

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 GENERAL BACKGROUND

The main focus of this research work is on the aspects of Gunganchi question formation. This chapter aims at introducing the work by discussing some historical facts about the Gunganchi speakers and the language itself. The research method used for data collection is the informant method. Justification for the study as well as the scope of the work is also examined in this chapter. The chapter will also give information on the genetic classification of Gunganchi and attempt a brief review of our chosen framework, the Government and Binding theory.

Historical Background

Kebbi State, the home of Argungu international fishing and cultural festival came into being as a political entity on the 27th August 1991.

It was carved out of the former Sokoto State with its headquarters in Birni-Kebbi, tucked between the largely and landscape of Niger-republic to the west and Sokoto, Zamfara and Niger-State to the north, east and south respectively. Kebbi state spreads over a vast expanse of sahel vegetation of approximately 36,229 square kilometers representing 3.9% of the total land area of Nigeria and located between latitude 10° 8' N and 13° 0' N, longitude 3° 30' E and 6° 02' E. In this wonderfully endowed land, lives a population of 2,766,504 paroled people enamoured by a long winding history inspired by memories of spectacular accomplishment at present, the state is made up of four emirates (Gwandu, Argungu, Yauri and Zuru) which are further divided into 21 Local Government areas: Birni-Kebbi, Ngaski, Yaun, Sakabo, Danko-Wasagu, Zuru, Koko Besse, Dandi, Suru, Maiyama, Jega, Bunza, Bagudo, Arewa, Gwamdo, Argungu, Aliero, Fakari, Shanga and Kalgo. Due to its geographical location, Kebbi State provides two of Nigeria's gateways to the west African sub-region.

This unique position enhances cross border Socio-economic activities between the communities of the State. The State has delivered ethnic groups the dominant among which are Hausa, Fulani, Kabama, Dakar, Karis Gungawa e.t.c. The distribution of these ethnic groups shows that the Gungawa are foundation Yauri Local Government.

The Gungawa tribe is located in Yauri Local Government area of Kebbi-State, we have Hun-Saare and lopa languages both spoken in Yauri Local Government. Yauri Local Government has an estimated population of females and males. Females (36,709) males (38,209) total population is 74,916. They can only be found in Yauri Local Government, they have another name they call themselves "uresha" this name is only used by the nature speakers.

There are diverse histories that have been said about the descendants or ancestor of the Gungawa or Bareshe people which will be discussed later. Gungawa is an adopted name for the Bareshe people by their Hausa neighbours which means Island dwellers because they were surrounded by water, this description by the Hausa tends to show their geographical area. Among themselves they were known as Tsureja, Yaurawa or Bareshe people.

The name of the language are commonly called Gunganchi, Gunga Tsureshe, Tsureya, their land is called 'reshe' or Gungun. The Gungawa people are found mostly in the northern part of Niger State and around Islands in extreme Sokoto State a few of them were also in Kotangora area and a recent finding also affirmed that they were in Borgu Local Government and part of Kaunama Local government in Kwara State. This area speaks of the corrupt forms of Gunganchi language because of the distance to their origin for a long time.

The tribe Gungawa can be found in some part of the northern Nigeria. For example in Southern Kebbi State, Yauri Local Government, Western Niger State Borgu Local Government area. They can be found as well along river banks of Niger State (North of Bussa). The Gungawa people are original inhabitants of Yauri according to Muaza Baguda a native speaker of the town. A descendent of a warrior called Kisira or Kachin who allied himself with the Hausa soldiers to gain territory in the extreme North who eventually settled

with his co-fighters in present Yauri town.

Another history was traced to Songay warriors, who came from Mali to seek territorial control and their eventual settlement to Yauri and part of Lopa and Lury (Gungawa neighboring areas). According to Malafiya a native of Gungawa from Rekubolo area of Yauri believes that the reshe (Gungawa) people came from kabuwa that they were hunters from Kastina State, he further explained that some says that they are from Shagana, Kambari, Kabbawa or Sarkawa, DukKawa etc from these histories the actual place of origin is not clear and it remains debatable among the speakers, however, the Gunganchi language has a close relatedness with Lopa and Iaru people whose lexical items both share noun class and affixes.

