

SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF HAUSA EXPRESSIVE TABOOS

Sadiq Nurudeen Abubakar, Mustapha Abdulhamid Baba, Abraham Areo David, Akase Tiav Thomas

Department of Languages and Linguistics,

Nasarawa State University, Keffi

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Abstract

This paper focused on the Sociolinguistic Analysis of Hausa Taboos. The paper adopted qualitative method of data gathering which includes primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected based on administering structured interview with the Hausa native speakers and the secondary data were gathered from the examination of the existing Hausa literature, online sources, journals, seminars and dissertations. This paper classified Hausa taboos investigated, into the following: disability taboos, profanity taboos, scatological/obscenity/sexual taboos, abuse/insult taboos and death taboos. It was discovered that taboo words exist in Hausa communities and the Hausa speakers express taboo words in their socio-cultural interactions. The findings reveal that taboo words expressed among Hausa speakers are considered offensive, prohibited, restricted, disallowed, unlawful, embarrassing, provocative, shameful, shocking, traumatizing and hurtful. Also, the paper revealed that Hausa taboos are products of Hausa culture, traditional religion, belief and tradition of the people in their socio-cultural interactions.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Taboo and Hausa.

Introduction

Language is a concept that is universally recognized as a system that identifies the ethnic background of people who emanate from different spheres of life as inhabitants of a particular community in an organized society. No one can separate language and society. It is the society that ensures the particular environment or an ecosystem where people inhabit to interact with one another through communication. It is language that symbolizes the art of communication between a speaker and respondent.

One of the best gifts man is endowed with is that of language, which is used to communicate with one another in a community (David & David, 2020). Without language, communication is threatened and without communication, life becomes tasteless and meaningless. The study of language, otherwise known as linguistics, has evolved significantly from ancient philosophical discussions about the nature of language to contemporary approaches that use scientific methods (Shadwy, 2023).

The primary uses of language are informative, expressive and directive in nature. Language is used to reason, to express ideas, argue a point, provide directions and much more (Sasha

and Summer, 2023:2). However, Levinson (2016:10) states that “most language usage is interactive, involving rapid turn-taking. The turn-taking system has a number of striking properties: turns are short and responses remarkably rapid, but turns are varying in length and often of very complex construction such that the underlying cognitive processing is highly compressed. Language is also a tool fashioned by man. Given the nature of his innate endowment, it is one of his most sophisticated tools. Parikh (2001:1), states “we use language to do various things, like giving command and asking questions and expressing feelings, but we use it mostly to communicate information about the world. Language use is central to our social interaction; in the view of Evans (2014:6), “language is central to all our lives and is unarguably the tool that set humans apart from any other species. And on some accounts, language is the symbolic behavior that allows human singularities – art, religion and science – to occur”. Evans (2014), reiterates that we use language to buy groceries in the supermarket, to get a job, to hire or fire an employee, to buy train tickets and to compose an email. We use language to make a telephone call, to flirt, to invite someone out on a date, to propose marriage, to get married,

to quarrel and to make up afterwards. Language use allows us to make friends and enemies, to pass the time of the day, and so on. In our everyday lives, we produce and comprehend language with such apparent ease that we take it for granted.

Al-HeijEid (2020:5), states that “the term ‘sociolinguistics’ refers to the study of language regarding the social context used in society.” Sociolinguistics emerged as a sub-field of Linguistics in the mid-20th century, emphasizing the importance of social and cultural factors in shaping language use and variation. This approach highlighted the role of social context, power dynamics, and identity in language, and has had a significant impact on our understanding of language change, language policy, and language planning. Sociolinguistics is a study of language where linguistic factors are related to the factors beyond the language, such as ‘language use’ by its speakers in a certain speech community. It is concerned with the relationship between language and the context in which it is used. In other words, it studies the relationship between language and society. It discusses the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning and the way people signal aspects of their social identity through their language.

