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Morphological Analysis of Lexicons in Hausa Dialects

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Abstract

This paper explores a *descriptive analysis of some lexicons in Hausa dialect with a view to identifying morphological process of their forms. The Hausa language is popularly spoken in northern Nigeria and some West African states like parts of Chad, Cameroon, Ghana and so on. Hausa is the major language of West Africa and is the largest member of the Chad language family, which in turn belongs to the Afro-asiatic Phylum. The study adopts Labov (1972) dialect variations theory. The theory significantly contributed to the field of sociolinguistics. The study uses Krjcie and Morgan (1990) sampling table and selected at random one hundred (100) words across the dialects of the two regions. The paper selects very few words and employs a descriptive approach in attempt to explain a concise description of lexicons involved in the two regions. The paper uses simple random sampling techniques as a method of data collection. Descriptive method guides and answers the objectives and research problem of study. Data were collected using simple random sampling techniques. The study reveals that the lexicon variations between the two regions are predominantly suppletive and modification process.*

Key words: Morphological process, Hausa regions, Kano and Katsina dialects.

Background to Study

This paper intends to examine a morphological analysis of lexicons in two regions of Hausa language with regard to dialectal variations as in Bello (1970) classifies Hausa dialects primarily into classical and modern Hausa dialectal variations. According to them the word Classical refers to Hausa language and literary styles

which have been greatly influenced by Arabic and Islamic traditions as opposed to modern Hausa. This connotes Hausa language, and literary styles influenced by western civilization and culture through agency of the English language. The feature of classical Hausa is the fact that is closer to Sokoto dialect than to any other major dialect; one has to



refer to *Dare Dubu da Daya; Labarun da nayanzu; and Hausawa da makwabtansu* (Abubakar, 1982).

In the above classification, dialectal variations overlap state or regional borders, giving dialect a kind of generic outlook. This study is skeptical about the applicability of the preceding broad classifications of Hausa into Western and Eastern dialect in uncovering the extra region or identity of ideal Hausa speakers. Hence, a paradigm shift is set forth by being specific, focusing mainly on the two regions of Kano and Katsina. These are administratively called states, but the paper prefers to use two regions being the appropriate term for linguistics boundaries or Isoglosses. The two chosen dialects are extracts of Bello (1970) major classification of Hausa dialect into seven categories namely; *Kananci, Katsinanci, Sakkwatanci, Dauranci, Zazzaganci, Bausanci, Hadejanci*. However, the study does not intend to dig into the parameters that informed the variations among the two chosen dialects but primarily seeks to uncover the inherent lexical variations in them as a guide for revealing speaker's specific regional identity.

Dialect

Many scholars have gone on a similar opinion for definition of the term 'dialect' as means or mode of expressing thoughts, language, tongue and form of speeches among many scholars, among many Abbas (2000), Crystal (1997), Lyons (2002), Bergery (1993), Musa (2006), Aremo (2022), Abbas (2024),

Aranoff (2011), Bowen (2011), Amfani (2002), Britain (2010), Chamber and Trudgil (1998).

Dialect is the form of speech of a given region or limited region or people, distinguish from either forms nearly related to it, a variety or subdivision of a language, speech characterized by local peculiarities or specific circumstances as, the Ionic and Attic were dialects of Greece the Yorkshire, the dialect of the learned. (Bowen 2011, Chacur, 2012,).

The differences these two Hausa dialects as in Ahmad and Bello (1990) who look at the Hausa major dialects with the Standard dialect. The dialects used in the comparison are: Kano, Sokoto, Katsina, Daura, Zazzau, Bauchi, and Hadeja dialects. Some researchers also look at dialect from different perspective, among many, Amfani (2022), Adam (1997), Akmajian (1980 and 2001), Bowen (2011) and Chacur, (2012). The differences that manifest are those of phonology, morphology and syntax. However, they did not mention theoretical linguistics variations featured in the comparison. The aim was to point out the differences in an appropriate way and very understandable. Their aim was to point out clearly the usage which are peculiar to their own and other dialects, and which they must avoid when they come to write standard or classical Hausa.

Bello (1970) discusses "Issues in Hausa Dialectology". He compares all the major Hausa dialects including dialect spoken in Niger republic. He looks at many aspects of linguistics study, stating the nature of each



dialect. The comparison is more of that between western and eastern dialects. He concentrated more on phonology and phonetics. In the comparison, morphology aspects were treated under a separate section on morphology unlike other authors of classical Hausa dialect. He made substantial analysis of computation between the two complexes of western and eastern dialects. Adamu (1997) compares Kano and Sokoto dialects. His study reveals various aspects of the Hausa languages, the comparison include, morphology, phonology, and phonetics. The comparison can therefore said to be of 'grammar but there is no theoretical claim in the analysis.