1.1.1 Present Gunganchi

The Gungawa called themselves Bareshe and their language tsureshe. During the British regime, the status of Yauri as an emirate and of Yelwa as the seat of the emir of Yauri were confirmed. Both Yauri and Yelwa have become Hausarized as a result of contact with the Hausa people. The British created an emirate because of the multi-ethnicity of Yauri. However, the Gungu district of Yauri Local Government is now the centre of the Gungawa population. The Gungawa lives in islets and shores of the Niger above Bussa until the creation of Lake Kanji in 1974 which disrupted their settlement and living outside Kebbi State. The Gungawa people are about 40 to 60 thousand in population (1993). According to Agmalafia about 35% lives outside Yauri Local Government, in Kebbi State 60% lives in Yauri town 9% in Kotangora Bussa and Borgu Local Government respectively and 1% in Kiama Local Government area in Kwara State. The population of the speakers in Yauri are referred to in Hausa as Yaurawa or Reshewa (1900). According to Queen Amina of Zaria called them Yaurawa but generally they are called Gungawa among the Gungawa diaspora. They sometimes call themselves Basreshe (plural) uresha (singular). Those that live in riverside fields of onions and for the in canoe building and fishing along the Niger are called Soroko or Soroko they may have been related to the Baro of Mali, a Western made group who were professional fishermen, however, Soroko in Niger State now means professional fishermen with a phonological change of name Sorogo.

1.2 Socio-Linguistic Profile of The Gunganchi Tribe

Every community has its way of life the way people eat, what they wear, their mode of marriage, etc. differ in Yauri societies. The Gunganchi people; just like every community have their district culture and tradition. Gunganchi is a language spoken as a mother tongue in Yauri Local Government of Kebbi State. It has neighbouring tribes like Hunsare and Lopa and the host of Hausa and other tribes.

The Gungawa people live a life similar to the Hausa because of the long time contact with them only in the aspect of occupation they differ. The Bareshe people wear loose rope to relate with friends their market is an exhibition centre where mats canoes are sold. The Gungawa people are highly cultural people this reflects in their greetings, clothing and bodily adornment like heavy tribal marks on the women faces and leg tattooing during wedding ceremony.

1.2.1 Political Administration

They had to adopt the emirate system like their neighbouring Hausa because it is a multi ethnic area consisting of Lopa, Yauri Yelwa, land and people that co-existed with them. The palace of the emir is in Yelwa. The British gave the recognition of Yauri emirate. Gungu (Island) district of Yauri Local Government is now the center of the (Gungawa) population (Hogben 1966:225)

Succession is not by hereditary, the emirs are appointed (the first emir of Yauri is a Gungawaman) the emir must be elderly, famous and respected among the ethnic groups. The emir rules the territory with local chiefs are called Sariki in areas like Gungunseriki, Toro, Banha Zamari, rekubolo, Jalubaba etc.

However, Local Government chairman holds the executive function of the Yauri area and other Government works are executed by the Kebbi State Government. In Gunganchi Community, they appoint an elderly and respected person as king, they

come together and turban him with white and they take a local drink called 'burukutu' which is made from millet or Guinea com.

Clothing

Before, the present day of westernization and civilization, the Gunganchi people clothed themselves with animal's skin. The animal skin is used to sew different styles, the made skirts, shirts, trousers etc. they even went to an extent of carrying their young ones with animal skin for instance they use the animal skin to tie their babies at the back. But now they normally put on clothes, their men put on barbariga while the women tie wrappers.

Marriage

Presently, there are two kinds of marriage practices in Gunganchi land religion marriage (Islamic wedding and traditional wedding) but in the older days, it was basically Islam. Gunganchi people practice both the monogamous and the polygamous forms of marriage. If someone gives birth to a baby girl a man visiting the birth place can claim the girl that he is interested, so when she grows up the man and his family/parents will farm for her parents will do every thing to please them.

Moreover, the boy will go along with Guinea corn but no bride-price is needed but they weren't allowed to marry more than two wives then. The girl might be betrothed to the boy/man at any age. During the wedding both couples will put on animal skin but now they normally put on babanriga while the bride will tie wrappers.

ASPECTS OF QUESTION FORMATION IN GUNGANCHI LANGUAGE

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