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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is aimed at discussing the case study of the Gungawa people who speak Gunganchi language. It will note their general background, historical background, sociocultural profile, the genetic classification of Gunganchi language. This chapter will also discuss the scope and organization of study, the chosen theoretical framework, data collection, and the data analysis for this project work.

1.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

The Gunganchi people are a tribe that are also called the "Bareshe" people by their Hausa neighbours which means "Island Dwellers", it was told they were given this name due to their closeness to lakes and rivers. Among themselves, they are commonly called "Gungawa, Tsureja, Bareshe or Yaurawa" people. Their language has different names like: Gunganchi, Tsureshe, Gunga or Tsureja and the name given to their land is either Reshe or Gungu.

The present Gunganchi people are the tribe who fled to the nearby Island of Niger in the mid-nineteenth century and eventually settled in a new site called Gungu or Yelwa. The Gunganchi people are said to be the original inhabitants of Yauri.

During the British regime, the state of Yauri as an emirate and the state of Yelwa as the seat of the Emir of Yauri confirmed that both Yauri and Yelwa became Hausarized as a result of their contact with the Hausa people. Today, the Yauri people speak mostly Hausa language. The Gunganchi people lived in islets (very small islands) and shores of the Niger above Bussa until the creation of Kainji Lake in 1974 which disrupted their settlement and their living outside Kebbi State.

1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF GUNGANCHI PEOPLE

According to oral history, the Gunganchi people have different histories that have been narrated which are associated with their origin that will be discussed below.

In the nineteenth century, a descendant of a warrior called 'kasira' who is also known as 'Kachin' allied with the Hausa soldiers to conquer the territory in the extreme North who later settled with his co-fighters in the present Yauri town.

A native speaker of Gunganchi who is known as "Agmalafiya" believes that the Gunganchi people came from Kabbawa. He said they were hunters from Katsina State and further explained that some people said the Gunganchi people are from the other Yauri's ethnic groups which are Shangawa, Kambari, Kabbawa or Sarkawa, Dukawa etc.

Another history told us of their trace to the Songhai warriors who came from Mali to seek territorial control and they eventually settled in Yauri and parts of Lopa and Laru (Gunganchi's neighbouring areas).

From the histories narrated above, it is obvious that the Gunganchi people have no specific history concerning their origin. They are divergent in their historical roots.

1.2.1 Population

The Gunganchi people were about forty to sixty thousand in 1993. About thirty-five percent lived outside Yauri Local Government in Kebbi State, sixty percent lived in Yauri town, nine percent in Kotangora, Bussa and Borgu Local Government and one percent in Kiama Local Government Area in Kwara State.

Back to 1990, the population of the speakers in Yauri were referred to as Yaurawa or Reshewa in Hausa language. According to Agmalafiya who was mentioned earlier, the Gunganchi people were called Yaurawa by Queen Amina of Zaria but generally called Gungawa among the Gunganchi in Diaspora and sometimes call themselves Bareshe, which is the plural, or Ureshe, which is the singular.

1.3 SOCIOCULTURAL BACKGROUND OR PROFILE OF THE GUNGANCHI PEOPLE

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, culture is the way of life, the customs and beliefs, art and social organization of a particular country or group.

The Gunganchi people have a social and cultural profile that is similar to that of their neighbouring ethnic group, Hausa. It is said that their lifestyle is centered on the Emirate's system. The Gunganchi people have their sociocultural beliefs which are expressed in their culture, mode of dressing, occupation, religion, festivals, marriage system, naming ceremony, burial ceremony, their education system and political administration.

1.3.1 Culture

The Bareshe (Gunganchi) people are highly cultured which reflect in their mode of dressing, greetings, occupation and body adornment like decorating the woman's legs with tattoos and heavy tribal marks on her face during the wedding ceremony.

1.3.2 Mode of Dressing

The Gunganchi people's mode of dressing in the olden days is different from their dressing in these modern days. In the olden days, they used to dress in animal skin, while in these modern days, they dress in 'Banbariga' which is the traditional dress for men while the women dress in loose covered clothing with a local embroidery scarf which is tied around the woman's body to ward off the sun. They are mostly dressed in loose robe for relaxation.