In the opinion of Sulpizio, et al., (2024:1), “the use of taboo words represents one of the most common and arguably universal linguistic behaviors, fulfilling a wide range of psychological and social functions.” Taboos are among the few cultural phenomena that have withstood the test of time, as all tribes and ethnic groups of the world have their taboos which are drawn from their cultural environments. This study is based on the speakers of Hausa society and the context in which Hausa speakers use taboo expressions to communicate and interact with each other. Hausa is one of the major languages in Nigeria. It is spoken in the Northern states which include: Kano, Katsina, Kaduna, Jigawa, Bauchi, Sokoto, Zamfara and so on (Alkali, 2024). Thus, the term “context” as used here, depicts the situations that determine the use of taboo language to communicate effectively among Hausa speakers. This study is therefore, concerned with carrying out a sociolinguistic analysis of Hausa Taboos.

Conceptual Explication

Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the study of language and society. It is important to know that there is a relationship between society and language. Society is concerned with the environment where people live, socialize, interact and communicate. Based on this fact therefore, (Wardhaugh 2006:13) states:

Sociolinguistics is concerned with investigating the relationship between language and society with the goal being a better understanding of the structure of language and how language functions in communication; the equivalent goal in the sociology of language is trying to discover how social structure can be better understood through the study of language, for example; How certain linguistic features serve to characterize particular social arrangement.

According to Hudson (1996) as cited in Wardhaugh (2006:13), sociolinguistics is the study of, “language in relation to society; whereas the sociology of language is the study of society in relation to language.”

Sociolinguistics as rightly described above, is an integral element of linguistic research, though not part of the formal linguistics; being phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. It is an area of theoretical linguistics that is critically concerned with how language is conceived and communicated among speakers of given speech communities. If you talk of speech community, the researcher is optimistic that language is an instrument that symbolizes identified culture and practice of speakers; and the society is a reflection and mirror of language. So intrinsically, speakers of language must have liberty to exist within their communities, interact and interrelate with one another.

Language Use

Language use is an aspect of sociolinguistics. It is remarkable to say that language is used to express ideas, feelings, emotions and desire by the speakers. It is through the use of

language that speakers were able to interact with each other in order to achieve certain goals set out in their society. In Agustine, Luardini and Asi, (2021:1), “the use of language can be part of the ethnographic discourse of communication to examine the relationship between language and society, and how multi-lingual speakers use language in their discourse community environment.” Having expressed some discourse about language use however, Kashima (2024), posits that “humans have the capacity to use complex language far more than any other species on earth.” We cooperate with each other to use language for communication; language is often used to communicate about and even construct and maintain our social world.

Language use and human sociality are inseparable parts of Homosapiens as a biological species. Levinson (2016) states, “most language usage is interactive, involving rapid turn-taking. The turn-taking system has a number of striking properties. Turns are short and responses are remarkably rapid, but turns are of varying length and often of very complex construction such that the underlying cognitive processing is highly compressed.” In a more clarification about language use, Hastings (2006), states that, “what seems clear is that language usage in non-literate societies is far more fluid than might be imagined. It is less a matter of guiding the right word than of making it right by regular usage. Existing words had the flexibility of all languages.

Language and Society

Language in relation to society is a subfield of sociolinguistics that is concerned with sociology and language. It is an area of theoretical linguistics that critically examines speakers' use of language and the extent that community and people exist, communicates between one speaker to another and postulates an active involvement of communicative competence and performance which formed the foundation that ensured interaction, interrelationship among people in their domain, following the proposition that preceded this. However, (Satria, Juralhan, Wahab, & Permatasari 2014:1), states that:

So like we knew that function of language in general as social

communicative; while in a quest to infer more about language and society as an umbrella variable of sociolinguistic approach.

Language and society as interpreted by (Australian National University, 2022) categorically stated that:

As important for anyone who wants to understand the ways in which languages function in their social context. It provides students with skills for carrying out research in sociolinguistics, including collecting, describing and interpreting sociolinguistic data and ethnographic participant observation.

Reporting and describing research findings will also be covered. It may however interest you to know that language and society intensify as a primary level or segment of sociolinguistic research where it lays a basic structure that subsequent researches on sociolinguistics would be built on; it is most relevant of the perspectives that concerns this subject of investigation where its help interprets some issues that would be translated in due course.

