

A Phonological Adaptation of Hausa Loanwords in Pabur-Bura

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Abstract

This study looks at Hausa- loan words in Pabur-Bura language. Hausa is one of the indigenous National languages and also a lingua franca in most part of northern Nigeria. The data for the study were based primarily on recorded interview of thirty (30) native Pabur-Bura speakers from Biu and Hawul local government areas of Borno State, Nigeria and entries in Schuh'sBura Dictionary. The paper discusses the phonological repair strategies the native Pabur-Bura native speaker sub-consciously adapt a loanword from Hausa. Pabur-Bura loan adaptation involves stone modification, shortening of final vowels, vowel deletion in certain context, vowel substitution, and determination of some Hausa geminate sounds, among others. Most vocabularies concerned in this work are nouns and some verbs.

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Background to the Study

Like any living organisms, languages also have developed the characteristics of adaptability by various means and methods of enrichment and development. Linguistic borrowing is the process of transferring linguistic elements phonological, morphological, and syntactic and semantics from a donor language (source language) recipient language (receptor language) as a result of contacts between communities speaking different languages. Borrowing is not restricted to just lexical items that are from language X to languages Y. The borrowed items can be any linguistic material such as sounds, phonological rules, grammatical phonemes, syntactic patterns, semantic associations, discourse strategies or any such linguistic device which has its origin in another language. Borrowed lexicons are found in all languages of the world. The phenomenon has a very strong linguistic relevance, because linguistic borrowing enhances the survival of the receptor language. It is sufficing to say that language capacity to borrow determines largely its continued survival because the world is dynamic and must accommodate many innovations from different languages.

Borrowed words are usually remodelled to fit the phonological as well as the morphological structure of the recipient language. The loanwords which are introduced into the recipient language may have some sounds in the borrowed lexicons which are foreign to the speakers of the receiving language, and due to the phonetic interference, the foreign sounds are changed to conform to the pattern of native sounds, for example all English loans with /p/ sounds are changed to /f/ in Hausa: *paint*, *passenger*, *pepper-soup* in English becomes *fenti*, *fasinja*, *farfesu* in Hausa. This process is called adaptation or phoneme substitution. Similarly, non-phonological patterns are also subjected to accommodation. In this, the loanwords which do not fit the phonological patterns are modified to fit the phonological combinations that are permitted in the recipient language. This process is usually done to fit the structure of the recipient language, for example Hausa language do not permit consonant cluster on the same syllable. Consequently, English loanword *France* is pronounced as *faransa*, where the consonant cluster is broken by vowel insertion.

The outcome of borrowing can vary according to the length and intensity of the contact, meaning the kind of interaction the speakers of two languages have and also the degree of bilingualism between them. The above condition can lead to the introduction of new phonemes into the recipient language with borrowed words which contain these new sounds. This can also bring a change in the phonemic inventory of the borrowing language. This process is sometimes called direct phonological diffusion.

The phonological patterns of a language can also be altered by the acceptance in more intimate language contact of loanwords which do not conform to the native patterns, for example most Hausa words do not end with consonant except idiophones. However due to intimate contact and intensive borrowings from English and Arabic, Hausa language phonology allows loanwords to end with consonants, for example *haram/haramun* (forbidden) loan from Arabic, *talebijin* (television), *giris* (grease) loans from English.

Loanwords are not only remodelled to accommodate aspects of the phonology of the recipient language, but also adapted to fit the morphological pattern of the recipient language.

Literature Review

According to Miyamoto (1990), there are two possible ways or methods of a study of loanwords. One is to see into the semantic field i.e. the classification of borrowed words according to which cultural categories they belong to e.g. if a religion was introduced by the lender, then the borrower has to borrow much religion vocabulary. Greenberg (1947) study this kind of Arabic loans in Hausa. The second is a phonological approach i.e. what are the characteristic features of borrowed words in terms of the grammatical system of the receptor language. This paper concentrates on the second method aiming to see how Pabur-Bura language adopts foreign vocabulary into its internal grammar and phonology.

