

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC STYLES OF THE USAGE OF THE WORD «KURA» (HYENA) IN HAUSA LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT:

“Kura” or Hyena is one of the most important African carnivorous wild animals that Hausa language speaking community of Nigeria loves and constantly interacts with. Hyena’s popularity has piers through the life of Hausa People, to the extent that, the Hausas stylistically use its name to serves for them, some vital social-cultural and linguistic functions in Hausa land. This research paper, studied the various sociolinguistic styles of the usage of the word “kura” (hyena), in Hausa Language. These include the styles of its usage in linguistic expressions, cultural displays and literature of the Hausa people.

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1.0 Introduction

The word style is defined as a distinctive and particular way in which something is done or express or performed or identified, which is considered as different or separate from its intrinsic content, meaning etc (Longman(2003:667) and Mukhtar (2010:3).

The word "kura" (hyena) is a Hausa native word which has complete morphological inflection. The base root of the word is "kur-", which changes by suffixes. Its singular forms are: "kur-e" (male hyena) and "kur-a" (female hyena), and its plural form is "kur-aye" (male/female) (Abraham, 1978:559) and Junaidu (2007:22) and Fagge (2004:61).

"Kura" (hyena) is defined as a wild animal that makes its cry as a laughing sound. Its physical features are like that of a dog, in height and body build. It is also like a giraffe, whose front legs raises up and rear legs and buttocks bent down. It has black sported speckled body like that of the guinea pawl and different body color, depending on its place of dwell (CNHN (2006:254) and Bargery (1934"648) and Longman (2003:332) and Bunza (2011:3).

It has been observed and identified that Hausa language is an inflected language, which has the system of words usage in different styles. For instance, the word "kura" is frequently being use, in different styles of Hausa Language usage, in beautifying the language, explaining the culture of the people and improving the creativity in the literature of the language. This means that, Hausa language, like any other functional language in the world, has a system or style of vocabulary use, where one word is use in serving for many linguistic, socio-cultural and literary functions (Wurma, 2008:71 and Danyaya (2007:12).

The aim of this paper is to educate, direct and enlighten the students of Hausa language, the capabilities, inflectional and functioning power of Hausa language. That is to say, the ability of the language, in using its native words for various sociolinguistics expressions and other purposes meant for language

and societal studies. Some linguists claimed that every language has natural tendency to behave in a particular way, which is known as "natural propensity"(Sarbi, 2008:3). Hausa language is therefore proved to be a unique, dynamic creative and arbitrary in using its words into different styles.

In this paper, the word "kura" is taken as a case study, in describing the dynamic sociolinguistic styles of the usage of words in Hausa language. The paper explained the sociolinguistic definition of the word "kura" and gave out the various styles of usage of the word, on different crucial educational areas, such as linguistic idiomatic expressions, creative literary usage and the style of used of the word in showing the social and cultural activities of the Hausas. Finally, the paper discussed some suggestions and recommendations for further researches and conclusion.

2.0 Sociolinguistic Definition of the word "kura" According to Hausa People

In the heightened and colorful style of language usage, the Hausa people socially and linguistically defined "kura" (hyena) as "**kwadayi**"(keen desired animal), "**keta**" (an animal with malicious injury) and "**ajali**" (an animal that kills) (Ado (1987:109). It is also referred as "**ɗaukaka**" (the popular animal), "**haushi**" (Vexation animal that annoyance people) and "**bakin-jini**" (flummoxed hated animal)(CNHN (2006:283) and Abraham (1978:532).

3.0 The Styles of Using the Word "Kura" for Idiomatic Expressions

The word "Kura" (hyena) is linguistically used for some idiomatic expressions in different ways, as follows:

3.1 The Style of Naming-Name of the Word "Kura"(Hyena)

Naming-name is one of the most important linguistic aspects in Hausa language studies. It is a system done to express many linguistics needs of Hausa people (Buba, 2010:130). In Hausa language, there is what is called "**derivational process**", whereby a word is formed or derived from a certain

event, action or situation, by compounding two or more words (Fagge, 2004:9). In Hausa language, the style of naming the name of hyena is done by joining the name "kura" with that of some animate or non-animate things, that has some distinctive descriptive qualities and natures of their own actions. This is indeed an improvement for vocabulary formations in the Hausa language (Danyaya, 2007:39). Examples of such formations are as follows:

- "**Kura-Amina**" (the patient animal)
- "**Kura-Burungu**" (the shouldered animal)
- "**Kura-Daguyau**" (the animal that scratches)
- "**Kura-Sha-hargowa**" (the animal that roared)
- "**Kura-Karyar Dawa**"(the wild dog)

Furthermore, in the naming-name processes, the name of "kura" is stylistically use, as an agential noun particle, which is joined together with some nouns, to produce some compound based nouns.. Examples:

- "**Kurar Zamari**" (pronged hook)
- "**Kurar Karfe**" (iron magnet)
- "**Kurar Yara**" (children playing toy)
- "**Kurar Shanu**" (cows load carrier)
- "**Kurar Kuda**" (name a big-green fly)
- "**Rawani Dan Kura**" (a type of turban)
- "**Kwallin Kura**" (gypsums)

3.2 The Style of Forming Hausa Proverbs by Using the Word "Kura"(Hyena)

In Hausa language usage, proverbial sentences are formed by including the name of "kura" (hyena), to make some idiomatic expressions and rhetorical statements, as follows:

- "**Kare ne ke kuka? A'a kura ce!**"(Is it dog backing? No, it is hyena!)
- "**Kare ya mutu, da haushin Kura**" (He died out of frustration)
- "**Ganin gida, Kare kan zagi Kura**" (Only at home, dog insults hyena)
- "**Kura ta mutu, an huta**" (As you are no more, people are at peace)
- "**Yaya lafiyar kura, bare ta yi hauka**" (Things are worse than before)
- "**Ature, ba ya raba kare da kura**" (Desperate affairs, needs separate remedies)

- "A rama wa kura aniyarta" (Do onto others, as how others do onto you)
- "Ko na goye, ya san kura" (I am popular among equals)
- "Mushen kura, ya wuce Allah Sarki" (I am above being disgrace)
- "Kome kurin kura, ba ta gamu da sa ba ne" (None talks when I am around)
- "Akuya ba ta gasa da kura" (None can compete with me)
- "Kare da kura, ba su zama guri ɗaya" (Oil can't mix with water).
- "Kura ba farkar kare ba ce" (I am not your pier)
- "Kura ta ga damisa, ta san ba kare ba ce" (I am above you, by mare seen) (Koko (2011:96) da Danyaya (2007:39))

3.4 The Style of Using the Word "Kura" for Metaphorical Expressions

Hausa people have some metaphorical linguistic utterances which are invoked to associate or compare the unusual attitudes of some people, in the Hausa society, with that of the usual habits of hyena. For example:

- "Haihuwar Kura" (Hyena's birth habits:-twin-birth: two or three times).
 - "Kiwon Kura" (Hyena's feeding habits: - i.e. over eating).
 - "Koton Kura" (Hyena's calves pecking up food (regurgitation method or unmannered eating habits).
 - "Tozalin Kura" or "Kwallin Kura" ("face-to-face" or bloody combat)
 - "Sarautar Kura" (Hyena's kingship i.e. Self seeking rule)
 - "Rakiyar Kura" (Hyena's Escort or escorting one up till his house)
 - "Tafiyar Kura" (Hyena's Walk:-i.e. tip-toeing)
 - "Wasan Kura" (Hyena's Play:-i.e. bad play)
 - "Kukan Kura" (Hyena's Cry:-i.e. going at once to threaten)
 - "Ladabin Kura" (Hyena's Respect: - i.e. pretend to cheat)
- (Abraham (1978:532 da Danyaya (2007:43))

3.5 The Style of Using the Word "Kura" for Alliteration Formations

Alliteration is a linguistic style of using a series of word that begin with same sound in order to make a special effect (Longman, 2003:19). In Hausa language, there are some alliteration styles, formed by including the word "kura", to satisfy the linguistic needs for "**Kacici-Kacici** (riddles and jokes) in Hausa. This type of style makes children to know and understand more of Hausa vocabularies. Example of such is as follows:

"Turmi Ture Kura, (Mortal pushed away hyena)
Kura Ture Turmi" (Hyena pushed away mortal).