Taboo

According to Khairullina, Fatkullina, So, and Lin (2020:2), “taboo is a system of ancient prohibition of religious and ceremonial attitudes that characterize a certain stage of social development of people. The system of sacred prohibitions from ancient centuries was widespread not only among the people of Polynesia, but also India, North America, China and Egypt. Later it was formed among the people of the ancient world - in ancient Greece and ancient Rome. As world religion have arisen, the sacred prohibitions were developed by theologians in Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Confucianism and Buddhism.” Ullman, (1970:9), cited in Khairullina et al, (2020:3), posits that “language taboos arise mainly for the following reasons: firstly, it is necessary to note the cases of taboos which owe their appearance to a sense of fear or ‘sacred horror’...religious restrictions on the mention of the name of God; the cases when superstition avoids calling by their names, the

dead, devil, evil spirits and widespread taboos relating to the meaning of animals.

Tapu is practiced in various forms across Polynesia, from new Zealand to Hawaii, and is believed to be the origin of the English word ‘taboo,’ while according Johanson, (2020), the British explorer, James Cook, “first noting the concept on a visit to Tonga in 1777; while tapu is a divine mandate controlling a society’s access to certain people, places or things (with potentially dire consequences for those who transgressed in historical times.” Taboo is similarly used in English to describe practices that are either forbidden or restricted by social or religious customs. On Eastern Islands, the respect locals have for their archeological sites is a noticeable example of tapu. However, other forms of tapu – including prohibitions on fishing during spawning seasons have been lost over the last 50 years as the Island adapted to meet the needs of international tourists. On the other hand, the origin and cultural evolution of taboos in human societies has been clearly stated by Hong (2024), “Taboos are ubiquitous in human social life, and play a particular prominent role in traditional small-scale societies, where they serve as powerful tools to regulate human action.

Rahmayani and Fitrawati (2018), state that there are many experts who have done research about taboo words. For example, the research from Jay (1996) and Battistella (2005), who have proposed about types of taboo words. According to Battistella (2005), “there are four types of taboo words; they are: epithets, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity.” In addition, Jay (1996) also states that there are nine types of taboo words; they are: “obscenity, profanity, vulgarity, epithets, blasphemy, cursing, slander, insult and slur, and scatology.”

Research Methodology

Taboos expressing disability

i.	<i>kur ma</i>	<i>wandabayajinmagana</i>
ii.	<i>bebe</i>	<i>wandabayafadinmagana</i>
iii.	<i>makaho</i>	<i>maragani</i>
iv.	<i>gurgu</i>	<i>nakasa she</i>
v.	<i>kuturu</i>	<i>cutarhanu da kafa</i>

The study is descriptive and employs qualitative research design. Two principal sources were adopted for data collections which include: primary sources and secondary sources. For the primary sources, an oral interview was conducted with the Hausa native speakers as well as the researcher’s intuition which helped in obtaining data for the study. Participant observations were also used in the course of gathering of the Hausa native speakers’ expressive taboos at the mosques, marriage ceremonies, family unit activities, motor parks, hospital setting, grave yards, school setting, cultural festival, naming of newborn baby ceremony, religious festival, and so on. The population of the study comprised of the entire Hausa speakers of Northern States and the researcher selected participants that are relevant to this study from Kano, Katsina, and Sokoto States in North West, Nigeria. The researcher made use of an OPPO A3x Android Device to record the interview interaction with the native speakers, and a notebook to write all expressed taboos from the expressions of the Hausa native speakers.

Other primary sources include: Mutumma’auinal’adagadanfedeal’ada Hausa textbook, Za:r – English-Hausa Dictionary, and Kamus Hausa Dictionary. The secondary sources of data collection include: online research sources, dissertations, journals, seminar papers, and theses. However, the researcher collected five hundred (500) Hausa expressive taboos from the native speakers which are then classified based on the sociolinguistic and pragmatic context of language use in the Hausa communities. The interactional sociolinguistic theory developed by Gumperz, (1982) and the linguistic politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) were descriptively used in the analysis and interpretation of data generated from the taboos language of Hausa.

