

LANGUAGE CONTACT: SEMANTIC DOMAINS OF HAUSA LOAN WORDS IN KANURI

By

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Abstract

The paper makes an attempt to identify and study those linguistic items borrowed from Hausa to Kanuri with special attention to their semantic fields. Borrowing is a phenomenon which is as old as human social, economic, and administrative contact. As far as contact is established between two or more different linguistic communities there is tendency for linguistic borrowing to take place. Therefore, despite the fact that the languages under study belong to different language phyla, there exists linguistic borrowing between them. Additionally, they are neighbors for decades. There are certainly various compelling reasons for one language or dialect to borrow from another language or dialect. The paper focuses attention on semantic fields of the borrowed words. Through the research, it is established that loan words are categorized into different semantic fields as clearly established by Semantic Field Theory (SFT) that, lexeme that are semantically related belong to the same group. Thus, the Theoretical Framework adopted by the paper is Semantic Field Theory (SFT). The research adopts two procedures as a source for data collection. These procedures are primary and secondary sources. The primary source includes unobtrusive observation while the secondary sources include written records. The paper concludes that Kanuri a Nilo-Saharan language borrowed some lexical items from Hausa language which is a Chadic language.

Keywords: Loan Words, Hausa, Kanuri, Domains, Borrowing

1.0 Introduction

It is believed that the attitude of taking lexical item(s) and sometimes even phrase(s) from one language or dialect to another is a common phenomenon. Indeed, many scholars have made an attempt to describe this trend. In the words of Sapir (1949, p.193), lexical borrowing is one of the important consequences of language contact. He further observes that, it usually takes place when one of these languages in contact is considered as more influential or prestigious than the others at the time of the contact. But according to Haugen (1950, p. 81), the concept of borrowing is a process which involves reproduction of lexical items in another language. He further observes that, the borrower is not under any obligation to repay the loaned word and the consent of the donor language is not sought, when borrowing the word.

Similarly, Hartman and Stork (1972) have stated that, “Words introduced into a language directly from a foreign language by either translation or imitation of concept taken over from another language” is referred to as linguistic borrowing. Ugwuoke (1997, p. 168) is of the view that borrowing is a situation where a language adopts or uses, as its own words, concepts and expressions of other languages. She further stresses that borrowing involves the process of

“copying, modification, translation or changing of a given set of patterned symbols of a source language into another set of patterned symbols (i.e. target or recipient language).”

Yul-Ifode (2001) in Nneji and Uzoigwe (2013, p. 9) maintains that, borrowing simply means an aspect of lexical change. However, this process involves adding new items to a language or dialect by taking them from another language or dialect. From these, therefore, it can be seen as a morphological process that improves the lexicon of language. Thus, accordingly Yul-Ifode (2001) affirms that, there is borrowing even between dialects of the same language. Another scholar has a similar view with Yul-Ifode (2001) since he also affirms that, borrowing is not limited to lexical items alone for the purpose of filling lexical gap in the receiving languages and culture (Mondejar-Nicasio, 2007, p. 2). By filling lexical gap in the receiving languages, surely it will improve the lexicon of that particular language.

To crown it all, as clearly pointed out by Haugen (1950, p. 81), the borrowed item is not returned to the source language, Yule (2010, p. 54) reaffirms that assertion by saying “borrowing is one of the most common sources of new words in English, but technically it is more than just mere borrowing since the English language doesn’t give them back at all.” This trend is a universal phenomenon that any natural language that borrowed any linguistic item(s) from another language that item(s) is not returned to the donor/source language.

However, Greenberg (1966) classifies Hausa as a member of the Chadic languages which belongs to the Afro-Asiatic phylum, while Kanuri is one of the African languages classified as a member of the Saharan branch which belongs to the Nilo-Saharan phylum. Despite the fact that Hausa and Kanuri belong to different language phyla there exist borrowings of linguistic item(s) between them. From the aforementioned discussion, the paper focuses on identifying those linguistic item(s) borrowed into Kanuri from Hausa. The loan words are classified into different semantic domains based on the Semantic Field Theory (SFT). The research is therefore, expected to be a major contribution to the area of linguistic borrowing and Hausa/Kanuri linguistics to be specific.

2.0 Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The paper employed two distinct sources for data collection; namely primary and secondary. The primary source includes unobtrusive observation while the secondary source includes written records. Unobtrusive observation is employed due to its nature, because data are collected while discourse is taken place. On the other hand, written records such as dictionaries are also used usually to ascertain the etymology of the words selected for the purpose of the research. Additionally, the researcher also uses his intuition in classifying the loan words.

