

Syntactic structure in Hausa film discourse: A change of phase

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Abstract

Hausa language is one of the widely spoken languages across several countries in Sub-Saharan Africa notably Nigeria, Niger, Ghana, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Benin Republic and even beyond. This development has made Hausa films very popular not even within the African region but also internationally. The discourse used in some of these films has generated interest and motivated this research paper. There are syntactic similarities between both English and Hausa. The paper investigates film discourse from a syntactic analysis perspective, focusing on emphasis in Hausa sentence structure change. The research work was transcribed and the data obtained analyzed based on Hausa phrase structure rule. The study discovered elements of English sentence structure in the discourse of Hausa films which changes its phase in the study of Hausa language.

Keywords: Hausa, Kannywood, syntactic structure, film discourse.

Introduction

Language is the means of communication; the discourse we create emerged to become bedrock of everything that we do. In all languages, sentences are structured to form the discourse, therefore there are certain specific ways speakers of a language create and produce sentences. Films discourse represents certain sentences which are novel sentences. The syntactic analysis of such discourse can reveal certain changes to the concept of Hausa

syntactic aspect as examined to have some element of English syntax. This work analyzes Hausa film discourse to unveil the interesting features of sentences as enclosed in such discourse using phrase structure rule with the aim to find out the dialogue structure.

However, Syntax is a system of rules and principles that describe how we organize words into phrases and phrases into larger units, the largest being the clause (Denham & Lobeck: 2013). Syntactic analysis is also known as parsing, is the process of analyzing string of symbols (like words in sentences) to determine its grammatical structure according to the rule of a formal grammar. Syntactic analysis also is an analysis that focuses on understanding the logical meaning of sentences or parts of sentences (Ibid). Therefore in this paper syntactic analysis its purpose is to understand the structure input text of Hausa film dialogue as it is used in some Hausa films.

Films are cultural artifact created by specific cultures as part of entertainment. They reflect those cultures, which in turn affect them. Film is considered to be important art form, a source of popular entertainment and a powerful medium for educating or indoctrinating citizens (Wikipedia 2013). In Hausa society film served as an aspect of globalization from the perspective of foreign culture and influence in Hausa film. The idea of these new changes remains questionable in the existing culture. Is the English structure replacing Hausa structure in Hausa film discourse? This question will be tasted in this paper to find out whether Hausa language is shifting toward English in some Hausa film discourse.

Literature review

Language is a central key to every activity we do. Hausa language is a very popular language spoken across the globe. The language is spoken in Northern Nigeria and other West African countries. Hausa language undergoes significant changes due to globalization, urbanization and language contact. Hausa film discourse, a reflection of the language's dynamic nature has also undergone transformation. Many scholars study language in many different perspectives. Some of those researches related to this topic are the following:

Adamu (2007), explores how Hausa films reflect and shape social reality. He analyses language use, themes, and cultural representation in Hausa films by highlighting their role in constructing social identity.

Chamo (2012), elaborates language use based on sociolinguistics perspective. How communication is changing using cultural script of Hausa language based on respect,

shyness, and courtesy. The research reflects so many changes in terms of Hausa language used in films.

Mohammad (2019), investigates linguistic features of Hausa language, focusing on phonology, morphology, and syntax. He identifies code-switching, loanwords, and language mixing as characteristic features.

Myers-Scotton (1993), examines social motivations for code-switching in African languages including Hausa. She explains language contact, social identity and language dynamics.

Newman (2000) provides a comprehensive grammar overview of Hausa language structure, including syntax, morphology and phonology.

Galadanci (1976), Bagari (1987), Yalwa (1995), Zarruk (2001), Sani (2007), Yusuf (2011) all (these scholars) explain different aspects of syntactic structures in Hausa language that guide the present (paper) research. Also there are limited studies on syntactic structure of Hausa film discourse which this paper wanted to cheap in the gap using the phrase structure grammar as provided by Chomsky (1957, 1965).

Methodology

The study employed a qualitative research design, specifically a discourse analysis approach to investigate the syntactic structure of Hausa film discourse. Random sampling technique was used to select 10 Hausa films from various DVD collections and online platforms. The films were chosen to represent a range of genre, including drama, comedy, and romance. The selected films were watched and the dialogue transcribed verbatim, focusing on dialogue segment. The transcriptions were of the original Hausa language. The transcribed data collected were analyzed using Hausa phrase structure grammar, focusing on sentence structure and phrase structure patterns using the tree diagram analysis. The analysis aimed to identify patterns and variation in sentence pattern.

