

The Interplay of Language and Humanities in the Preservation and Transmission of Hausa Culture

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Abstract

The research analyses the unified relationship between language together with the humanities and cultural sustainability patterns in Hausa society. Through Hausa language many cultural traditions serve as storage facilities which maintain indigenous knowledge systems alongside traditional beliefs and ethnic heritage by using proverbs and oral histories and social customs. The research evaluates performing arts together with oral traditions and historical accounts as well as literature because they function as cultural channels of expression and survival. The study employs Cultural Hermeneutics to examine how Hausa culture remains intact through both educational institutions and traditional traditions using Qur'anic schools along with griots, elders, and storytelling customs. Hausa culture persists in adapting to modern changes such as globalization together with urbanization and language shift thanks to media and digital humanities. Indigenous language policy together with educational reforms and academic commitment to cultural preservation is shown through the findings to be essential. Through their analysis the researchers established that linguistic systems demonstrate both an overview of identity heritage and operational functions for cultural defence against modern-day stresses. The findings serve scholars

together with policymakers as well as cultural institutions who want to maintain indigenous cultures through language education approaches.

Keywords: Hausa language, cultural preservation, humanities, indigenous knowledge, language policy.

Introduction

The study of culture requires language and humanities because these serve to deliver messages through communication and keep human experiences and values and worldviews together. Language functions as a symbolic system above everyday dialogues because it serves as an encoding mechanism to store cultural knowledge which keeps passing from one generation to the next. According to Sapir (1921) language acts as “a guide to social reality” by influencing cognitive processes and cultural interpersonal relations of individuals. Language performs two essential functions in the humanities tradition including literature and philosophy as well as history and arts because it provides societies with tools to investigate their cultural heritage while enabling identity scrutiny.

The significance of language and the humanities features primacy in African

cultures because they primarily rely on oral history before written documentation exists. Hausa society maintains its position as West Africa's most sizable and culturally rich community which provides excellent examples showing how language along with the humanities functions as essential tools for safeguarding cultural heritage and transmitting traditions. Oral poetry (*Wakar baka*) along with storytelling (*Labarai*) and proverbs (*Karin magana*) and traditional performance arts constitute the core methods of Hausa culture which provides unique understanding of indigenous knowledge systems operating in African communities (Yahaya, 1988). Such expressions combine entertainment value with communal traditions and conceptual knowledge while instructing people about morality in both community spaces and educational institutions.

Culture transmission in Hausa society maintains a direct relationship with language-based communication methods. The Hausa language serves as both a communication tool and a storage system for traditional and historical information. Educational Islamic exegesis (*Tafsir*) parallels didactic songs (*Waka*) and answer-response techniques of riddles (*Kacici-kacici*) which establish cultural transfer from elders to youth during special events and gatherings. In the words of Ruth Finnegan (2012), oral literature functions as an “archive of the people” across multiple African societies which have less emphasis on written texts. Humanities exist in all physical spaces where people share knowledge through storytelling fiction and songs to develop shared cultural values.

Cultural mechanisms adapt to new media forms as well as communication formats because they demonstrate dynamic characteristics. Hausa popular culture now features radio dramas and music videos together with digital storytelling shown on

YouTube and Arewa24 broadcast platforms. The relationship between traditional cultural forms and modern expressive systems shows continuous development which maintains cultural identification in contemporary scenarios (Abubakar, 2019).

The complete comprehension of Hausa society requires recognition of language together with the humanities as primary elements for preserving and transferring cultural values. The analysis of these points demonstrates how African indigenous cultures preserve their strength and sustain their traditions throughout socio-political along with technological advancements.

The Relationship between Language and the Humanities

Language requires the humanities for their mutual enhancement. The main way humanistic ideas get expressed occurs through language despite the fact that humanities actively study and protect the different languages that represent their cultural heritage. At its core the oral tradition in African societies proves that language creates deep connections between humanities which produce philosophical knowledge alongside social guidelines and historical memory retention according to Okpewho (1992).