Bargery, (1984) explains the extent to which Hausa language has spread. "Though this area is vast, the dialectal differences are comparatively few and for such two people who speak Hausa can be hard to understand each other". Skinner (1999) suggests assimilation and palatalization discussed in his book, titled 'morphology are from Hausa. Likewise it is also the data he used his analysis on the process of assimilation and palatalization. Abubakar (1983) examines generative phonological approach. His work reveals the western and eastern dialect, comprising of Sokoto, Katsina, Daura, Zaria, Kano and Bauchi dialects found in north Nigeria, Abubakar did not give any serious attention to Guddiri dialect. He considered it to be pidgin Hausa. Abubakar made use of two methods of analysis. He made use of isogloss method and the lexicostatistics to

support the isogloss method. He identifies forty one features which have been represented in four isoglosses. From the number of features; nineteen are variant phonological features, while twenty one are morphological. Bello (1970) examines Structuralist approach, that is to say, his concern was to find out features that are present in one dialect but absent in other dialects. He discusses eight dialects of Hausa namely, Kano, Sokoto, Zaria, Katsina, Daura, Bauchi, Damagaram and Maradi dialects within the republic of Niger. Each dialect was discussed in isolation pointing out those features that were treated.

Musa (1996) examines a comparison of Hausa dialects which were classified into western dialects or complex which comprises of Sokoto and Katsina and the eastern dialects which comprises of Zuzzau, Guddri, Bauchi, and Daura. He also mentioned that Kananci is the most closely related dialect to the Standard one. Atuwu (1997) examines of Sakkwatanci and its sisters which are Katsinanci and Zamfaranci the study categorically showed the variations that are between the three dialects, although they are very much similar to each other. Malka (1978) classifies Hausa dialects into fourteen and they could be found in Nigeria and Niger republics. Both nations have seven major dialects according to him as follows: Bausanci (Bauchi dialect), Dauranci (Daura dialect), Kananci (Kano dialect), Katsinanci (Katsina dialect), Sakkwatanci (Sokoto dialect), Zamfaranci (Zamfara dialect), Zazzaganci (Zaria dialect)



while in in Niger Republic: Adaranci (Tahoa dialect), Agadasanci (Agadez dialect), Arewanci (Dogon-Dutsi dialect), Canganci (Gaya dialect), Damagaranci (Zinder dialect) and Kurtayanci (Titibiri dialect)

Hausa Language

The Hausa language is popularly spoken in northern Nigeria and some West African states like part of Chad, Cameroon, Ghana and so on. Hausa is the major language of West Africa and is the largest member of the Chad language family, which in turn belongs to the Afro-asiatic Phylum (Newman 1980 cited in Newman 2001). Hausa is spoken as a first language by scattered settlements throughout West Africa, and as a second language or lingua franca by millions of non-Hausa in northern Nigeria and in northern Republic of Benin, Togo, and Ghana (Newman and Newman 2001). It is also used as a trade language in West Africa capital cities, in some parts of Chad and Sudan, and in the north and Equatorial Africa. There are also significant Hausa-speaking diaspora communities in the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, and new ones are already in the making in the United States and Europe. Ogunsare (2018) reports that that the Hausa language is the world's 11th most spoken language'. 'According to The Spectrum Index, there are 150 million speakers of Hausa language all over the world. Hausa is a major Afro-Asiatic as well as part of the Chadic languages spoken predominantly in West Africa, particularly in Nigeria, Niger, Ghana and many other African countries (Newman, 2001).

Methodology

This research is a qualitative lexical analysis of Kano and Katsina dialects. The data for this work has been collected from different sources such as libraries, textbook, journals and internet based texts were reviewed, written sources and informants were mainly used as reference materials. With regard to variables of Hausa data, some are texts oriented, while some were collected by listening to the speeches and utterances of some native speakers of Hausa while they were engaged in different dialogues and discussions. The 'introspective' method is also employed in gathering Hausa data. Since the language (Hausa) is familiar by researcher, as a native speaker, Hausa language relates to researcher's competence and intuition. In addition to this, the native informants were consulted in order to get the appropriate data.