Data analysis

Borrowed sentences

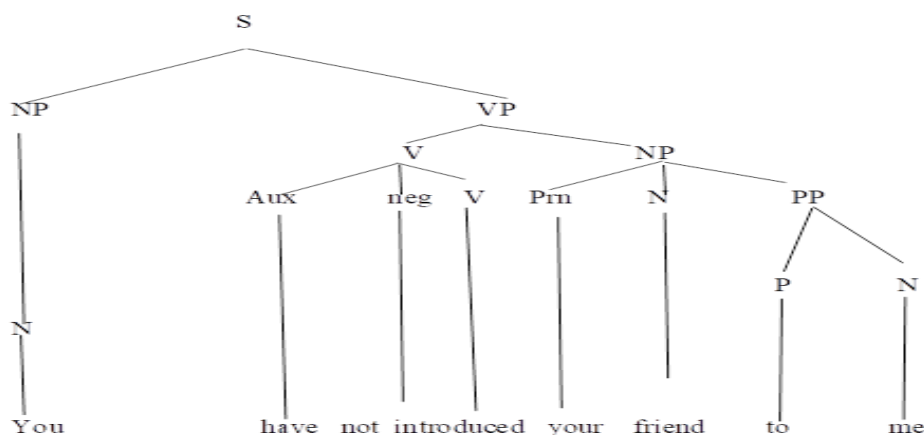
‘Sometimes, in Hausa film discourse, English sentence pattern or phrases are borrowed and translated into Hausa. In the process, the original Hausa structure is altered, and instead of

using traditional Hausa sentence structures, new versions or different structures are created through transformations as it can be seen from the example below.’ Waya (2021)

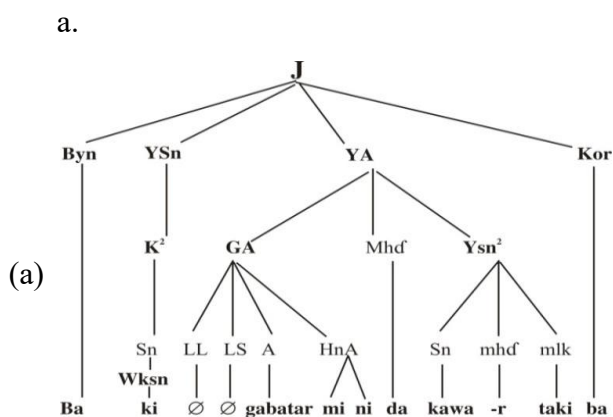
Hausa Film

1. Faisal: Ba ki gabatar mini da qawar taki ba.

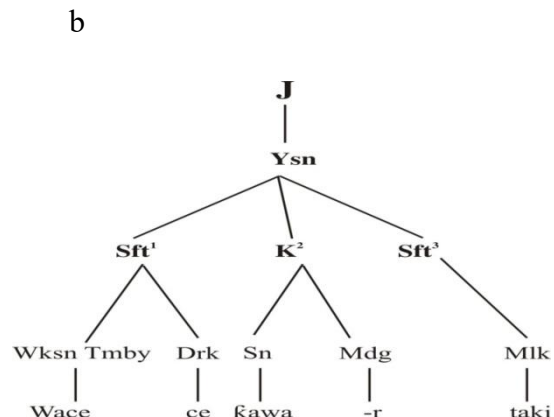
↓ ↓ ↓
 You have not introduced your friend to me.



The above sentence is an English sentence tree structure which was used in Hausa film dialogue using Hausa language instead of using Hausa sentence as “Wace ce qawar taki?” in form of question. This explains that, the construction of the sentence is based on English language direct translation as explain by Newmark (1988) as word to word translation. Therefore, if the two structures are presented in tree diagram structure it will give the following structures (a) and (b) below. The first structure is more of English structure created by the film dialogue which gives another form of Hausa sentence structure unlike the structure of actual Hausa sentence structure (b).