The humanities which include oral literature and performing arts in Hausa culture exist in direct proportion to their dependence on language. Ibrahim (2018) established *waka* along with riddles and proverbs as humanistic texts that perform a dual function as linguistic forms. These artistic approaches both entertain the audience while sharing proper values coupled with social standards and communal memories.

Study Objective

The research found the need to analyse the relationship between language and cultural heritage and how they maintain and pass on

Hausa cultural values, beliefs and practices. It aimed at discoursing on the role of certain language patterning such as proverbs, idioms and oral narratives in coordinating with the traditional oral literary works, artistic representations and aspect of other humanities in preserving and propagating the Hausa cultural identity. The purpose also involved the determination of the means by which these cultural resources through joint efforts contributed to the maintenance of the culture in one generation to the other, and the further development of a common sense that tightens societal connections to each other as well as adjustment to the current realities without losing its originality.

Research Questions

- Which language features help the Hausa language to safeguard cultural heritage along with transmitting cultural traditions?
- Through which ways do components of humanities (authors and music and theatre) maintain and express Hausa cultural essence?
- How do Hausa community members of different generations use language and how does this link to their understanding of the culture?
- What insights do Cultural Hermeneutics and Ethnolinguistics theory provide to explain how language functions with the humanities system within Hausa culture?

Theoretical Framework

The analysis of how Hausa language preserves and maintains culture draws from Cultural Hermeneutics theory presented by MusimbiKanyoro in 2002. According to Cultural Hermeneutics we need to study cultural materials—including verbal and written expressions—inside their societal elements and political systems. The approach disrupts mainstream stories to enable minoritized knowledge systems to speak out.

The research adopts Ethnolinguistics as a supplementary theoretical approach alongside Cultural Hermeneutics. Through ethnolinguistics we study language and culture whereas its primary focus lies in showing how language features show the existence of cultural facts. Hausa language reveals its social, religious and communal aspects through its linguistic expression according to Foley (1997).

The pair of analytical frameworks serves as an instrument to reveal the intricate manner by which language together with humanities maintain cultural stability among Hausa people.

Methodology

This paper utilized qualitative method of research using ethnography in order to evaluate the way a language in tandem with the humanities preserves and passes the Hausa culture. The cultural practitioners, elders, and educators were interviewed using a semi structured approach. More materials have come through the observation of cultural performance and event and through collection and analysis of the traditional oral literature in the form of proverbs, folktales and songs.

Thematic analysis with the help of Cultural Hermeneutics and Ethnolinguistics interpretive lenses was applied on the collected data. The methods allowed the researcher to capture cultural expressions in their social and historical contexts besides looking at connection between linguistic forms and cultural meanings.

The Hausa Language as a Cultural Repository

Speaking beyond its communicative function language functions as an active corridor which showcases cultural tradition of peoples. As an African native language Hausa functions as an essential cultural database which holds the foundation of

Hausa societal beliefs and traditions and native values. The Hausa language contains a vast collection of indigenous knowledge and collective practices which emerges from its structure and communication expressions while being used in everyday contexts.

• Structural Features of Hausa that Reflect Cultural Values

Many aspects of Hausa grammar trace back to fundamental cultural priorities of its native speakers the detailed system of *kirari* address terms reflects how Hausa culture values social rank and family connections together with show respect to others. According to Newman (2000) *Alhaji*, *Malam* and *Hajiya* are not linguistic forms but social markers that demonstrate status along with piety and maturity.

The grammar structure provides politeness strategies through pronoun usage and verb formation in Hausa language. People of higher status or elders receive plural address forms in Hausa because this practice represents an essential cultural respect norm that exists among African languages (Jaggar 2001).

• Proverbs, Idioms, and Oral Narratives as Carriers of Indigenous Knowledge

Hausa culture moves through the generations through three crucial cultural expressions including Proverbs (*Karin magana*) and Idioms (*kalmomin Karin ma'ana*) and Oral Narratives (*tatsuniya*). The short concise form of proverbs allows them to deliver both moral instructions and philosophical concepts alongside cultural rules to society. African oral literature and Hausa literature specifically depend on these forms as stated by Finnegan (2012) to deliver complex content in brief yet powerful ways.