Data Presentation and Analysis

‘deaf person’
‘dumb’
‘blind person’
‘cripple’
‘leprosy’

kur ma ‘deaf’, refers to a taboo expression where a Hausa speaker is socially impaired in which the person cannot hear communication extended to him. It is a disability that affects the Hausa people which may be congenital or accidental. Uttering this taboo word between a speaker and responder in a sociolinguistic context of communication is considered offensive and epithet and should be avoided.

bebe ‘dumb’, refers to a taboo expression which is a social impairment affecting the Hausa speaker. The disability could be of natural cause or accidental where a person cannot be able to express himself in the course of interaction with another. Uttering this taboo expression between an addresser and addressee in a sociolinguistic context of communication is considered offensive and epithet and should be avoided.

makaho ‘blind’, refers to a taboo expression which is a social impairment affecting a Hausa speaker where the affected person is unable to sight things around him. The disability could be of natural cause or accidental. Uttering this taboo expression between an addresser and addressee in a sociolinguistic context of communication is considered offensive and epithet and should be avoided.

gurgu ‘crippled person’, refers to someone who cannot walk; could be of natural or accidental cause. Uttering such taboo words between a speaker and listener in a sociolinguistic context of communication is considered offensive and epithet and should be discouraged.

kuturu ‘leper”, refers to a chronic disease of the skin, nerves and mucous membrane.. The disability could be of natural cause or accidental. Uttering this taboo expression between an addresser and addressee in a sociolinguistic context of communication is considered offensive and epithet and should be avoided.

urma ‘deaf’: one can replace it with (i) *wandabayajinmaganam* ‘someone with hearing deficiency’ among Hausa speakers. It is a disability that occurs naturally or by accident. Uttering this taboo word between a speaker and responder in a pragmatic context of communication is considered offensive and euphemism should be used to mitigate the taboo expression and ensure that communication is used politely and seamlessly in the Hausa community.

bebe ‘dumb’: can be replaced with (ii) *wandabayafadinmagana* ‘someone with speech impairment’ among Hausa speakers. It is a disability that occurs in people naturally and constitutes a social impairment which renders the speaker to be very vulnerable in terms of social interaction. Uttering the taboo word between addresser and addressee in a pragmatic context of communication is considered offensive and euphemism should be used to replace the taboo expression and ensure that communication is polite and smooth in the Hausa community.

makaho ‘blind’: can be replaced with (iii) *maragani* ‘a person with sight impairment’ among the Hausa speakers. It is a disability that affects the Hausa speaker as a result of natural cause or accidental. The social impairment of this nature usually renders the victim vulnerable and creates social segregation. Uttering the said taboo word between an addresser and addressee in a pragmatic context of communication is considered offensive and euphemism should be used to replace the said taboo expression in order to mitigate the offensiveness and ensure that communication is channeled successfully among the Hausa speakers in their community.

gurgu ‘crippled person’: can be replaced with (iv) *nakasashe* ‘disabled person’ among Hausa speakers. It is a social disability that renders the person unable to walk in order to meet up with social challenges; as such, the affected speaker is rendered vulnerable and faces social inequality among Hausa speakers in the Hausa community. Uttering the said taboo word between addresser and addressee in a pragmatic context of communication is considered offensive and euphemism should be used to cushion the effect of the said taboo expression and ensure that polite and soft expression is communicated among the speakers in the Hausa community.

kuturu ‘leper’: can be replaced with (v) *cutar ‘hanu da kafa* ‘someone affected by disease of the skin, nerves & mucous membrane’ among the Hausa speakers. This social impairment constitutes a social distance between the affected person and others. The disability usually renders the victim vulnerable due to the stigma which causes the victim to resorts to begging in most cases in the Hausa community. Uttering the said taboo word between addresser and addressee in a pragmatic context of communication is considered offensive and

euphemism should be used to cushion the effect of the said taboo expression and ensure that polite and soft expression is communicated among the speakers in the Hausa community.

Taboos expressing profanity

i.	<i>kwa ran</i>	<i>kwasan aradu</i>	‘thunder’
ii.	<i>saddabaru</i>	<i>dabarazamba</i>	‘sorcery’
iii.	<i>tsum bur bura</i>	<i>shamus laljani</i>	‘idol / statue’
iv.	<i>bori</i>	<i>iskoki</i>	‘animistic spirit possession religion’
v.	<i>sur kulle</i>	<i>sirrinmagani</i>	‘incantation’

kwa ran kwasan ‘thunder.’ It is a rumbling sound with lightening that usually occurs when rain is falling. Hausa speakers believe in their traditional religion that when there is thunder, it means that something is wrong in the community. For a Hausa speaker to swear with thunder therefore, is considered a taboo when it is expressed by the speakers in their social interaction with each other.