1.3.3 Occupation

The Gunganchi people are mostly farmers and fishermen. Their major crops are guinea corn, beans, rice, and onions while the fishing equipment which is a fish cage is called 'Suru' and 'Hauwuya' in Gunganchi language. The people are also known for their canoe and mat making.

1.3.4 Religion

The Gunganchi people are mostly Muslims and few traditional worshippers and very little Christians.

1.3.5 Festivals

The festivals done in Gunganchi are called 'Anipo' festival and 'Idembe' Festival. The blood of animals like goat or bushmeat is used as sacrifices to their gods during the festival.

During the festival, a round seat is created by the people when eating. Such sittings are also formed at events like wedding, naming ceremony, sallah festival and a relaxation joint.

1.3.6 Marriage System of the Gunganchi People

The Gunganchi has a distinct way by which marriage is done. It shows a lazy man cannot marry any Gunganchi lady because marriage is said to be a bit difficult most especially for the men. Firstly, a man must inform his parents if he is in love with a lady. Then, the man's parents must make their son's interest known to the lady's parents.

He will then farm for the lady's family he intends to marry from before giving their consent. The farming duration is not specified, the man is said to stop the farming when the lady's father is satisfied and the final consent will be given to the man's family. The lady's family will then inform his relatives formally about their daughter's courtship with the man before the wedding date is chosen.

According to Muazu, the marriage or engagement ceremony is based on Islamic rites whereby the brideprice (Zadaki) will be paid. The bride will be decorated with tattoos on her legs and heavy tribal marks on her face.

Foods eaten at the ceremony are guinea corn pap, which is served in the morning and rice with fish soup and burukutu is served at dusk. Their sitting position is related to that of the festival's as mentioned earlier they sit round a dish of guinea corn pap on a mat, their sitting culture is the same with the Hausas. Hence, the Gunganchi people inter marry with the Hausas.

1.3.7 Naming Ceremony

The Gunganchi do their naming ceremony seven days after the child's birth and its hair will be shaved. Rice or guinea corn pap is served at the ceremony with people sitting round the food. Therefore, the child will be circumcised after ten years.

1.3.8 Burial Ceremony

Like most tribes, the Gunganchi celebrate the death of an aged person and mourn the death of a young person. They investigate sudden or unusual death by consulting the oracle called "Gigo" (true god) or "Ujigo" (a god of thunder and rain). The oracle will make the spirit of the deceased to revenge for his or her death by killing the person who is responsible for his or her death.

However, this practice is peculiar to the local or extreme Gunganchi people.

1.3.9 Education System

The Gunganchi value the Western education, they give education to both their male and female children. They have schools; they also make use of their personal houses as schools.

1.3.10 Political Administration

The Gunganchi adopted the system of their neighboring tribe (Hausa) which is the Emir's system because it is a multi-ethnic area that consists of Yelwa, Lopa, Yauri, Laru people which co-exist with them. The Emir's palace is situated in Yelwa, thus, the Gunganchi are the first settlers in Yauri. The appointed Emir is the ruler of all the ethnic groups under Yauri.

During the British regime, recognition was given to the Yauri emirate and Gungu (Island) district of the Yauri Local Government which are now the center of Reshe (Gunganchi) population. In the political administration of the Gunganchi people, succession is not by hereditary because the Emir must be appointed, despite the fact that a Gunganchi man was

the first Emir of Yauri. The Emir must have some qualities before he can be appointed, like; he must be an elderly person, famous and respected among the ethnic groups made up of Yauri.

When a new Emir is appointed, turbaning will be done as a sign of leadership. The Emir rules the territory with his local chiefs called "Sariki" in areas like Gungunsariki, Banha, Rekubolo, Toro, Zamari, Jalubabu etc.

Presently, the Local Government Chairman is responsible for the executive function of Yauri and other governmental activities are executed by the Kebbi State Government.