According to the Hausa proverb "*Ruwa ba ya tsami sai da dalili*" ("Water does not turn sour without a reason") the community

believes it is important to track down conflict reasons before taking impulsive action. "*Kasa ta ci giwa*" ("The ground has swallowed an elephant") functions as an idiomatic expression that brings up important societal events while showing historical awareness (Yahaya, 1979).

An oral narrative collection functions as an educational system while preserving cultural histories according to Abubakar (2001). The entertaining narratives about famous characters such as Bayajidda carry essential memories and cultural principles and administrative standards through the subtle language features that shape authentic Hausa speech.

• Language Use in Socialization and Community Rites

Socialization and communal events within Hausa culture require language as an essential factor for the processes that occur during naming ceremonies (*bikin suna*) and marriages (*bikin aure*) and religious festivals (*Eid*). The religious practices utilize distinct linguistic forms in addition to praises and invocations and ritual utterances to strengthen both cultural traditions and common group identities.

The social expectations become known to children as they participate in storytelling gatherings and greetings events and learn in Qur'anic schools (*makarantar allo*). The Hausa language functions simultaneously as the communication tool while educating people about virtues which encompass truthfulness and welcome behaviour along with reverence toward elders and collective accountability (Furniss, 1996).

Rites of passage ceremonies show the close connection between language and cultural traditions through their use of Islamic verses at naming rituals and traditional songs for weddings. The traditions establish a complete acceptance of community

perspectives and societal practices and moral principles by each new generation.

Mechanisms of Cultural Preservation and Transmission in Hausa Society

Every society needs cultural preservation together with transmission methods to survive as well as maintain its identity. Traditional and modern institutions work together to keep this process active within Hausa communities. The transmission mechanisms protect values and norms while transmitting history as well as knowledge to future generations maintain a collective connection to their cultural roots and cultural heritage.

• Role of Griots, Elders, and Scholars

According to Vansina (1985) Hausa culture uses griots or praise-singers (*maroka*) to protect historic records by acting as tracking historians and artist praise performers. During public festivities, griots combine their duties of hymn singing about current and past political figures with retelling family histories and heroic deeds. Through their historical knowledge and linguistic capabilities the historians maintain important cultural stories visible for the public domain. The encoding of historical references and proverbs allows oral historians to perform educational guidance and moral leadership in addition to their role as entertainers.

Culture preservation stands among the fundamental duties carried out by elders. Throughout everyday encounters elders teach the upcoming generation how community functions operate by meaning cultural standards rules and which principles to abide while setting boundaries for acceptable traditions in Aboriginal society. The maintenance of authority within domestic and social settings allows indigenous people to transfer their cultural

knowledge and practical methods of greeting as well as conflict resolution and collective work tasks to the following generation (Abdurrahman & Canham, 2005).

The intellectual preservation of culture achieves significant advancement through the work of Islamic and traditional scholars known as *malamai* at Qur'anic schools plus Islamic institutions. These scholars merge religious teaching methods to combine ethnic cultural guidelines for building stronger religious identities and ethnic identification. Through their teaching activities and writing the scholars support the usage of Hausa language in both religious and education contexts according to Boyd (1989).

• Informal and Formal Education Systems (e.g., Qur'anic Schools, Cultural Festivals)

The Hausa education system contains traditional teaching practices in addition to standardized educational programs. Education within the informal system occurs throughout homes and community environments teaching children social values together with religious teachings and native arts. A leading informal institution as described by Ahmed (2012) exists in the form of Qur'anic school (*makarantar allo*) which enables students to study the Qur'an along with acquiring Hausa-Islamic ethical values and disciplinary patterns and linguistic principles.

Contemporary schooling offers both Western curriculum schools and Qur'anic institutions side by side. But Hausa traditional celebrations like *Kallon Gargajiya*, *Durbar*, and *Hawan Sallah* also function as living schools. The cultural festivals present traditional horse events together with music and drama performances to strengthen ethnic pride and cultural recognition among young people (Kassim, 2011).

Building from Islamic or traditional systems these institutions maintain Hausa cultural preservation through indigenous value systems and communal values.