A combination of techniques was employed in the collection of data gathered for the purpose of this research work. As mentioned earlier, the 'introspective' technique was employed. In addition to that, observation was also used as a means of generating data, since the researcher is a native speaker of the Hausa language. Furthermore, an unstructured interview was used to elicit relevant data from informants. The researcher initiates discussion with the informants in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. This method of data collection helps the researcher to obtain significant, reliable and valid data on Morphological Analysis of *Kananci*



and *Katsinanci* dialect of Hausa language. The researcher uses an interview as one of the techniques for eliciting relevant linguistic data from informants. Discussions were employed and questions were presented to the informants in an informal and relaxed atmosphere where certain significant, reliable and valid information and fact about the Hausa language and its structures (data) could be elicited and gathered; which could, however, be difficult in a formal situation. Observation is one of the most commonly and widely used descriptive linguistic methods in the gathering and collection of data in the field of linguistic research. The researchers employ this technique because it is suitable in obtaining firsthand information, that is, the natural primary data and the knowledge of the workings and structures of the languages under investigation. In addition, however, this instrument has provided the researcher with the opportunity to practically observe how the two languages operate in their respective dialects.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted in this research is the Labov (1972) dialect variations theory. His theory is significantly contributed to the field of sociolinguistics as it

identifies how language usage varies depending on social factors such as class, ethnicity, and region. His work lays the foundation for much of modern sociolinguistic research. This theory matches the motion says that research findings on how language usage varies depending on social factors such as classes of lexical dialect of the regions of a given language. Based on this assertion, this paper seeks to identify the dialectal variations through morphological analysis of lexicons in two regions of the Hausa language.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data used for this research were found from native speakers and wordlist of the language through study and observations from the Hausa native speakers of the two regions in the focus area of study. Although the Hausa language is a tonal language, but the data used indicate no tones are marked and it uses simple random sampling technique and selects very few words for analysis.

Lexicons Used for Naming Animals

The Hausa lexicons used for naming animals. Under this category, dialectal variations are commonly found in animals as in exemplified below:

| S/N | Kano (x) | Kastina (y) | Gloss |
|-----|------------------|------------------|-----------|
| 1a | <i>Bera</i> | <i>Kusu</i> | rat |
| b | <i>Shaho</i> | <i>Gaggafa</i> | Eagle |
| c | <i>Ungulu</i> | <i>Angulu</i> | Vulture |
| d | <i>Mage</i> | <i>Kyanwa</i> | Cat |
| e | <i>wahainiya</i> | <i>Mahauniya</i> | Chameleon |



The study shows in example 1a that there is no relationship between the two lexicons of two different regions rather than suppletive process, for instance a free morpheme *kusu* (rat) in Katsina and *bera* (rat) in Kano. In example 1b, the relationship between the two regions is a suppletive process, *Gaggafa* (eagle) in Katsina and *Shaho* (eagle) in Kano. This means there is no relationship between X and Y identities. The study shows in example 1c that a base relationship '*gulu*' stand as stem. The dialectal variation is a vowel modification initially from one dialect to another for instance, Kano dialect uses '*un+ gulu*' (vulture) and Katsina '*an+ gulu*' (vulture). In 1d, the relationship between the two

identities is suppletive process as in '*kyanwa*' (cat) in Katsina and '*mage*' (cat) in Kano. In 1e, the dialectal variation in an initial disyllable modification occurred. For instance, Kano dialect uses '*wahainiya*' (chameleon) and Katsina '*mahauniya*' (chameleon). The variations here is that, there are two syllable modification initially in both lexicons of the two regions ('*wahai* and '*mahau*') serving as modification to the stem *niya*.

Lexicons Used in Family

There is a situation where the Hausa lexicons used for naming something related to Health problems such as dialectal variations are commonly found in words as follow:

| S/N | Kano (x) | katsina (y) | Gloss |
|-----|----------------|------------------|----------|
| 2a | <i>Zazzabi</i> | <i>Masassara</i> | Fever |
| B | <i>Rauni</i> | <i>Ciwo</i> | Wound |
| C | <i>kumburi</i> | <i>Malolo</i> | Swelling |
| D | <i>Bacci</i> | <i>Kwana</i> | Sleeping |

The study shows in example 2a that there is no root relationship in both regions. Kano dialect says "*zazzabi*" (fever) and in Katsina '*mashashshara*' (fever). This means the two languages have suppletive process as the word structures give out different identities. In 2b, the relationship between the two languages is also a suppletive process as in *rauni* (injury) in Katsina and *ciwo* (injury) in Kano. This means that there is no relationship between X and Y identities. In example 1c, a free

morpheme *malolo*(swelling) in Katsina is *kumburi*(swelling) in Kano. In 2d, the relationship between the two languages is a suppletive process: *kwana* (sleeping) in Katsina and *bacci* (sleeping) in Kano. This means there is no root relationship between X and Y identities.