For lexical borrowing to take place, a contact situation between languages involved is required. There are various types of borrowing identified in this study:

1. The direct type of borrowing, where the target language adopts and integrates into its system both the form and meaning of a lexical item originating from the source language.
2. Loan translation or calques, where the form and meaning of a foreign word instead of being carried into the target language, is merely employed as a model for native creation. Here the target language substitutes for each of the source language morphemes, the semantically corresponding morpheme in the target language and combining these according to its own native rules of word formation (Bynon 1977).
3. Loan blend: here the borrower imports parts of the model and replaces part of it with something already in the receptor language.
4. Semantic extension: this is a method in which a foreign concept is taken into a language by modifying the semantic range of an item of similar meaning in the native language.

There are several reasons advanced to explain why languages borrow from one another, among these are:

- I. Prestige motive: Hocket (1958, identifies prestige as one of the reasons for borrowing. In this case, he argues that people are expected to emulate those they admire. Another variety of prestige wants to confirm with the majority like the Hausa language in northern Nigeria. The source language could be that of the majority or those in power.
- ii. The need filling motive: this is a situation whereby languages borrow in order to find words for new objects, concepts and places. It is argued that it is easier to borrow an existing term from another than to create one (Hocket 1958).
- iii. According to Owino (2003) pernicious homonym is another motive for borrowing. Sometimes a word is borrowed from another language to resolve a clash of homonyms.

On the linguistic items likely to be borrowed, Bynon (1977) discusses the lexical classes that are open to borrowing. He notes that it is generally the 'opened classes' (Nouns, verbs and adjectives) that are more readily borrowed than the 'closed classes' (pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions). He notes that nouns are the most borrowed class everywhere because the great majority of borrowed words are the names of new objects and materials.

Data Collection

This study is partly based on about three hours of audio recorded interview of thirty (30) Pabur-Bura native speakers of different ages, genders, educational backgrounds and residence. Fifteen (15) of the interviewees were from Biu town, the headquarters of Biu local government area of Borno state. This group was targeted simply because of its semi-urban residence with their daily lives centred on urban activities i.e. using tri- motorcycle (KekeNapep) for going to work, buying provisions in the market, transporting children to and from school every day. It was hoped that with these kind of daily urban activity, there would be a high propensity of borrowing since they require more than one language in their daily communication.

The other fifteen (15) interviewees came from Marama, Shaffa and Azare towns in Hawul local government area of Borno state. These rural areas were chosen mainly because most of the subjects are bilingual (they speak both Hausa and Pabur- Bura). While conducting the interviews, the subjects were unaware that the main interest was in the loanwords borrowed from Hausa. The interviews were informally conducted where the interviewees lived and dealt with problems in their lives. The purpose of which is to elicit a sample of speech about them which forms part of their everyday conversation. There are collection of Bura Dictionary, books and Bura Bible which provided the source of secondary data. Native speakers of Pabur-Bura language were then used to verify the pronunciation of the loanwords collected from these sources.

Presentation and Data Analysis

The socio-linguistic situation of the two languages is critical in giving a pointer to the direction of borrowing as Hacket (1958) argues that borrowing tends to be from more prestigious to less prestigious cultures. When lexical items were borrowed into a language it may sometimes require sound repairs in order to fit into the sound system of the receptor language. Therefore, when new linguistic concepts are borrowed into another language it may or may not retain some of its original pronunciation.

Phonological Adaptation Process of loanwords

Radical loans (zero suffix): According to Haugen (1953), radical loans are types of loanwords that do not undergo any sound changes. Consider the following examples:

Hausa	Pabur-Bura	Gloss
Àyàba	àyàba	banana
Dankali	dankali	sweet potatoe
Darà	darà	game of drought
Fàifài	fàifài	tray mainly use to cover Vessel
Gaadi	gaadi	guard/protect
Gùdumà	gùdumà	hammer
Liilò	liilò	swinging/dangling
Wà	wà	interrogative pronoun

The above examples are Hausa words that are borrowed into Pabur-Bura without any change.

Non radical loans: According to Haugen (1953) in Kaka et al (2016) non radicals are loanwords that do undergo changes in forms and structures in the process of accommodating loans from another language. The process includes sound replacement, deletion, insertion, lengthening, shortening, tone modification etc.

i. **Process affecting vowels:** Hausa does not possess a phonemic central schwa vowel /ə/. Pabur-Bura /ə/ is rendered as any part of the vowels that are available for word medial position in Hausa, i.e. /a/, /i/, /o/. Consider the following examples:

Hausa	Pabur-Bura	Gloss
Bindigà	bəndəkà	gun
Dakà	dəkà	pound/beat
Àljiihù	dəfù	pocket
Kilba	kəlba	an ethnic group
Kàaka	kəka	grandparent
Sirdi	sərdù	saddle
Toofà	təfà	spit

ii. **Vowel length modification:** Some Hausa vowels are adapted in their original quality in Hausa loanwords in Pabur-Bura. However, quite often the lengths of some vowels are modified. Consider the following examples:

Hausa	Pabur-bura	Gloss
Kèekèe	keki	bicycle
Àsaarà	asar	misfortune/loss
Asiiri	ashir	secret
Bàntee	benta	pant/inner wear
Bùhuu	bufù	sack/bag
Caaca	caaca	gambling
Dubuu	dubu	thousand
Goorò	gorò	kola nut
Jirgii	jilki	aeroplane
Qaara	qaaraa	complaint
Kàaciyà	kaciyà	circumcision
Karàntaa	kàràta	to read
Gàarii	gàari	flour
Kwàleekwàlee	kwàlekwàle	canoe
Laabaari	làbar	news/information
Làaràabaa	làraba	Wednesday
Ràkee	rèeke	sugar cane
Rubùuta	rùbta	to write
Saa'à	sa'à	luck/victory
Taaba	tàba	cigarette
Tattaasai	tàtasi	large red chilli pepper
Tsàadaa	tsàda	expensiveness
Yaadi	yadi	a piece of cloth
Zoobe	zobi	ring
Koofi	kopu	cup
Amaryaa	amarya	newly wed bride
Irii	iri	seed
Gàrmaa	galma	plough
Roogò	raagù	cassava
Bàaba	bàba	father

iii. **Degemination:** it is a phonological process whereby a geminate is reduced or neutralized to a single sound (Mathews 2007). Some geminates in Standard Hausa are degeminated in Pabur-Bura Hausa loanwords which is accompanied by compensatory vowel lengthening, which Crystal (1988) describe it as an effect in which the deletion of one segment is accompanied by an increase in the length of another, usually adjacent to it, thus preserving the syllable weight. Consider the following examples:

Standard Hausa	Pabur-Bura	Gloss
Tattaasai	tàatasi	large red chilli pepper
Accà	aacà	wheat
Àddaa	àada	machete
Kullùm	kuuləm	always

iv. **Tone Modification:** is a speech melody which changes the pitch level of a word. Consider the following examples:

Standard Hausa	Pabur-Bura	Gloss
Làhàdi	laadùwà	Sunday
Gwandà	gùnda	pawpaw
Gwàara	gwauroo	spinster
Kàaciya	kaciyà	circumcision
Laafiyà	laafiyà	well being
Lìtinin	lìtinwà	Monday
Alqawàrii	àlkawàl	promise/pledge
Shaa	sà	to drink
Shaawàra	shaawarà	advice
Taabà	tàba	cigarette

v. **Deletion:** is a phonological process by which part of a form is deleted (Mathews 2007). Consider the following examples:

Standard Hausa	Pabur-Bura	Gloss
Alqawàrii	àlkawal	promise/pledge
Sukàrii	sukar	sugar
Àsaarà	asar	misfortune/loss
Àsiirii	ashir	secret
Hankalii	hankàl	sense
Karàntaa	kàràta	read
Làaràba	làrba	Wednesday
Rubùuta	rùbta	write
Shaa	sà	drink
Sàabulù	sàbul	soap

vi. **Rhoticization:** There are two types of R^s in standard Hausa: the trilled /ř/ and the flapped /ɾ/. The flapped /ɾ/ is used to distinguish from the trilled /ř/. However, Hausa loanwords in Pabur-Bura are characterized by loss of flap. This factor could be attributed to the fact that Pabur-Bura doesn't have the flapped /ɾ/ in its phonological inventory. Consider the following examples:

Standard Hausa	Pabur-Bura	Gloss
Dařà	dara	game of drought
Makaranta	makaranta	school
Goořuba	gwarvà	dum palm
řařiyaa	rariya	siever
řakèe	rièreke	sugar cane

Conclusion

This study attempted to provide a descriptive approach of Hausa loanwords in Pabur-Bura language. The study discussed how native Pabur-bura sub-consciously employs phonological repairs to adapt some Hausa lexicons into Pabur-bura through tone modification, vowel deletion, vowel substitution, degeminates of some Hausa geminates sounds. It is hoped that this study will add to the variety of Hausa loanwords found in some Nigerian languages.

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