(Yahaya, 1976:14)

4.0 The Socio-Cultural Styles of Usage of the Word "Kura".

Again, hyena has some various socio-cultural importances to the Hausa people. Its name is stylistically used, to show out various areas of its socio-cultural importance, in the Hausa society, as follows:

4.1 The Style of Using "Kura" for Describing Hyena's Medical Importance

Traditionally, the Hausa society of Nigeria has the believe that every human being is born healthy, but the spirits of illness goes about chasing human being and afflicts them with sickness. More so, the Hausa philosophical thoughts, testifies that once one is afflicted with sickness, be it physical or psychological, he must go and look for medical cure available in the society (Bunza(2009:5) and Hamza,(1986:10). Among the custodians of such medicines are "gardi" (Hyena tamer) (Bunza, 2004:24).The tamers use parts of hyena's body to treat some vulnerable diseases and sicknesses affecting people in Hausa society. It is often says:

"Kura, amfaninki dubu" (Hyena: The animal of a thousand importances).

Therefore, the Hausas have a style of Hausa language expressions, which indicates parts of hyena body, use as medical cure, as thus:

-**"Bayan Kura"**: (Skin of the back of hyena).

-**"Sawun Kura"**: (Hyena's foot print).

-**"Igiyar Kura"**: (The rope use for tie-ting hyena).

-**"Takunkumin Kura"**: (Hyena's Muzzle).

-**"Miyar Kura"**: (Hyena's saliva).

-**"Gashin Kura"**: (Hyena's hair).

-**"Fatar Kura"**: (Hyena's skin).

-**"Fatar Goshin Kura"**: (Hyena's forehead skin).

(Sallau, 2010:49).

4.2 The Style of Using the Word "Kura" for Mirroring Hausa People's Religion

Hausa people has the belief that every human being is born with the quest and curiosity to worship his creator (Allah). With this view, some anthropological critics believed that religion is the first culture in the world (Bunza, 2009:13). In the 9th century, Hausa land pre-Islamic period, people were engaged in the worships of spirits (jinn) and demons in the act of a paganism cult named "bori" (Gusau, 2008:112), Kano 92002:5), Sule,(1974:25) and Bunza, (2009:64). In a such pre-Islamic religion, hyena animal was among the demon been worshiped. Its pre-Islamic praise-epithets were chanted in winning the attention of its mercy, as thus:

"Kure ga kayanka"(Hyena here is your property),
"Dawa ya yi albarka" (Farms should be blessed),
"Mu ci lafiya" (To eat in peace,)
"Gida ya yi kyau" (House to be good),
"A samu aure" (To get marriage),
"Iyali su zauna lafiya" (Family to be in peace).
(Ado (1987:108) and Mashi (2001:40).

After the advent Islamic religion in Hausa land, Hausa people still invoked the name of "kura" (hyena), by associating its name with some important Islamic acts, titles and places of worship, as thus:

"Masallacin Kura mai yawan kasusuwa" (One finds plenty of bones,
in the mosque of hyena)
"Masallacin kura, ba a ba kare limanci" (i.e. in the mosque of hyena, dog
can't be able to lead prayers).
"Masallacin kura, ko da kuɗi kare ba ya zuwa" (Even if you give a dog
money, he can't attempt going to hyena's mosque).
(T/Wada (2006:194).

4.3 The Style of Using "Kura" for Creating Superstitious Believes.

Many African societies have in one way or the other, some superstitious believe as a guiding principle for training and guiding its members, on some societal norms and values and the does and don'ts (Abdennour, 2007:55) and

Zayan (2007:50). The Hausa people are among the African the people that creates some superstitious believes for the purpose of training their young ones, to fit well into the society. They use the word "kura" in promulgation of some superstitious believes, to inculcate the fear hyena into the minds of the young ones. For example, it is often says:

First, "**Kura, aljanar dare ce**" (Hyen is a night demon). It is a nocturnal animal that loves darkness. Its eyes shine or lit as light does in the night. It is believed that anything that hides away in the night, hyena will see it and apprehend it.

Second, "**Kura mai kwankwamai ce**" (Hyena is a bewitched animal). It is thought that devil dwells on it and therefore it can act like a witch to harm human beings.

Third, "**Kura tana da kofi**" or "**Kura tana da kwari**": (i.e. an animal, which inspired fear and feeling of helplessness). It is perceived that, whenever hyena want apprehend any animal or human being, it will just cast a spell on it and that thing will be petrified and be inspired by fear-feeling of helplessness and stay in one place. The hyena will simply come and eat it.

Finally, it is believed that hyena is "**Kura ga tsoro, ga ban tsoro**" (timid, cowardice and terrifying animal). It is believed that when hyena is a terrifying animal, but cowardice, because when it hears the sound of a gong or gun, it becomes timid.