- **Intergenerational Storytelling and Linguistic Continuity**

Hausa society believes storytelling to be the fundamental cultural tradition which occurs during evening gatherings with family members. The traditional folklore (*tatsuniya*) enables elders to teach children both moral values and historical narratives and ancient cosmic doctrines. Finnegan (2012) states this tradition both builds familial relationships across generations and maintains linguistic vitality of the Hausa language by keeping it active.

Come each day the use of proverbs and specific words helps cultural information spread among speakers and helps solidify identity as a fundamental element of language. Bamgbose (1991) reveals academic research findings which demonstrate that both mother-tongue educational programs and home/school promotion of native languages prove pivotal for sustaining indigenous cultures. As a widespread language throughout West Africa the Hausa language acts as a powerful foundation to preserve cultural identity in Hausa society.

Contemporary Influences and Challenges

Modern society presents major obstacles in the way of maintaining and transmitting Hausa cultural values. Modern cultural changes because of globalization together with technological developments and the process of urbanization modify the ways cultural practices develop and cultural knowledge spreads. The new cultural opportunities created by modern technological transformations expose Hausa culture to risks of losing its core elements and replacement of traditional languages.

The section illustrates the modern transformative forces operating on Hausa culture while investigating how media facilitates the renewal and recreation of Hausa cultural identity.

- **Impact of Globalization, Technology, and Urbanization**

The growth of globalization produces positive and negative consequences which affect the maintenance of Hausa culture. Hausa language and culture now reach locations outside of Nigeria because Kannywood has helped spread its dissemination especially across bordering nations. The cultural export described by Adamu (2007) serves two purposes because it promotes Hausa popular culture to worldwide audiences while maintaining certain traditional customs through modern presentation.

Foreign values and lifestyles and languages invade society as an outcome of globalization processes. The widespread use of English in education together with its role in business and media operations coupled with Western cultural traditions has reduced the use of native languages and traditional customs in northern Nigeria. According to Onyeka (2014) the global culture which results from globalization marginalizes traditional customs thus making them outdated when considering modernized globalized practices. Digital media plays a significant role as the main driver of recent transformational changes in media industries. Social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and Instagram provide young people with opportunities to interact with both worldwide and geographical cultural content. Exposure to multiculturalism through foreign cultural expressions speeds up the disappearance of traditional Hausa customs according to Mba (2005).

The process of cities growing has deeply influenced Hausa cultural patterns. The

increasing migration of rural citizens to urban areas including Kano, Abuja and Lagos leads residents to replace traditional rural customs with urban way of life. Anonymity from city life plays against the combination of population movement to lead to weakened social networks and decreased traditional expressions. According to Kalu (2010) urbanization creates two major effects by breaking down traditional family systems while sacrificing communal principles because city dwellers choose professional success instead of cultural maintenance.

Language Shift and Cultural Erosion

Through language as the main method of culture transmission both cultural preservation mechanisms and cultural elements undergo direct effects whenever language patterns undergo shifts. Language shift occurs when speakers start using a different language and it normally occurs because global languages such as English become more useful and helpful. The shift toward a new language mostly appears among the new generation of Hausa people. Bamgbose (1991) opines that urban youth together with other Nigerian language speakers increasingly use English rather than Hausa which leads to Hausa language reduction in domestic and social interactions.

The traditional practices of the Hausa people face extinction because of these linguistic changes. Examples of traditional wisdom expressed through proverbs and idioms and songs will vanish when younger generations stop using and comprehending Hausa. Oyeleye (2013) explains that this cultural loss promotes areas of social breakdown while also leading to the disappearance of traditional knowledge systems within Hausa communities. The combination of language shift results in cultural deterioration when younger individuals embrace foreign

traditions which challenge their ancestral customs.

Intergenerational storytelling becomes difficult to maintain because of the decreasing use of Hausa language which historically preserved cultural knowledge. Finnegan (2012) mentioned that authentic oral customs of storytelling and praise singing function both as entertainment and as instruments to educate about morals and protect traditional heritage. The choice to use globalized entertainment over traditional practices leads to the disappearance of multiple elements that define Hausa culture.

