a person is called parasite, pig, monkey etc. (Reimer, 2010, pp. 374-375). In other words, it is linked to an unpleasant reality or an instance where the meaning of a word is demoted to a term of abuse. It is also linked to a socially undervalued concept or estate (Luján, 2010, p. 295). The word *knave* was used to mean boy, but now used to mean *man servant* or *dishonest man*. In the same vein, some words that are borrowed into Baatonum from Arabic also have this kind of semantic change. Some examples are given below:

Table 3. Semantic Pejoration

S/N	Arabic	Gloss	Baatonum	Gloss
1	معلم /mu'allim/	Male teacher, master, tutor, school master, lecturer	Maalam	Man (title)
2	معلمة /mu'allimah/	Female teacher, tutor, school mistress, lecturer	Maalama	Woman (title)
3	خليفة /ḥalīfah/	Caliph, successor of the messenger of Allah	Arufa/Alufa	cleric, assumed cleric

The table above shows that some Arabic words borrowed into Baatonum has undergone the process of pejoration over the years. For instance, 'mu'allim' and 'mu'allimah' which are masculine and feminine nouns respectively, meaning a teacher, a trainer, and an instructor, tutor, lecturer, are adapted in Baatonum as 'maalam' and 'maalama' and used as title or term of address for a man and woman respectively. These nouns are used recognized officially as substitute for Mr. and Mrs. in Baatonum and among some language communities in Nigeria. The meaning of the words in Arabic has therefore been undervalued in Baatonum and in other languages like Hausa, Yoruba, Nupe, Igbira etc. from the original meaning. At the same time, the Baatonum word 'arufa' or 'alufa' as adapted refers to a Muslim cleric, or sometimes an assumed Muslim cleric. In Yoruba language, 'alufa' is used for both Muslim and Christian clerics. This is also a pejorative instance undervaluing the social concept of the

Arabic word 'ḥalīfah' which refers to a caliph of the Messenger of God, Muhammad (PBUH) as understood from the Islamic perspective of the lexical item.

Metaphor

Metaphor is seen as the most common form of semantic change. As Millar (2015, p. 37) explained, it is simply using a word for something it does not literally denote in order to draw attention to a resemblance. It is so frequent that it might reasonably be taken as the paradigm type of semantic change. Metaphor is always based on a perceived similarity between the source and the target. In which case, the two must share one or more traits, which constitute the ground for the metaphor (Luján, 2010, p. 289). The use of *mouse* for a computer device is metaphoric. This type of change is also noticed in some Arabic words adopted into Baatonum as found in the table below:

Table 4. Metaphor

S/N	Arabic	Gloss	Baatonum	Gloss
1	لحن /laḥn/	Solecism	Lahan	Weak memory, misapprehension,
2	فصاحة /faṣāḥah/	Fluency, eloquence	Fasaaha	Erudite, intelligent
3	درجة /darajah/	Stair, doorstep, degree, grade, status, measure, mark, point, rank	Daraja	Honour
4	وليمة /walimah/	Banquet (marriage)	Walima	A feast upon completion of learning Qur'an recitation
5	دليل /dalīl/	Denotation, proof, evidence, guide, symbol, symptom, key, etc.	Daliili	Reason
6	منافق /munāfiq/	Hypocrite, double dealer, double faced	munaafiki	Scandal monger, calumniator, slanderer
7	وثيقة /wathīqah/	Document, deed, record, paper, act, instrument, etc.	wasika	Letter, missive

In table (4) above, the Arabic words as adopted into Baatonum denote meanings that are literally meant for the original words in Arabic. The words are used to mean what they denote by way of analogy. For instance, the word '*munaafiki*' in Baatonum is used to mean a slanderer who moves about planting the seed of enmity and discord among people. Meanwhile, the meaning of the word '*munāfiq*' in the source language is hypocrite – somebody who pretends to have admirable feelings, beliefs and principles but behaves otherwise. The similarity between the source (Arabic) and target (Baatonum) language is in the lack of sincerity, truthfulness and hidden hatred. It is also observed from the table, that the Baatonum word '*Lahan*' refers to weak memory or misapprehension, and this differs literally from the meaning of the Arabic '*laḥn*', which denotes error or mistake in grammar, particularly the inflectional aspect of Arabic grammar (spoken or written). However, the perceived similarity between the two is the poor grasp of what is been taught in the course of learning; by way of erring in grammar or syntax in Arabic and erring in apprehending what is been taught in Baatonum.