Created English translated dialogue of Hausa sentence in tree diagram.



The correct Hausa dialogue in tree diagram.

Example 2

Borrowed sentences

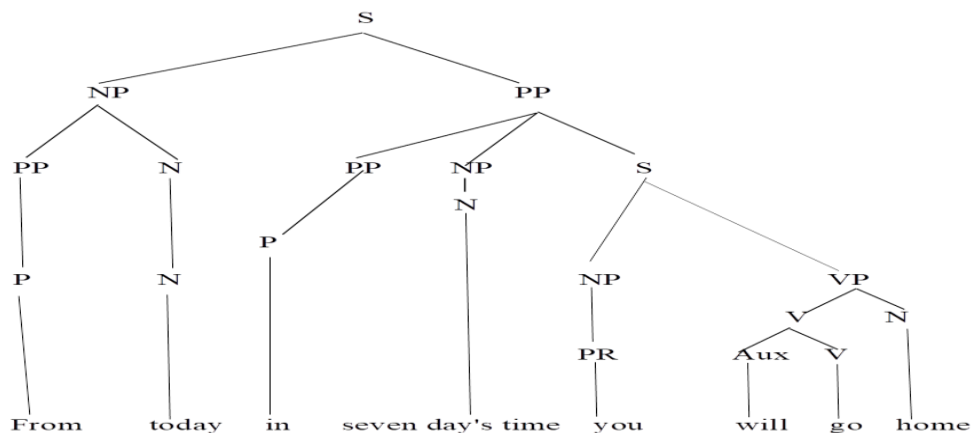
Another example of Hausa film discourse, as we can witness in the following example “Daga yau ki faaraa kirga kwana bakwai zaa ki tafi gida”. The Hausa verb phrase takes the form of the English verb phrase. The English verb phrase contains an auxiliary verb and a main verb. This sentence pattern was borrowed and translated into Hausa.

Hausa Flim

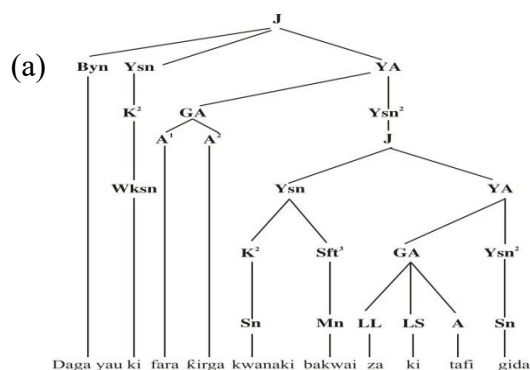
(3). Nas : Daga yau ki fara kirga kwana bakwai za ki tafi gida.

↓ ↓ ↓

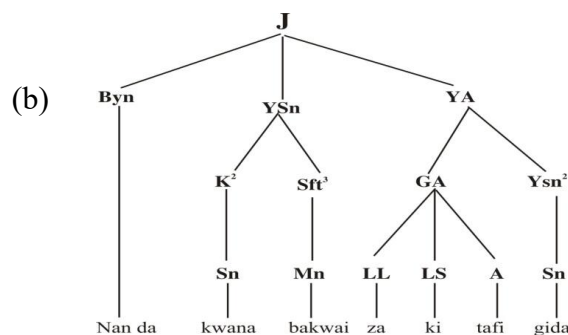
From today, in seven days' time, you will go home.



The above example as the way the dialogue is presented in Hausa is exactly the same way of English sentence. The Hausa dialogue version supposed to be the corrected sentence statement in standard Hausa direct and precise “Nan da kwana bakwai za ki tafi gida” the tree diagram of the two sentence (a) and (b) below shows the differences of the created dialogue with English sentence structure (a) and the correct Hausa dialogue in Hausa sentence structure (b).



Created English translated dialogue of Hausa sentence in tree diagram.



The correct Hausa dialogue in tree diagram.