Similarly, Semantic Field Theory (SFT) is adopted as a theoretical framework of the research. It is clear that, the model originated as far back as the middle of the nineteenth century and accorded to the ideas of Humboldt and Saussure. However, Trier’s (1934) version clearly opened a new era in the history of semantics. The basic assumption of the model is that lexemes that are semantically related whether paradigmatically or syntagmatically within a particular language system belong to the same semantic field in that language. Therefore, a semantic field in this sense is a paradigmatically and syntagmatically structured subset of the lexicon (cf. Katz, 1972 and Lehrer,

1974). This is clearly applicable to those lexical items borrowed from Hausa to Kanuri, because the borrowed lexical items belong to different semantic fields in the Kanuri language.

3.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

This section of the paper is largely concerned with the presentation and analysis of the data collected for the purpose of this research work. In the presentation of the data high (´) and falling (^) tones are marked while low (`) tone is left unmarked. In the same vein, long vowels are indicated by doubling the vowel concerned. However, it is of great importance to mention that Kanuri language is not characterized by long vowels. To justify this assertion Bulakarima and Shettima (2012, P. 42) state that "... at glance, vowel length and diphthongization appears to be phonemic in Kanuri, is not true." The paper focuses only on the classification of the loan words into different semantic domains.

3.1 Semantic Domains of Hausa Loan Words in Kanuri

At this juncture, the paper discusses the various semantic domains of Kanuri borrowed lexical items from Hausa. The research reveals that the loan words are from different sources, thus belonging to different semantic domains. These domains include Home, Religion, Commerce, Education, Administration & Politics, Names Relating to Animals, (Insects, Worms e t c), Science & Technology, Culture, Farm Produce and words related to Human Body Parts & Structure.

i. Home

- ii. The loan words in this group are those used in the domain of home, which are related to activities taking place there and the items use in the home, such as utensils, food items and related words. The followings are examples of such borrowed words:

Example 1:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a. áwárwáróo	wórówóro	bracelet
b. adudu	adudu	type of metal box
c. alale	allele	type of food made of blended beans
d. aléewa	aléwa	type of sweet
e. burkutu	burkutu	a type of wine from guinea corn
f. búutaa	búta	kettle
g. daddáwáa	daudá	spice made from locust bean
h. gwanjóo	gonjá	second hand cloth/auction
i. qooqóo	kokó	type of small calabash
j. kwandóo	kondó	basket
k. kwatámíi	kotómí	gutters
l. qóosái	kósái	bean cake
m. kújeeráa	kújerá	chair
n. ráaríyáa ¹	lálíyá	sieve

¹ In this example the consonantal phoneme /r/ in the donor language is replaced with /l/ in the target language.

o. láabúlée	lávúlé ²	curtains
p. máyáafii	máyáfi	bed sheet
q. mándáa	mándá	salt
r. mánjagáaraa ³	mánjakára	rake
s. soosóo	sosó	sponge
t. qanqáráa	kankára	ice block
u. farántii	faránti	plate
v. rishôo	rishô	stove
w. cóokalii	cókkol	spoon
x. yájii	yáji	spice
y. dámbúu	dámbú	type of food
z. addáa	addá	machete

3.1.2 Religion

The loan words in this group are those related to religious activities. According to Grema (2018) the borrowed words in this source are not much, probably because the speakers of Hausa and Kanuri languages are predominantly Muslims and the religion of Islam originated from Arabs. Therefore, the two languages borrow words in this domain from Arabic. Thus, the following can be seen as examples of such loan words.

Example 2:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a. láayaa	láya	talisman
b. kábaríi	káwar	grave
c. gúnkíi	gúmki ⁴	an idol
d. alháji	alháji	title used to address who has performed pilgrimage
e. gáadoo	gádo ⁵	inheritance

3.1.3 Commerce

The loan words in this group are those related to various aspects and activities of commerce. Consider the following:

Example 3:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a. díilaa	àdila	bale of cloth
b. baakáa	bakká	tray used for selling kola nuts
c. Bálángu	bálángu	kind of roasted meat
d. bandáa	bandá	smoked meat or fish
e. bíyaa	bíya	payment
f. tsiirée	céré	kebab
g. cúkúu	cúkkú	cheese

² The change from /b/ > /w/ occurs intervocalically not in all environments (Bulakarima and Shettima, 2012, p. 74).