However, most of the Gunganchi people are bilingual, (they speak both Gunganchi and Hausa) but the majority speaks Gunganchi at home especially the youths. Thus, the language of the emirate is Hausa with high prestige.

1.4 GENETIC CLASSIFICATION OF GUNGANCHI

Genetic classification is the sub-grouping of all relevant languages into genetic nodes (group of languages in each of which one language is more closely related to the other in that group than to any language outside the group). The basis for genetic classification is the idea that group of languages that share certain systemic resemblances have inherited those similarities from a common origin.

Thus, genetic classification makes two statements. First, it affirms that certain languages are in fact related to each other (i.e. share a common ancestor). Second, it specifies how the languages are interrelated in the form of a branching diagram.

Gunganchi language falls under the Niger-Kordofanian language family.

African Language

Afro-Asiatic	Niger Kordofanian	Nilo Saharan	Khoisan		
Mande	New Benue Congo	Atlantic Volta Congo	Kordofanian		
Oko	Defoid	Kainji	Idomoid	Edoid	Wolof
Western Kainji				Eastern Kainji	
Kamuku	Kainji Lake Gunganchi (Gungawa)	Kambari	Bassa	Lopa	

1.5 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

This work is limited to the aspects of the phonology of Gunganchi language and it is divided into five chapters.

Chapter one deals with the introductory part, which includes the general background, historical background, sociocultural profile of Gunganchi people, genetic classification of Gunganchi language, scope and organization of study, data collection, data analysis and the review of the chosen theoretical framework.

Chapter two deals with the basic phonological concepts that involves the sound inventory of Gunganchi language whereby the tonal inventory and syllable inventory of the language of study shall be discussed and the sound distributions which includes distinctive features.

Chapter three is based on the phonological processes found in Gunganchi language. Then, chapter four will focus on the tonal and syllable processes of Gunganchi language. Chapter five will summarize and conclude the work.

1.6 DATA COLLECTION

In this research work, the method used for our data collection is the direct translation method from English language to the project language which is Gunganchi based on the badan 400 wordlist. There was a direct interview with the language helper, thus, data elicitation was carried out with the wordlist recorded on audiocassette.

Informant's Data:

Name: Corporal Labbo Alkali

Occupation: Soldier

Age: 40 years

Religion: Muslim

Languages spoken apart from Gunganchi: Hausa and English

Number of years spent in Reshe (Gunganchi): 20 years

1.7 DATA ANALYSIS

To ensure an accurate data analysis in this research work, all the data collected were carefully and correctly written, tone marked and transcribed. The data collected were used according to how the native speaker used them without imposing any extra rules or norms.

1.8 REVIEW OF THE CHOSEN THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework adopted for this research work is Generative Phonology, which was developed by Chomsky and Halle in the early 1950s; it is a component of generative grammar. This framework assigns the correct phonetic representations to 'utterances' in such a way as to reflect a native speaker's internalized grammar.

According to Oyeade (2008: 9), Generative Phonology is a theory which is built on the insight of taxonomic phonemics even while remodeling the focus of phonological analysis. The major motivation for this theoretical framework was the clash between theoretical assumptions and linguistic data under the theory of classical (taxonomic) phonemics.

Generative phonology took off at maximum speed in the 1960s, following the works of Chomsky and Halle (published in 1968 as "Sound Pattern of English (SPE)". This theory argues that the taxonomic approach of classical phonemics was not adequate enough to address appropriately the phenomenon of human speech.

The proponents of this new school of phonology suggest that an adequate theory of phonology must account for:

The phenomenon of language acquisition

The puzzling fact that man can still understand the speech of another even when this speech is defective; and

The native speaker's intuition about the physical make-up of the speech of his language.

1.8.1 The Structure of Generative Phonology

Generative phonology assumes three very crucial components: the underlying representation, the phonetic representation and the rules which link the two together that is called the phonological rules. These components will be reviewed below.

1.8.1.1 Underlying Representation

Oyeade (2008: 12) assumes underlying representation to be an abstract representation existing in the linguistic competence of the native speaker. The underlying representation is the most basic form of a word before any phonological rules have been applied to it.