Borrowed phrases

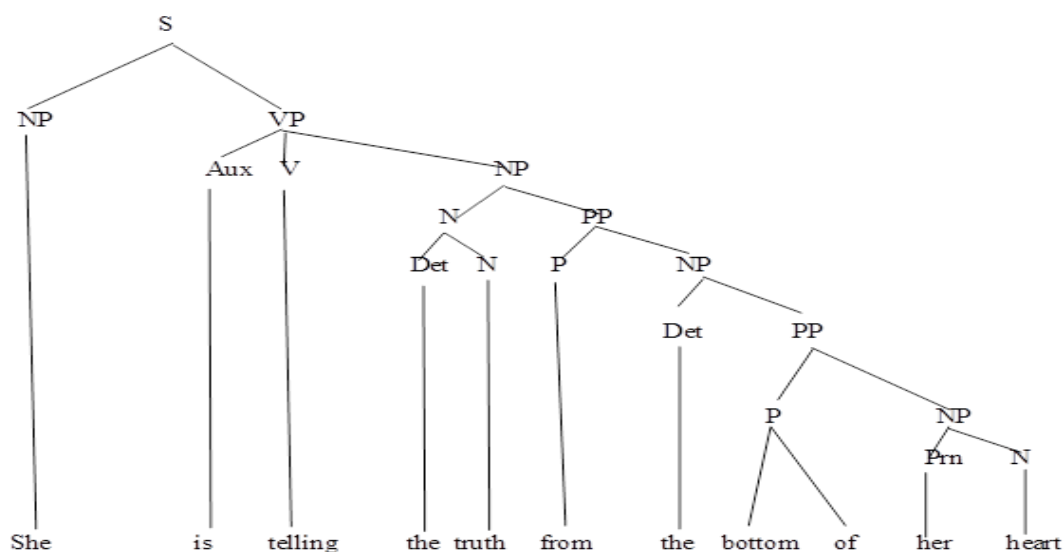
Phrase is part of a sentence that constitutes only a constituent. In film discourse, apart from borrowed sentences, there are also borrowed English phrases into Hausa film dialogue. Consider the English phrases translated directly into Hausa:

Hausa Film

3. Fidi : Gaskiya take gaya maka *harkarkashin zuciyarta*

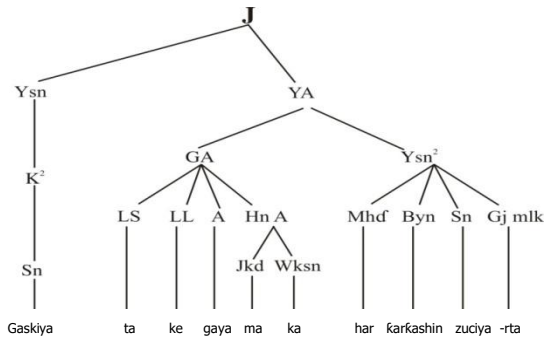


She is telling you the truth *from the bottom of her heart*



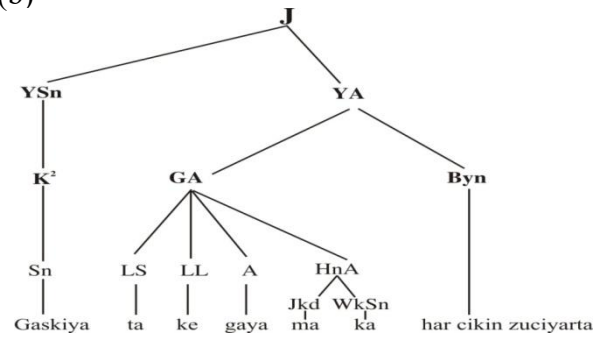
Harkarkashin zuciyarta is the direct English phrase “From the bottom of her heart”. The correct dialogue in Hausa sentence structure is “Gaskiya take gaya maka har cikin zuciyarta.”

(a)



Created English translated dialogue of Hausa sentence in tree diagram.

(b)



The correct Hausa dialogue in tree diagram.

