

Descriptive Analysis of Variations in Three Hausa Dialects

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Abstract

This paper explores a descriptive analysis of dialectal Hausa language to identify their variations and similarities. The study examines dialect variations in three Hausa regions, namely Kano, Katsina and Sokoto. The study adopts Labov's (1972) theory of dialect variations. The paper selects few words and employs a descriptive approach in attempt to explain a concise description of lexicons involved in the three regions of Hausa language. Data were collected using simple random sampling techniques. The paper reveals eight (8) categories of lexicon from the three regions of Hausa dialects. The study reveals that the variations

among the three regions are predominantly suppletive process and modification. From the data collected, words like *namiji* (male), *doki* (horse), *riba* (profit), *ruwa* (water), *gida* (house), *dan Adam* (human being), and many more are spelt and pronounced the same across the three dialects. Unarguably, none of these dialects is devoid of lexical variations linked to a particular region. But despite the variations, the three dialects are mutually intelligible and, as such, classified as the same language.

Key words: Descriptive analysis, Hausa dialect, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto similarities, differences

Background to Study

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).

This paper aims to conduct a morphological descriptive analysis of variations and similarities in Hausa dialects. Dialect variation is the study of lexical and structural components of language. It is usually associated with the study of geographical variations, especially in rural areas. There are many dialectological works today that focus principally on social variation in both urban and rural areas. (Britain, 2002). Dialect is also a term often applied to forms of language, particularly those spoken in more isolated parts of the world which have no written form. Dialects are also often regarded as some kind of deviation from a norm as aberration of a correct or standard language (Chamber & Trudgill, 2004).

Bello (1992) 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 the agency of the English language. The feature of classical Hausa is the fact that it is closer to Sokoto dialect than to any other major dialect when one refers to *Dare Dubu da Daya; Labarun da na yanzu; 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 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 three regions of Kano Katsina and Sokoto. These are administratively called 'states', and the paper prefers to use these three regions being the appropriate term for linguistic boundaries or isoglosses. The three chosen dialects are extracts of Bello (1992) major classification of Hausa dialect into seven categories, namely; *Kananci, Katsinanci, Sakkwatananci*: 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.

Bello (1992) discusses issues in Hausa dialectology. He compares all the major Hausa dialects including the dialects 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, morphological 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 includes, morphology, phonology, and phonetics. The comparison can therefore be 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 dialects, comprising of Sokoto, Katsina, Daura, Zaria, Kano and Bauchi dialects found in northern 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 lexicostatistic method 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. 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 among 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)

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 simple random sampling technique and select 150 lexicons for data analysis, 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 notion which portrays 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 assertions 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 three regions in the focus area of study. Although the Hausa language is a tonal language, but data used indicate no tones are marked and it uses simple random sampling technique and selects very few words for analysis. **1. Kano and**

Katsina Regions Using Similar Dialects

There is a situation whereby some lexicons are found used in two regions. The examples below have shown some examples of Kano and Katsina using similar dialects. These dialects have the same sound pattern and same sound productions as well as similar words structures, including syllable units, similar consonants and vowels and the same meanings.

S/N	Kano	Katsina	Gloss
a	<i>Hakori</i>	<i>Hakori</i>	tooth
b	<i>Kofa</i>	<i>Kofa</i>	door
c	<i>Hula</i>	<i>Hula</i>	cap

d	<i>Shinkafa</i>	<i>shinkafa</i>	rice
e	<i>Daki</i>	<i>Daki</i>	room

The study shows some lexicons used in these regions, phonologically, morphologically and semantically are the same. For instance, in examples (1a-1e), reveal parts of human body are expressed in the same way in both regions. It also shows the names of animals, food and things are often expressed in the same way in both regions.

2 Kano and Sokoto Regions Using Similar Dialect

Some lexicons are found used in two regions. The examples below have shown some examples of Kano and Sokoto using similar dialects. These dialects have the same sound pattern and same sound productions as well as similar words structures, including syllable units, similar consonants and vowels and the same meanings.