4.4 The Style of Using Kura for Portraying the Sense of Time

Due to the popularity of hyena in Hausa land, most of the Kings or Emirs of Hausa lands were keeping hyenas in their palaces. They even have offices with appointed officers, who are in charge for taking care of hyenas. The name of hyena is stylistically used to tell the time and the type of offices held by the custodians of hyena. Yahaya (1974:51) stated thus:

"Wuyi! Ni kura" (I, the roared hyena),
"Ni kurar sarki" (I, the king's/emir's hyena),
"Ni ta galadima" (I, the Chief of staff's hyena)

4.5 The Style of Using "Kura" for Describing Educational System of Hausa People

In the Hausa traditional Islamic system education, there is a stage, called "Matakin Gardi" (The stage completion of memorization of holy Qur'an) (Ado, 2009:196). It is a critical stage where those who completed their education, in the memorization of the holy Qur'an, want to get a job to earn a living. Some of the students married after graduation. The wife is metaphorically described, in Hausa language as "kura". And to show the extent to which this wife affects the education of such a student, it is says:

-"**Kura, ma ci tilawar gardi"** (i.e Hyena, distorts Qur'an memorization of "gardi" (student))

4.6 Using the Name "Kura" as a Narrative Style on How Hyena is Apprehending Hyena in Its Cave

Hyena (kura) is mostly hunted in its cave. It is always a very hectic job, because of the nature of the size of its cave. The cave's entrance is so narrow that one has to suffer by squeezing his body before he gets in, unlike the inner part, which is as wide as a bungalow's parlor. The parlor is designed into two apartments, thus: The outer one, where the "he" and the "she" hyenas (husband and wife) stay. The most inner apartment is where the calves live. Entering into hyenas cave is not for an ordinary hunter and so, the name of "kura" (hyena) is use to narrate the difficulties hunters encountered before they get into the cave, to apprehend it, as thus:

-"**Ramin Kura Mai Wuyar Shiga"**(i.e the cave of hyena, is difficult to enter)

-"**Ba shiga ramin kura ke da wuya ba, fitowar, domin sai da kuje-kuje"** (i.e. It is not entering into the hyena's cave that matters, but how to get out, because one has to seriously scratches his body)

-"**Ramin kura, daga ke sai 'ya'yanki"**(i.e. only hyena and its calves pits)

staying in hyenas cave).

-"**Shiga ramin kura, ba na karamin gardi ba ne**"(Only those who are highly professionals can enter into hyena's cave.

-"**Ramin kura da wuyar shig, a gaya wa kare ya yi a hankali**" (Entering hyena's cave is difficult, inform dog to be careful) (T/Wada (2006:196) and Koko (2011:133)

4.7 The Style of Using "Kura" for Deducing Hyena Taming as an Occupation

Those who are professionals in apprehending and taming hyena, are mostly who went through the Islamic system of education and got the mystic techniques from the holy Qur'an, as claimed? They use the knowledge they got in their traditional Islamic school and get an occupation for taming wild animals, such as hyena, monkeys, snake, etc. The name of "kura" is use as a style of showing taming as an occupation. Examples:

-**Kura da shan bugu, gardi da anshe kudi** (Beating is the receiving end for hyena, while money is for the hyena Tamer).

- **Wasan Kura, sai wanda ya iya** (Only professionals tamer hyena)

6.0 The Styles of Using the Word "Kura" (Hyena) In Hausa Literature

Hausa literature (Adabi) is of two types, oral and written literature (Yahaya, 1992:1). The written literature (Rubutaccen Adabi) is the one which is written as prose, drama and poetry (Sarbi, 2007:1). On the other hand, the oral literature (Adabin Baka) is the one which is formed and delivered up head, in prose, plays and songs (Umar, 1987:5). The Hausa language, the style of using the word "kura" mostly appears in oral literature. Therefore most of the examples cited below are gotten from oral literature, as follows:

6.1 The Style of Using "Kura" for Creating Folk Stories

Folk stories, popularly known as "Tatsuniya"(sing.) or "Tasuniyoyi" (pl.) in Hausa language, are short stories created by elders in the society, to narrate them to children, in order to give them proper training, to enable them

fit well in the society (Fafunwa (1982:10), Yahaya (1992:7) and Usman (2013:7). In such creative stories, the style of using names of animals and insects is done to represent the behaviors of human beings. "Kura" is among the most frequently named of the animals use Zarruĳ, 2009:59). The sampling examples are:

- Tatsiniyar **Kurege da Kura** (The folk story of Squirrel and Hyena)
- Tatsuniyar **Kura da Gizo** (The folk story of Hyena and Spider)
- Tatsuniyar **Taure da Kura** (The folk story of He-Goat and Hyena)
- Tatsuniyar **Kare da Kura da Damo** (The folk story of Dog, Hyena and Land- Monitor)(Usman(2012:49), Yahaya (1977) and Ingawa (2007:3)

6.2 The Styles of Using "Kura" in Composing Oral Songs

The Hausa oral singers use the name of "kura" in composing most of their songs, for making idiomatic expressions, such as metaphors, similes, personifications, praise epithets and to mention just a few. For example,

6.2.1 The Using of "Kura" as a Discourse Style in Hausa Oral Songs

The following oral songs show how the word "kura" is used, to personify human attitudes, as thus:

- Jagora: **Diba kare da shi da kura** (Look at dog an hyena)
Kare da shi da kura (Dog and hyena)
Sun kama kokowa (They had a wrestling)
 'Y/Amshi: **Har ya dauke kafar kura** (As he lifted the leg of hyena)
Ya tai wuri ya sakat (He wanted to drop it)
Sai tac cabe bindinai (She apprehended his tail)
 (Gusau, 2009:71)

6.2.2 The Using of "Kura" as a Praise Epithet Style in Hausa Oral Songs

The Hausa traditional oral singers are in fond of using the names of animals, to praise epithet the persons they are singing for. The name of "kura" is one among the names of the animals invoked, as a style of praising someone. The following is an example of such:

- Jagora **:Goge mai kashe molo** (violin that kills guitarre)

tunes, and the hyena follows the sounds of the tunes, and dance in accordance to the tunes, to the extent of making a turn round its base. It can follow the tune of drumming to go as far as to the frontage of a person, pointed at, to kneel down and greet him. This is what is called:

"Gaisuwar Kura" (Hyena's Greeting)

"Ladabin Kura" (Hyena's Respect)

The hyena's tamer explains the act of greeting verbally and say to the person being greeted, thus:

"Kura na gaishe Ka" (Hyena is Greeting you)

"A rama wa kura aniyarta" (Do onto it, as it did onto you)

"Burungu daguyau"(The catcher, the eater),

"Kura ga tsoro, ga ban tsoro"(Hyena, the timid, the terrifying)

"Ta dan-dawasa, ba hargowa" (The roaring animal for play),

"Ko mai bori ma yana bautarki" (Even those Spirit-possession cult, worships you)

"Saboda irin kwankwamanki, (Due to your spirit incarnation),

"Ko aljani, idan dare ya yi, yana shakkarki"(Even the devils, feras you at night)

"Domin kin fi aljani, aljanci" (You are more than a devil, due to our uncontrollable behavior),

"Ke ce mai cinye nama da kasusuwa" (You are the eater of both meat and bones)

"Gazau borin arna" (The evil spirit of the idol worshippers).

(Ado, 2009:132)

8.0 Suggestions

Studies of style and stylistics in language are very important aspects, which every linguist should be very observant about, in the study of the relationship of language and society. It is therefore suggested that, more and more vocabularies should be found and studied in relation with the human activities done in the society. It should be noted that linguistic utterances of human being are explanations of his culture. Therefore, studying any linguistic variable, without relating it to its cultural identity, may make the research not to be fully understood by readers.

9.0 Recommendation

Studies of style and stylistic is recommended for the students of Hausa language, especially for those who are undertaking research in sociolinguistic studies of Hausa society. Similar, this type of study can be made in any linguistic society, by getting some vocabularies that can be blend into various sociolinguistic usages. I therefore, recommend that it should be included as a compulsory course unit in the studies of languages in tertiary institutions.

10.0 Conclusion

The title of this paper is "the sociolinguistic style of the usage of the word "kura"(hyena) in Hausa language". It is an educational research paper that deals with the studies of language in society. It is aimed at bringing out the abilities of Hausa language, in serving the purposes of its people, by explaining the cultural conducts that operates in the Hausa society. It explained, with examples, the sociolinguistic styles of using the name of "kura", to show the various usages of the word, in Hausa language, literature and the socio-cultural activities which operate in Hausa society.

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