Example 4

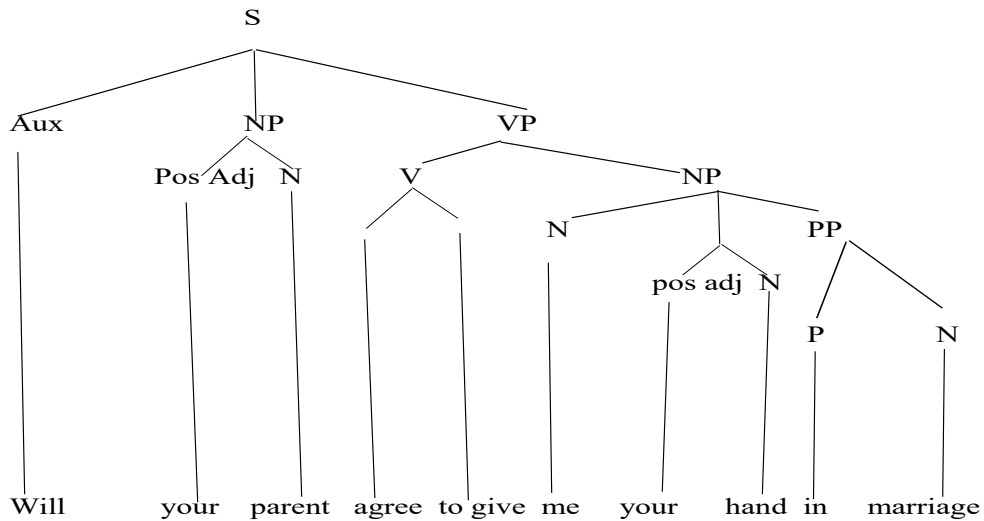
Borrowed phrases

Hausa Film

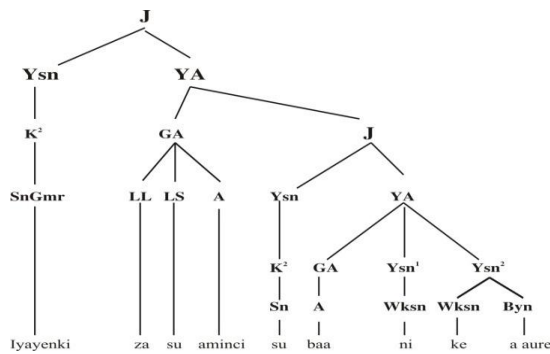
4. Jabir: Iyayenki za su amince su ba ni ke aure?



Will your parents agree to give me *your hand in marriage*?

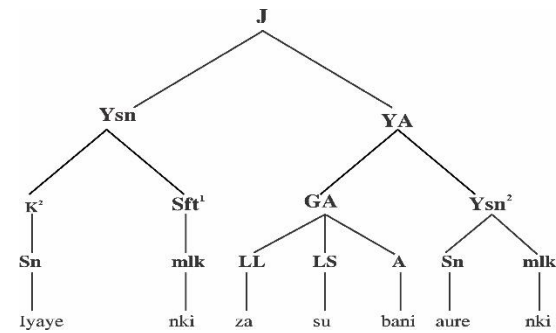


(a)



Created English translated dialogue of Hausa sentence in tree diagram.

(b)



The correct Hausa dialogue in tree diagram.

There are other ways to translate the sentence “Will your parents agree to give me your hand in marriage?” into Hausa. They include the following:

- (a) Iyayenki za su yarda mu yi aure?
- (b) Iyayenki za su aura mini ke?
- (c) Iyayenki za su bani aurenki?

In the above explanations in the process of analyzing the examples we extracted in the film discourse we discovered the frequency of English sentence structures in Hausa film discourse. The tree structure of the Hausa rendition English version of the film discourse and the structure of the created Hausa version looks more similar than the original version of Hausa tree structure of the Language. Another findings is that, there are possible transformation of Hausa sentence structure to another patterns created by film discourse. The implication of English sentence in Hausa film discourse can be as a result of possible reasons for the shift: globalization, cultural influence and language contact (Chamo: 2012).

Conclusion

This paper analyses syntactic structure of Hausa film discourse, focusing on sentences and phrase structure borrowing from English. The study revealed significant English influence on Hausa sentence structure resulting in new version of Hausa sentence structure adopted by English translated version

1. Changes in traditional Hausa sentences film dialogue.
2. Modification on phrases structure of Hausa film dialogue.
3. Emergences of new grammatical construction of Hausa film sentence dialogue.

Recommendations

To maintain linguistic authenticity and cultural sensitivity, Hausa filmmakers should:

1. Collaborate with language experts for editing and training the film crew.
2. Consult educationist and Hausa culture and tradition experts for guidance on thematic content.
3. Incorporate language and cultural workshops in film production process.

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