Underlying representation shows what a native speaker knows about the abstract underlying phonology of the language. At this level, items with invariant meaning have identical representation. The underlying representation is also known as "the phonological representation", thus, the ability (competence) of a native speaker to compute a sentence is referred to as the phonological representation and this competence can be scientifically investigated.

There is an assumption of an underlying level where there is a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning and which is exactly the same from one competent speaker to another which explains the puzzling reaction of children in the acquisition process. Since the child shares the same competence (and therefore the same underlying representation) as the adult, it is reasonable to assume that the child will expect the same output as the adult will expect. The child may not be able to produce such an output since his production capability is slower in the acquisition process than his competence.

The assumption of an underlying representation which accounts for the rapid processing of defective input. Both interlocutors have a shared competence which is accurate and invariant; the decoder participant thus has a prototype with which he can restructure the defective utterance of the encoder.

Also, the underlying representation has the property of being encoded in "distinctive features" (these features will be discussed in the next chapter). This assumption is motivated by the fact that language seems to target these features in making its choices rather than

segments.

1.8.1.2 The Phonetic Representation

The phonetic representation is the form of a word that is spoken and heard. It is also known as "the surface level". Phonological structure reflects the linguistic competence of the native speaker to compute a phonetic representation for the potentially infinite number of sentences generated by the syntactic component of the grammar. We can say that there is no speaker of a language that has heard all the sentences in his language but speaker has the ability to understand any sentence heard.

Phonetic representation indicates how the lexical item is to be realized in speech. It is characterized by degree of narrowness such that, at the very least, any two sounds that are distinguished in any human language are differently represented.

Generative phonology seems to consider this level as being trivial and not worth too much attention except, perhaps as a source for the verification and justification of the proposed underlying representation.

1.8.1.3 Phonological Rules

Phonological rules map underlying representation onto phonological representations. They delete, insert, or change segments, or change the features of segments. They are said to show the derivational sequence or path of an item in its journey from the underlying level to the phonetic level. They must be able to capture the phonological phenomenon in the simplest form. There are two types of rules in phonological rules: feature changing rules and fill-in rules.

The feature changing rules change the features of the input to that of the output. However, the other kind of rules called fill-in rules are rules, as the name implies, which fill in empty slots.

Phonological rules have to be precise in a scientific account of linguistic phenomena. It was therefore suggested that the rules should have their own format. For instance, a rule can say insert a high front vowel between a cluster of consonants and we can have another rule which says insert a high front vowel after a word-final consonant. These rules can be formalized thus:

$\emptyset \rightarrow i/C ___ C$

$\emptyset \rightarrow i/C ___ \#$

As you can observe from the formalization of the two rules, they are identical in input and output. Furthermore, they have a lot of similarities in the environment. If the rules are left like this, that is, as two separate rules, the implied claim will be that these are two separate and distinct processes. This is intuitively incorrect and it loses a linguistically significant generalization. These two rules can then be collapsed into one and to capture the linguistically significant fact that we are dealing with the same process. Thus (a) and (b) can be combined as in (c) below:

$\emptyset \rightarrow i/C ___$

$\#$

that is, a high front vowel is inserted either between two consonants or after a consonant at word final position.

In phonological rules, notational devices are applied. They are conventions which make it possible to combine distinct but related phonological rules in a single statement; rules may be collapsed in this way only if they involve the same process. In other words, notational devices are abbreviation conventions aimed at reducing several rules into one. The purpose is to present more economically the facts of language.

There are notational devices like: brace notation ($\{\}$), angled bracket notation ($\langle \rangle$), variable features or alpha notation (α), multiple variable notation (a, b, \dots). The role of these devices is to make it possible for the phonologists to precisely and unambiguously state in rule form and the process that is taking place in language when a pattern is observed. Secondly, it makes linguistically significant generalizations and claims about the way

languageworks.

Finally, and perhaps most trivially, it provides a shorthand abbreviatory method by which a complex process can be captured as briefly as possible.

ASPECTS OF THE PHONOLOGY OF GUNGANCHI LANGUAGE

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