Media and the Reinvention of Hausa Cultural Identity

Globalization together with urbanization creates difficulties but the media serves as a fundamental element for both restoring and rebuilding Hausa cultural identity. The Kannywood entertainment industry along with Hausa radio and television programs establish themselves as fundamental platforms for people to debate their cultural identity. Kannywood movies have become tools for promoting traditional Hausa cultural values according to Aliyu (2007) while simultaneously embracing modern elements. Viewers feel connected to their ancestral traditions because the media showcases Hausa cultural values through depictive representations despite the invasion of globalization trends.

The media presents innovative channels for Hausa people to experience their culture by watching music videos and wearing fashion trends. Naija music and Hausa pop culture have become popularized which created a cultural fusion between both traditional practices and contemporary elements (Pate, 2014). Through social media users from younger generations find opportunities to participate in sharing cultural content. Through YouTube channels together with Instagram and Twitter users preserve their

Hausa heritage while generating new cultural expressions regarding Hausa language and fashion and food traditions. Through the media there exists an opportunity to reconstruct Hausa identity within global perspectives. Adegbite (2009) explained that images of Hausa culture in media are constructing a Pan-African identity which blends historic customs with current ambitions. Globalization creates pressure which prompts Hausa culture to adapt through media-driven cultural reinventions that preserve its unique elements.

The interconnectedness of language with humanities shields Hausa culture from disappearing

The continued existence of Hausa culture requires the union of language with humanities along with strategic educational changes and academic involvement and digital revitalization of cultural practices. This segment examines the union between these components which functions to sustain and advance Hausa cultural heritage through modern times.

Indigenous Language Policy and Educational Reforms

The sustainability of Hausa culture requires an established indigenous language policy. The dominance of English over Hausa and other indigenous languages within Nigeria has led to decreasing local cultural practices because Hausa remains marginalized (Adebayo 2011). By implementing language policies which support Hausa language teaching in schools the preservation of both the language and its cultural values becomes achievable. Educational reforms embracing native languages in school curricula help young individuals maintain cultural pride and cultural development as described by Bamgbose (2000).

Building Hausa instruction in schools will create an educational link between standardized curricula and traditional cultural wisdom. National policy development requires integration of indigenous language education systems to achieve its objectives properly. According to Nwana (2005) protecting cultural sustainability requires education systems to incorporate local languages for teaching cultural material in students' native languages. These reforms benefit both language retention as well as cultural knowledge transmission because the language contains cultural information such as oral traditions and history and customs.

Role of Academic Institutions and Cultural Organizations

Academic institutions together with cultural organizations take the lead to integrate language and humanities for cultural sustainability development. The documentation study along with dissemination of indigenous knowledge finds its base within educational departments of universities together with research centers and cultural organizations. Higher learning institutions in Nigeria must actively help maintain Hausa culture through their support of research about language and literature as well as history and cultural practices according to Egbokhare (2002).

The Hausa Cultural Association together with other cultural organizations supports cultural arts while organizing festivals and exhibitions that help share traditional values with the public. As cultural heritage keepers these institutions maintain cultural heritage to facilitate traditional practice education for the new generation. Ibrahim (2010) argues that cultural organizations perform an essential function in defending policies for indigenous language advocacy in addition to boosting cultural understanding between

locals and outside populations. These organizations create many programs that include cultural event scheduling and publishing activities which focus on showcasing Hausa cultural heritage.

Academic institutions can cooperate with cultural organizations to establish cross-disciplinary programs that unite subject matter from language with literature and history and the arts. The combination of creative writing courses and literary criticism about Hausa literature enables the creation of bridges which connect traditional culture with modern standards. According to Alhassan (2015) such interdisciplinary academic programs enable the revitalization of cultural heritage through integration of academic methods with cultural advocacy practice.

Revitalizing Hausa Culture through Digital and Literary Humanities

Digital platforms present a distinct chance to restore Hausa culture because they enable the advancement of both the language and its linked cultural customs. Through social media interactions combined with electronic publications and multimedia formats which include podcasts videos and blogs Hausa culture finds international promotional channels. The internet functions as a influential tool for cultural resurgence by enabling Hausa speakers to develop content that illustrates their cultural heritage (Nwachukwu-Agbada, 2012).