³ In this example a voiced velar sound in the donor language is replaced with a voiceless velar sound in the target language.

⁴ This loan word is use by Manga speakers which is one of the Kanuri dialects, the Yerwa dialect uses *sanam*.

⁵ This is also dialectal (Manga), the Yerwa dialect uses *warata*.

h.	fálkée	fátké	trader of assorted materials
i.	gúrdo	gúrdo	retail
j.	kuza	kuza	tin/iron ore
k.	ríibaa	ríwa	profit
l.	talla	talla	hawking
m.	fatákaa	fatáka	twenty-five kobo coin
n.	ásúsu	ásúsu	money box/account
o.	adaashi	adashe	money collected periodically and it is to one or more members to be shared and it takes turns.
p.	dákóo	dókó	carrying loads for payment
q.	áafu	áfu	half of three pence

3.1.4 Education

The loan words in this group are those related to various aspects and activities associated with education of any form. The following are examples of such loan words:

Example 4:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a. tsangáyaa	sangáya	Qur'anic school
b. bóokoo	bóko	western education
c. tákardáa	tágardá ⁶	sheet of paper
d. makarantaa	maaranta ⁷	school

3.1.5 Administration and Politics

The loan words in this group are those related to administration of any kind and those related to various aspects and activities in politics. Consider the following as examples:

Example 5:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a. fítoo	fúto	customs duty
b. 'yár sandáa	yársandá	woman police
c. bángaa	bánga	voluntary security outfit
d. fárár-huuláa	fálinfálá	a civilian
e. zaavée	zawé	election
f. xán sandáa	dán sandá	police man

3.1.6 Names of Animals (Insects, Worms etc)

The loan words in this group are those related to the names of animals, insects, reptiles, worms and other living things. Here are examples of such loan words:

Example 6:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a. áládee	áláde ⁸	pig

⁶ There is also another word for this word i.e *kakkadu*.

⁷ There is a phonological process that takes place in this example, which is called compensatory lengthening as result of gradual consonant weakening that lead to occurrence of two identical vowels (Cf. Bulakarima and Shettima, (2012, p. 76).

⁸ Kanuri language also uses *gadu* for pig.

b.	agwaagwáa	agwagwá	duck
c.	akú	akkú	parrot
d.	táanáa	táná	earth worm
e.	táutau	táutau	spider
f.	qadángáree	gadángáree	lizard etc
g.	balámíi	balání	specie of sheep
h.	tattábaráa ⁹	tattawár	pigeon

3.1.7 Science & Technology

The loan words in this group are those related to various aspects and activities in science and technology. The examples of these loan words include the followings:

Example 7:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a. dálmaa	dálma	lead
b. dánqoo	dánko	rubber
c. gádaa	gáda	bridge
d. kártaa	kárta	playing cards
e. kácaa	kátca	wheel chain
f. keekée	keké	bicycle
g. kwalé-kwalé	kolékolé	canoe
h. gárwáa	gárwá	large can
i. lambatûu	lambatû	street-side drainage
j. táabaa	táwa	tobacco/cigarette
k. fankóo	fankó	empty container of object
l. máaléeji	méléji	speedometer
m. asháanáa	arshána	matches
n. aníní	aníní	button
o. áskáa	áská	a folding knife
p. ámalánkée	ámálénké	cart
q. fitílaa	fatíla	lamp
r. agóogó	agógó	watch
s. gáree	gáree	wheel
t. áláwáyyo	áláwáyyo	clothing fabric
u. atamfá	atamfá	a type of clothing fabric
v. bargóo	borkó	blanket
w. kirtánii	kirtáni	jude thread
x. qúusaa	kúsa	nail
y. laimaa	laimaná	umbrella
z. tángarán	tágáran	ceramic plate
aa. táasaa	tása	copper dish
bb. kwálbáa	kólwa	bottle
cc. zargíinaa	zargína	washing blue

⁹ In the case of this example the phoneme /b/ in third syllable of the model is replaced with phoneme /w/ in the target language which is considered as a form of weakening. The final vowel of the model is also deleted in the target language.

dd.	langalángaa	làngalánga	long strips of iron binding on bales
ee.	qwaayáa	koyá	harmful drug
ff.	káatáakóo	kátákó	timber
gg.	gwángwání	góngóng	tin/can

3.1.8 Culture

The loan words in this group are those related to various cultural activities. Consider the following as examples:

Example 8:

Hausa		Kanuri Gloss	
a.	bambáróo	bombóro	type of musical instrument
b.	daalá	dalá	pyramid
c.	faataarí	fatalí	type of skirt/underwear
d.	gurumfáa	gurumbá	big round hat
e.	kwaatáa	kwatá	abattoir
f.	móoloo	móló	small type of lute
g.	lállee	nálle	henna
h.	santí	santí	state of being carried away by pleasure derived from taking delicious edible
i.	zungurúu	zungurú	type of long gourd
j.	gurmíi	gulúm	large size guitar
k.	lúngu	lúngu	nook, corner
l.	lúurúu	núru	cotton blanket
m.	tsáamíyáa	sámíyá	a type of Hausa royal gown
n.	shákwáráa	shókórá	a type of Hausa gown
o.	wandóo	wandó	pair o trousers
p.	boorii	borí	devil-possession/cult
q.	kállábíi	kálláwí	head tie
r.	kámfái	kámpái	pants
s.	langu	langu	type of children game

3.1.9 Farm Produce

The loan words in this group are those related to various aspects and activities taking place in the farm. Below are examples of such loan words:

Example 9:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a.	ayaba	banana
b.	abarabáa	pineapple
c.	aláyyahóo	spinach
d.	álwaa	type of creeping water plant
e.	áurée ¹⁰	type of mango
f.	dábíinoo	desert dates
g.	gwándaa	pawpaw

¹⁰ It refers to a variety of mango fruit which is a quite big in size.

h.	góoro	góro	kola nuts
i.	gwáazáa	gózá	cocoa yam
j.	rakée	reké	sugar cane
k.	shìnkáafáa	shangáwá	rice
l.	táakii	táki	manure/fertilizer
m.	yáalóo	yáló	garden egg
n.	dankálii	dangáli	sweet potato
o.	barkonóo	barwunó	pepper
p.	dóoyaa	dóyà	yam tuber
q.	tattaasáii	tattashé	variety of large pepper

3.1.10 Words Related to Human Body Parts and Structure

The loan words in this group consist of those related to human physical structure and body parts. Examples of these loan words are as follows:

Example 10:

Hausa	Kanuri	Gloss
a. huuhúu	fufú	lungs
b. timbíi	timbí	abdomen, belly
c. waadáa	wadá	dwarf
d. gaashin baakí	gashimbakí	moustache

In the above presentation and categorization one can understand that, Kanuri language borrowed a fairly large number of lexical items from Hausa. This borrowing takes place because they have established contact for many decades and they remained neighbors up to the present day. All the borrowed words used in the present research work are nouns, but that doesn't mean all the borrowed words from Hausa to Kanuri are nouns. There are also other categories of Hausa lexical items that are loaned into Kanuri language.

Furthermore, the domain of Science & Technology has the highest total number of loan words, because it has thirty-three (33) borrowed lexical items. It is followed by the domain of Home with twenty-six (26) lexical items that are borrowed from Hausa to Kanuri. On the other hand, there are nineteen (19) lexical items in the domain of Culture and the domains of Commerce and Farm Produce has seventeen (17) lexical items each. The domains of Names of Animals & Insects, Administrations & Politics and that of Religion have eight (8), six (6) and five (5) borrowed lexical items respectively. The Semantic domains with the least borrowed lexical items are the domains of Education and that of Human Body Parts & Structure with only four (4) borrowed lexical items each. It is also clear from the data presented and analyzed that, each of the domain has certain percentage of the loan words which can be seen as follows: Home (18.70%), Religion (3.59%), Commerce (12.23%), Education (2.87%), Administration & Politics (4.31%), Names of Animals & Insects (5.75%), Science & Technology (23.74%), Culture (13.66%), Farm Produce (12.23%) and Human Body Parts & Structure (2.87%).

4.0 Conclusion

From the above discussion it is clear that the research is able to establish that, Kanuri a Nilo-Saharan language borrowed a fairly large number of words from Hausa, a Chadic Language. The

loan words are from various sources ranging from large number to just a few. Similarly, the percentage of borrowed lexical items is calculated and provided in the paper. Thus, an attempt is made to show that, the borrowed words are categorized into different semantic domains. It is paramount at this juncture to mention that, all lexical items that are semantically related really belong to the same group. It is also obvious that Hausas and Kanuris are neighbors for long period of time and there is contact between the speakers of languages up to present time of writing this paper.

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