saddabaru ‘sorcery.’ It is a diabolic power acquired among the traditional herbal Hausa speakers. This kind of diabolic power is used by some speakers to perpetuate evil against others which the community voids an act of sorcery and prohibits expressing such utterances among the Hausa speakers who are engaged in social interaction between a speaker and responder.

tsum bur bura ‘idol/statue.’ It is a spirit that resides on top of ‘gorondutse’ rock, which the traditional Hausa speakers believe in, as well as worship as their god. In the light of this, the Hausa community considers it as blasphemy for a Hausa speaker to call the name of their god disrespectfully in the course of social interaction between an encoder and a decoder.

bori ‘animistic spirit possession religion.’ It is an ancient traditional religious practice of the Hausa speakers. In the Hausa community, some Hausa speakers are spiritually devoted in worshipping a spirit using the act of ‘Bori’ to appease their lord. Those Hausa speakers who believe in that traditional religion consider any Hausa speaker who expresses unremarkable statement on their belief as a taboo and the religious followers restrict and prohibit such utterances in the course of social interaction between a speaker and a listener.

sur kulle ‘incantation’. Some Hausa speakers who believe in traditional medicine practice in the Hausa community usually prohibit and disallow communicating about spiritual healing done for some speakers. They consider it as taboo, revealing the secret spiritual issues in a public discuss between a speaker and responder.

kwa ran kwasan ‘thunder,’ can be replaced with (i) *aradu*: The pragmatic context of this expression is euphemism, since “thunder” is not a polite expression that is acceptable among the Hausa speakers the needs to cushion the effect of the taboo harshness in order to make communication to be seamless between the speaker and the listener.

saddabaru ‘sorcery,’ can be replaced with (vi) *dabarazamba*: This taboo expression has been replaced with euphemism in a pragmatic context. This symbolizes that “sorcery” as a taboo is a magical and diabolic means expressed by Hausa speakers, but the euphemism cushions the effect of the taboo expressed against the law of the community and perhaps enhances a seamless communication between encoder and decoder in the community.

tsum bur bura ‘idol/statue’ (xii) *shamus laljani*: This Hausa taboo expression has been replaced by a euphemism in a pragmatic contest. The euphemism, “Shamus laljani” implies that the Hausa speakers should express the name of the spirit which the community is serving as spiritual lord; mentioning its name must be respected as sanctity of a secret.

bori ‘animistic spirit possession religion,’ can be replaced with (vii) *iskoki*: The Hausa expressive taboo here is replaced with a euphemism in a sociolinguistic context. The expressive taboo implies practice of Hausa speakers’ cultural and religious devotion. The use of the euphemism replaced the harshness of the taboo expressed.

sur kulle ‘incantation,’ can be replaced with (ii) *sirrinmagani*: The Hausa expressive taboo here has been replaced with euphemism, pragmatically. The taboo expressed indicates mystical practice of the Hausa tradition. For a Hausa speaker to express such kind of taboo is against the cultural law and practice. But replacing such expression with euphemism has refined communication between the speaker and the responder.

Taboos expressing scatological/obscenity/sexual

i.	<i>zuwànkáì</i>	<i>kawowa</i>	‘discharge’
ii.	<i>kazanta</i>	<i>datti</i>	‘trash’
iii.	<i>jinibiki</i>	<i>jininaihuwa</i>	‘maternity blood’
iv.	<i>wadiyi</i>	<i>farinruwa</i>	‘white fluid from man private part’
v.	<i>luwadi</i>	<i>saduwannamiji da namiji</i>	‘gay’

zuwànkáì ‘discharge.’ The Hausa expressive taboo here has been expressed by the Hausa speakers in a sociolinguistic context of language use. The taboo word is a product of communication intensified in the course of social interaction between addresser and addressee. The taboo implies that a man having sexual satisfaction, releases sperm which the community considered such expression to be offensive in a public discussion.

kazanta ‘trash.’ This Hausa expressive taboo is a taboo that has been expressed by the speakers in a social interaction between a speaker and a listener, observing sociolinguistic context of language use. The taboo clearly implies filthy things which are considered offensive when expressed by Hausa speakers in the course of their social interaction.