Digital humanities integration serves as a method to unite different generations in their efforts to protect Hausa culture. Youthful persons with digital tech knowledge can interact with cultural content using platforms that appeal to their generation. Digital archives work to safeguard Hausa oral traditions together with songs and stories by collecting and safeguarding these resources from possible destruction. Okeke (2013) establishes that making Hausa

cultural artifacts accessible through digital repositories lets upcoming generations effortlessly access their cultural heritage.

Literary humanities remain essential for protecting and restoring Hausa culture through its perpetual cultural preservation efforts. Community cultural learning happens through writing practices as well as storytelling traditions and poetry together with literary compositions. Professor Umar (2016) explained that both oral and written Hausa literature reflects cultural essence while showcasing its core values and beliefs that reflect its cultural worldview. The publication of Hausa literature combined with literary events works to protect and enhance the living cultural richness of the language. Online and printed editions of Hausa literature now create new possibilities for the younger generation to interact with their cultural heritage through mixed approaches of traditionalism and contemporary reinvention. Digital and literary humanities provide a means to protect Hausa culture so future generations can build upon this cultural heritage during the digital era.

Findings

Multiple crucial findings about the fusion of language with humanities emerge for sustaining Hausa culture based on this inquiry.

1. Language as a Key of Cultural Repository

According to research the Hausa language functions as a central storage institution for cultural values along with historical knowledge and social standards. Hausa language structural elements including proverbs as well as idioms together with oral narratives function as vital mechanisms to transfer indigenous knowledge from one generation to the next.

2. Impact of Educational and Cultural Reforms

The integration of indigenous languages into formal education gives positive results for maintaining culture. The study shows why educational institutions should establish Hausa as a core subject because this approach aids students in understanding local customs and traditions. Academic institutions together with cultural organizations serve as essential elements for Hausa heritage promotion through academic programs and cultural happenings and traditional festivals. There is still a requirement for specific policies to increase Hausa language and cultural recognition throughout every educational establishment in the country.

3. Digital Platforms and Cultural Revitalization

The emergence of digital platforms has indicated a promising way towards the cultural regeneration of Hausa culture. The Internet media, social networks, and digital archives provided youngsters with new venues for expressing the cultural heritage in a new way. Using digital storytelling, podcasts and blogs the younger generation is discovering new ways of expressing themselves and connecting to their roots. This move to the digital realms ensures remote global access to the Hausa culture and topicality for modern times.

4. Challenges of Globalization and Urbanization

Despite all the positive changes, the research revealed that globalization and urbanisation threaten to turn out a menace to the cultural preservation. Language shift particularly among younger urban dwellers has seen the cultural practices particularly among the

Hausa-speaking communities eroded especially among the Hausa speaking communities; the tendency has been to encroach on the dominant languages such as English for communication purposes. Increased domination of West culture and attraction of the urban way of life has also contributed to the decline of both indigenous languages as well as the traditions of cultural expression.

5. Elders and Scholars in Cultural Continuity play a role.

Elders, and griots, and scholar are the pillars of Hausa cultural heritage ceremonies as regards continuity. Their functions on informal education system like storytelling, the guying of information, etc, is still an important facet. Yet, there is an increasing worry that these practices are facing a threat of fading out as children grow up in societies that are increasingly inversely linked to older generations of style of education and communication.

Implications of the Study

The results accentuate the key position of Hausa language and humanities as a means of maintaining cultural identity, underlining their role in passing on values, histories and world views. There are realities that need stronger Indigenous language policies, integration of Hausa in formal education and support for cultural programmes to this end. It implies as well that digital and literary humanities are powerful instruments for cultural revitalization and intergenerational contact.

Conclusion

This research reconfirms the importance of Hausa language and the humanities for culture preservation and dissemination. Yet

even in the face of modern day challenges these stills remain important for cultural sustainability. The improved use of indigenous language in the education, media and policy sector will promote the survival of the Hausa identity for future generations.

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