Lexicons Used in Family

There is a situation where the Hausa lexicons used for naming something related to Health problems such as



dialectal variations are commonly found in words as follow:

| S/N | Kano (x) | katsina (y) | Gloss |
|-----|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 3a | <i>Kanti</i> | <i>Shago</i> | shop or store |
| B | <i>Awo</i> | <i>Awu</i> | weigh |
| C | <i>Bashi</i> | <i>Sagi</i> | debt |

The study shows as in example 3a that there is no base relationship in the two regions. For instance, Kano dialect uses “*kanti*” (shop) and Katsina uses ‘*shago*’(shop). There is no relationship between the two lexicons but suppletive as the word structures give out different identities. In 3b, there is a relationship between the two lexicons as in *awu* (weighing) in Katsina and *awo* (weighing) in Kano. There is base relationship between X and Y identities. The two lexicons have the same base and the variation

is in the final vowel morpheme ‘o’ in Kano and ‘u’ in Katsina. The study shows in example 3c, For instance, Kano dialect uses “*bashi*” (debt) and Katsina uses ‘*sagi*’(debt). There is no relationship between the two lexicons but a suppletive process.

4 Dialectal Variation Related to Sewing/Clothing

Sometimes, the Hausa lexicons are used for sewing or clothing: such dialectal variations are commonly found in words exemplified below:

| S/N | Kano | katsina | Gloss |
|-----|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 4a | <i>kaqfi</i> | <i>Burgi</i> | spinning |
| B | <i>Hula</i> | <i>Tagiya</i> | Cap |
| C | <i>qinka</i> | <i>Saka</i> | sewing/weaving |
| D | <i>Riga</i> | <i>Taguwa</i> | shirt |
| E | <i>Fatari</i> | <i>Hwatari</i> | skirt |

The study reveals in 4a, a word *Kaafi* (spinning) is used in Kano and *burgi* (spinning) is used in Katsina. This means there is no morphological relationship between the two lexicons but a suppletive process and the same process in 4b, *hula*(cap) is used in Kano and *tagiya* (cap) used in Katsina. The variables shows in example 4c, there is no morphological relationship between

the two lexicons but suppletive process as in *qinka* (Sewing/weaving) is used in Kano and *saka* (Sewing/weaving) is used in Katsina. It's the same as in example 4d, as in *riga* (shirt) used in the Kano variety and *taguwa* (shirt) used in Katsina variety. In example 4e, *faataari* (skirt) is used in Kano and *hwataari* (skirt) is used in Katsina. The variables reveal that lexiconssshare the same root ‘*taari*’



the variation is modification as Kano used *'fa'* initially and Katsina used *'hwa'* initially.

FINDINGS

The study reveals that the morphological analysis of lexicons in Hausa dialects exist in form of two processes, namely, suppletive process and modification process.

1. The study reveals under modification, the morphological analysis of the lexicons are in the vowel quality, through which vowel change occurs initially or finally.
2. The study reveals that the morphological analysis of lexicons in Hausa dialects exist as a suppletive process. Most of the lexicons in Kano dialects have no relationship with lexicons in Katsina dialect in terms of morphological structures.
3. The study reveals that the existence of suppletive lexicons between the two regions do not change the expression of word originally and semantically.
4. The study shows that the existence of suppletive lexicons from one region to another change the physique of word phonologically and morphologically.
5. The study reveals that very few lexicons in Hausa dialect exist as suppletive process that have the same stem in both Kano and Katsina dialect.

Suggestion and Recommendations

The study covers some, not all aspect of Hausa dialect. This is due to limited time and data used available during this paper. The study concerns only two regions, though there are many aspects of study in linguistics. There are many areas such as dialect variations and similarities, dialect and gender, dialect and number, dialect and tenses and so on, as a contribution or bridging gap of the previous or future studies. More again, this work is an open door for other studies in the area of linguistics particularly in the field of morphology.

Conclusion

This paper studies a descriptive analysis of some lexicons in two Hausa dialects with a view to identifying morphological processes of their forms. The paper observes two types of dialect used in Kano and Katsina regions. The paper reveals two main Variations in morphological process of lexicons in these two regions namely suppletive lexicons and modification lexicons. The regional dialect is a sub variety of a language associated with a particular geographical area. The existence of dialectal variations amongst the two Hausa dialects of Kano and Katsina have been clearly foreground and carefully enumerated. The study reveals the variations between the two regions are predominantly suppletive process and negligible modifications. From the data collected, words like *'namiji* (male), *doki* (horse), *riba* (profit), *ruwa* (water), *gida* (house), *da*



nadam (human being), and many more are spelt and pronounced the same across the two dialects. Unarguably, none of these dialects is devoid of lexical variations linked to a particular region. But despite the variations, the two dialects are mutually intelligible and, as such, classified as the same language.

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