S/N	Kano	Sokoto	Gloss
a	<i>Tsintsiya</i>	<i>Tsintsiya</i>	broom
b	<i>Takalmi</i>	<i>Takalmi</i>	shoe
c	<i>Buta</i>	<i>Buta</i>	kettle
d	<i>Ido</i>	<i>Ido</i>	eye
e	<i>Baki</i>	<i>Baki</i>	mouth
f	<i>Kai</i>	<i>Kai</i>	head
g	<i>Kunne</i>	<i>Kunne</i>	ear
h	<i>kasuwa</i>	<i>kasuwa</i>	market

i	<i>Gona</i>	<i>Gona</i>	farm
j	<i>Makaranta</i>	<i>makaranta</i>	school

The study shows many lexicons used in Kano and Sokoto dialects are phonologically, morphologically and semantically the same words. For instance, in examples (2a-2c), the study shows that material nouns are good examples of same dialect in two regions. In examples (2d-2g), the study reveals that organs of human are good examples of same dialect in two regions. In example (2h-2j), the data shows that places are another samples.

3. Katsina and Sokoto Regions Using Similar Dialects

Some lexicons used in Katsina and Sokoto dialects are the same. The lexicons below have the same sound patterns and same sound productions as well as similar words structures, including syllable units, consonants, vowels and meanings.

S/N	Kano	Sokoto	Gloss
a	<i>Lemu</i>	<i>Lemu</i>	Orange
b	<i>Gero</i>	<i>Gero</i>	Millet
c	<i>Abinci</i>	<i>Abinci</i>	Food
d	<i>Dawa</i>	<i>Dawa</i>	Corn
e	<i>Ciki</i>	<i>Ciki</i>	Stomach

The study shows some lexicons used in Katsina and Sokoto dialects are the same .

Examples (3a-3d), the study reports that food material are good examples of same

dialect in two regions. In example (3e-3g), the study reveals that organs of human are good examples of same dialect in two regions. In example (3h-3j), the data shows that places are another samples

4. Kano and Katsina Regions and Dialect Variation

In some situations, some lexicons there are some variations in two regions. Below are some examples of Kano and Katsina using different dialectal varieties of a word. These words have different sound pattern and slightly vary in sound productions as well as words structures but they have the same meanings.

S/N	Kano	Katsina	Gloss	
A	<i>Lemo</i>	<i>Lemu</i>	orange	
B	<i>Ungulu</i>	<i>Angulu</i>	vulture	The
C	<i>Wasa</i>	<i>Wargi</i>	playing	stu
D	<i>Harshe</i>	<i>Halshe</i>	tongue	
E	<i>Darma</i>	<i>Dalma</i>	aluminum	dy
F	<i>Garma</i>	<i>Galma</i>	hoe	
G	<i>Markade</i>	<i>Malkade</i>	grinding	sho
H	<i>Fura</i>	<i>Hura</i>	gruel	
I	<i>Fatala</i>	<i>Kwali</i>	head-tie	ws
J	<i>dan-kamfai</i>	<i>dan-tofi</i>	pant	so

me lexicons used in Kano and Katsina dialects are not graphologically and phonologically the same. For instance, in examples (4a and 4b), study reveals that vowel modification is part of dialects existence in two regions. It also shows as in

examples (4d, e, f and 4g) consonants substitutions from ‘r’ to ‘l’ as in *darma* (kano) and *dalma* (katsina) and consonants substitutions from ‘f’ to ‘h’ and as in *fura* (kano) and *hura* (katsina).

5. Kano and Sokoto Regions and Dialect Variations

Some lexicons are found with variations in two regions. There are some examples of Kano and Sokoto using different dialects. These dialectal varieties of the words have different sound pattern and slightly vary in sound productions as well as words structures but they have the same meanings.

S/N	Kano	Sokoto	Gloss
A	<i>Hakori</i>	<i>Haure</i>	tooth
B	<i>Lemo</i>	<i>Lemu</i>	orange
C	<i>Tsumma</i>	<i>Raga</i>	rags
D	<i>Bera</i>	<i>Kusu</i>	rat
E	<i>Hagu</i>	<i>Hauni</i>	left
F	<i>Barkono</i>	<i>Tankwa</i>	pepper
G	<i>Tabo</i>	<i>Laka</i>	mud
H	<i>Daki</i>	<i>Shigifa</i>	room
I	<i>Kofa</i>	<i>Gambu</i>	door
J	<i>bakan-gizo</i>	<i>masha-ruwa</i>	rainbow

The study shows, all lexicons used in Kano and Sokoto dialects are not phonologically the same as in example (5i) a word in Kano ‘*kofa*’ door and in katsina, ‘*gambu*’ door. In addition to this, in example (5a), a word in

Kano, 'hakori' tooth and in Katsina, 'haure' tooth. This means, morphologically they are not the same.