jinibiki ‘maternity blood.’ The Hausa expressivetaboo presented here is a taboo expressed by Hausa speakers in a social interaction between an encoder and decoder, which has been spoken sociolinguistically. The taboo expressed symbolizes obscenity in the sense that a woman who delivers a newborn baby, the blood that flows with the delivery where the Hausa speakers prohibit and disallow expression of such kind of taboo word in a public communication domain.

wadiyi ‘white fluid from man private part.’ The Hausa expressive taboo is expressed by the Hausa speakers based on sociolinguistic context of language use. This intensifies a social interaction between an addresser and addressee in expressing the above taboo. In the Hausa community, this expressed taboo implies that a man who is aroused sexually usually discharge such fluid in a quest for satisfaction; as such, the Hausa community considers expressing such taboo word as offensive and unlawful in the course of social interaction in the community.

luwadi ‘gay.’ This Hausa expressive taboo is associated with men having sexual affairs with fellow men. The taboo has been expressed in a social interaction between an addresser and addressee, which observes sociolinguistic context in expressing such taboo, and the Hausa community dastardly condemns the expression of such topic and consider it offensive since it has conflicted with the community acceptable norms and values.

zuwànkáì ‘discharge,’ can be replaced with (iv) *kawowa*: This euphemism has replaced the taboo expressed by the Hausa speaker in a pragmatic context. The taboo expressed indicates that a man is aroused sexually and discharges sperm on top of a woman. In this regard, the community disapproves the above taboo expression; therefore euphemism has been used to replace the taboo word expressed in order to mitigate the offensiveness of the taboo word expressed by the speakers in the Hausa community.

kazanta ‘trash,’ can be replaced with (ix) *datti*: This Hausa expressive taboo is replaced with a euphemism in a pragmatic context of the Hausa language use. The taboo expressed by Hausa speaker explicitly indicate that the taboo is scatological and obscene in nature; therefore the communication that intensifies between a Hausa speaker and responder in a public discourse setting is offensive and prohibited since the utterance causes embarrassment.

jinibiki ‘maternity blood,’ can be replaced with (ii) *jininaihuwa*: This Hausa expressive taboo is replaced with euphemism in a pragmatic context of the Hausa language use. The taboo expressed by the Hausa speaker implies that a woman who has given birth to a baby releases blood profusely in the course of delivery. The Hausa community has prohibited and restricted the use of such taboo expression in social interaction between addresser and addressee, instead, they are encouraged to use the acceptable code which is euphemism in order to mitigate the harshness of the taboo expression.

wadiyi ‘white fluid from man private part,’ can be replaced with (v) *farinruwa*: This Hausa expressive taboo has been replaced with euphemism pragmatically. The taboo expression made by Hausa speakers communicate the fact that a matured man releases white fluid as a result of sexual arousal, which in turn, the Hausa community considers the use of such expression to be offensive in a social interaction between a speaker and responder; instead they are encouraged to use soft expressions to mitigate the use of taboo expressions in order to enhance face to face communication which is morally acceptable in the Hausa community.

luwadi ‘gay,’ can be replaced with (vii) *saduwannamiji da namiji*: This Hausa expressive taboo has been replaced with euphemism in a pragmatic context. The taboo expression represents a man having sexual affair with a fellow man. The Hausa community categorically considers expressing such taboo word unlawful and encourages the Hausa speakers when making expression in a public social interaction, should use euphemism in order to cushion the effect of the taboo expression to the listener, in order to ensure that communication is lawful and acceptable in the Hausa community.

Discussion of Findings

The study established that the taboo expressions by the Hausa speakers are unlawful, disallowed and prohibited. The study equally revealed that sociocultural classifications of Hausa expressive taboos have been established since the Hausa people believe and adhere strictly to their cultural and traditional practices which govern their existence as people and their traditional religion. Such sociocultural classifications of Hausa people as reflected in this study include: *bori*, *tsumbumbura*, *kofi*, *iskoki*, *camfi*, *kunya*, *surkunle*, *tsafi*, *tada*, *kandun baka*, *asiri*, among others. All the sociocultural classifications of taboo expressions in Hausa mentioned above are categorized according to their usage among the Hausa speakers. Bori and tsumbumbura are the ancient traditional religious practices which the Hausa people practice; they are mainly spirits and statues which the Hausa speakers worship and others are majorly cultural beliefs and practices as captured in the daily lives and transactions of the Hausa people in their community.