Table 5. Metonymy

S/N	Arabic	Gloss	Baatonum	Gloss
1	دواة (dawāt)	Inkwell, inkstand	tadawa	Ink
2	أذان ('aḏān)	Call to prayer	Laadan	The one who calls to prayer
3	عيد ('id)	Feast, festival	Idi	The Eid prayer ground
4	بيت الله (baytul-lāh)	House of Allah (ka'abah)	Baitil-laahi	One who performed the Muslim pilgrimage
5	فتيلة (fatilah)	Wick	fitila	lantern, lamp

In table (5) above, the meanings of the Arabic words borrowed into Baatonum are close to the corresponding original Arabic words. For example, the word '*dawāt*' in Arabic, is the container that holds or ink inkpot, but in Baatonum, '*tadawa*' as adapted, denotes what the container contains i.e. the ink. In the same vein, the word '*laadan*' in Baatonum is also used metonymically as 'the person who calls to prayer'; because the original word '*adhān*' as shown in the table denotes the act of calling to prayer. Another instance is that of the word '*fatilah*', which means a wick (piece of material in a candle or lamp that is lit for burning) in Arabic, whereas in Baatonum, the borrowed lexical item '*fitila*' denotes the lamp as a whole, including the wick. In this case, a part

Similarly, the Arabic word '*faṣāḥah*' denotes eloquence or fluency. On the contrary, '*fasaaha*' in Baatonum refers to intelligence or erudition with a perceived similarity between the words in Arabic and Baatonum is extensive learnedness involved in speech on one hand, and in general knowledge on the other.

5.5 Metonymy

This is another form of semantic change which was adopted into linguistics from rhetoric, the traditional study of figurative, literary and persuasive language (Reimer 2010, p. 376). Metonymy is opposed to metaphor as it is not based on similarity, but on contiguity of referents. The contiguity could be in the use of a container for the thing it contained or vice versa, material for object, the time for what is done at that time, the place for what is usually located there or vice versa. For instance, the use of *crown* to mean the king or queen, the use of *stage* to mean the theatrical profession and so on is metonymical. Some Arabic words borrowed into Baatonum also have this kind of usage as could be seen in the following examples:

of an object is used in referring to the whole; and a type of metonymy referred to as synecdoche.

Conclusion

In this paper, an attempt is made to examine and discuss various semantic modifications that have occurred on Arabic lexical items borrowed into Baatonum. Many lexical items of Arabic origin have been adopted and absorbed into Baatonum; many of them retain the original Arabic meanings, while some others have gone through the process of change in their denotation and (or) connotation. This study has identified five categories of semantic changes that have affected the borrowed words. These are semantic broadening, narrowing, pejoration, metaphor and metonymy. Twenty-

seven (27) lexical items of Arabic origin, borrowed and adapted in Baatonum are used as data for the study. The findings of this study show that five (4) lexical items have wider scope of meaning in the target language (semantic broadening), eight (8) have a narrower scope (semantic narrowing), three (3) items have connotations: (pejoration), six (7) with semantic change as a result of similarity between the source and target (metaphor) and five (5) items with semantic change due to contiguity between the source and the target (metonymy). Furthermore, analyses of selected words from the data provides premise for the semantic change in the borrowed lexical items in Baatonum. The study of Arabic-Baatonum relationship is an unfamiliar area of research and therefore, requires the attention of researchers to study various aspects of contact between Arabic and Baatonum.

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