6. Katsina and Sokoto Regions and Dialect Variations

Some lexicons are found with variations in two regions. There are some examples between Katsina and Sokoto using different dialectal varieties. These words have different sound patterns and totally varies in sound productions as well as words structures but they have the same meanings.

S/N	Katsina	Sokoto	Gloss
A	<i>Shinkafa</i>	<i>Gumi</i>	rice
B	<i>Yakuwa</i>	<i>Sure</i>	amarantos
C	<i>Kabewa</i>	<i>kabushii</i>	okro
D	<i>Hura</i>	<i>Dawo</i>	gruel
E	<i>Hazo</i>	<i>Buta</i>	haze
F	<i>Awarwaro</i>	<i>Munduwa</i>	bangle
G	<i>Waje</i>	<i>Garka</i>	outside
H	<i>Bishiya</i>	<i>Itaciya</i>	tree
I	<i>Tsani</i>	<i>Kwaranga</i>	ladder
J	<i>Toka</i>	<i>Hifdi</i>	ash

The study shows, all lexicons used in Kano and Sokoto dialects are not phonologically the same as in example (6g) a word in Kano, 'waje' outside and in katsina, 'garka' outside. In addition to this, in example (6f), a word in Kano, 'awarwaro' bangle and in katsina, 'munduwa' bangle. This means, morphologically they are not the same.

7. Kano, Katsina and Sokoto Similar Dialect

There are situations whereby some lexicons are found in the three regions using the same outputs. There are some examples of lexicons used in Kano, Katsina and Sokoto regions are the same phonologically, morphologically and semantically as presented below:.

S/N	Kano	Katsina	Sokoto	Gloss
A	<i>Kai</i>	<i>Kai</i>	<i>kai</i>	head
B	<i>Ciki</i>	<i>Ciki</i>	<i>Ciki</i>	stomach
C	<i>Hanci</i>	<i>Hanci</i>	<i>hanci</i>	nose
D	<i>Ido</i>	<i>Ido</i>	<i>Ido</i>	eye
E	<i>Kunne</i>	<i>Kunne</i>	<i>kunne</i>	ear

8. Kano, Katsina and Sokoto Regions and Variations

In some situations, some lexicons are found to have different sound patterns and totally varies in sound productions as well as words structures but similar in meanings in Kano, Katsina and Sokoto dialects.

S/N	Kano	Katsina	Sokoto	Gloss
A	<i>Mage</i>	<i>Kyanwa</i>	<i>Mussa</i>	cat
B	<i>Tsauni</i>	<i>Tsuburi</i>	<i>Tudu</i>	hill
D	<i>Fura</i>	<i>Hura</i>	<i>Dawo</i>	gruel
E	<i>Barkono</i>	<i>Yaji</i>	<i>Tankwa</i>	pepper
F	<i>Fira</i>	<i>Hira</i>	<i>Tadi</i>	Water
G	<i>Waje</i>	<i>Kwararo</i>	<i>Garka</i>	outside
H	<i>Kogi</i>	<i>Gulbi</i>	<i>Fadama</i>	river

I	<i>Kwashe</i>	<i>Kwalhe</i>	<i>Kwalfe</i>	remove
J	<i>Hazo</i>	<i>Buji</i>	<i>Buci</i>	haze

Conclusion

The regional dialect is a sub-variety of a language associated with a particular geographical area. The existence of dialectal variations amongst the three Hausa dialects of Kano, Katsina and Sokoto have been clearly foregrounded and statistically enumerated. From the data collected, the study reveals eight (8) groups of lexicons in three selected of Hausa Regions. The study shows that sometimes Kano and Katsina Regions use similar words different from their Sokoto equivalent. Sometimes, Kano and Sokoto Regions use similar words but different from their Katsina equivalent. In some cases, Katsina and Sokoto Regions the same word but different from the Kano equivalent while in some cases same word is used in the three regions to express the same meaning. It is concluded that despite the variations, the three dialects are mutually intelligible thus classified as the same language.

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