The findings of this study agree with Garba, (2019) that asserts that taboo is avoided for the fear that both accidental breach and intentional defiance are frowned at in the society, hence, violations result to wide condemnation. The study

found out that the Hausa taboos are secret, prohibited, restrictive, offensive, epithet, embarrassing, shameful, hurting, shocking, curse, avoidable, void, evil and so on. The study equally found out that taboos in Hausa communities were expressed based on the traditional religious denotation. They are acts of traditional religious connotations interpreted to be beliefs of the Hausa. Any attempt whatsoever to default or contravene the secret belief of the community is considered a taboo, such acts as related to profanity, blasphemy, curse, epithets, carthasis, provocation, shock, trauma, hurtfulness, shame and embarrassment.

The study discovered that Hausa expressive taboos are culturally inclined. The taboos that were expressed through Hausa are those taboos that were indigenous, attached to behavior, customs and traditions of the Hausa people. Communities based on their cultural values usually restrict, prohibit some acts and conducts of the indigenous Hausa people. Such prohibitions and restrictions imply that they have committed taboos by violating the law as enshrined on the cultural norms, values of the Hausa community. Such types of taboos that amount to cultural implications include disability taboos, profanity taboos, scatological/obscenity/sexual taboos, abuse/insult taboos, evil/devilish taboos,

animal/reptile/plant/tree taboos, disease taboos, family/kinship taboos, and so on.

The study also revealed that taboos in Hausa communities were structured and orientated on the belief system of the Hausa society. Belief is an emotional feeling that has built in the people through traditional practices and behaviors of the people, especially the elders, youths, males, females and other category members of the community, it continues to transcend from one generation to another. Some section of the community may consider such beliefs to be superstitious, some may consider them to be traditional religion and some may reflect the beliefs as part of the customs and traditions of the fore-fathers. In this connection, there are taboos associated with the belief of the Hausa people in evil/devilish taboos, crime taboos, abuse/insult taboos and so on. The study found out explicitly that there are taboos practiced among the Hausa people in their communities which deal with obscenity taboos, sexual taboos and scatological taboos. All the above-mentioned taboos are found to be done unconditionally at the Hausa communities. The study also revealed that Hausa expressive taboos made by the Hausa speakers are found to be offensive, hurting and shocking, like death taboos are shock to people whenever death-related taboos were mentioned publicly.

However, in the critical analysis of the taboos in line with the interactional sociolinguistic principles, revealed that Hausa taboos were products of their culture, as these taboos were expressed through the culture of the Hausa people. The basic principle of the interactional sociolinguistic theory was meaningfully interpreted through the culture of the Hausa people in their communities which these notions of the interactional sociolinguistic rules has been

established in this study. On the other hand, the linguistic politeness theory revealed that context has played a critical role where euphemism was adopted to replace the negative face which threatens the listener or hearer in the face to face interaction where the taboo expression has been replaced with politeness which implies the positive face in line with the principle of politeness theory. The study finally revealed that politeness mitigated the offensive, prohibited, restrictive, hurting, shocking, provoking, embarrassment, shameful, disgusting and so on, use of Hausa taboo expressions. They were replaced with soft, polite, acceptable, unrestrictive, non-prohibited, non-shocking and so on expressions and ensure that communication among the Hausa speakers became seamless, appreciative, meaningful and respectful.

Conclusion

The study indicated that Hausa taboo is a sociolinguistic phenomenon. It is imperative to note that taboo words are expressed in the culture of the Hausa people which shows that the taboo expression among Hausa people is a socio-cultural activity embedded in the customs, traditions and religious belief systems practiced in the Hausa communities. It is indispensable to reflect that in this paper, Hausa taboos are discovered to be unlawful acts which the Hausa communities consider as offensive, forbidden and provoking when sociologically used at the public domain where they are not supposed to be used. However, every language around the globe has its own peculiarity in the sociolinguistic context of taboo expression and use. The paper recommends that taboos can be studied pragmatically, that is, in terms of contexts by comparing taboos between different languages and understanding and expressing them in specific contexts.

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