

The Language of Hausa Films: Forging a New Discourse

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Abstract

The paper studies Hausa film language through the analysis of three communication strategies, namely proverbs, imperatives and forms of address. It shows that Hausa film creates a new discourse by reflecting modern and traditional Hausa society. The films preserve some accepted cultural norms of behavior and norms of communication in order to please the more conservative public. On the other hand, combination of traditional and modern Hausa lifestyle evokes changes in the discourse. The paper shows that proverbs are commonly used as communication strategy for indirectness, rather than a specialized language. It also discovers that imperatives are used as communication strategy in close relations between interlocutors (no matter what their social status is) to express the direct message. As for forms of address, traditional and borrowed terms reflect the changing style of life. The examples extracted from the Hausa films are to show how the regular grammatical and lexical means change their discourse function in new social context.

Keywords: Hausa, Films, Discourse, Proverb, Imperative, Forms of address

1. Introduction

Film discourse or what is commonly called “film text”, is of great significance in the study of social behavior and identity. It has attracted the attention of specialists and analysts of language and discourse who generally examine the topic from two perspectives. Formal linguists consider the discourse as a “particular unit of language above the level of sentence” while functionalists view discourse as “a particular focus on language use” (Schiffrin 1987:1). For the purpose of this research the functionalist view which is inseparable from the functional approach to the study of data, is employed. Our study follows Fasold (1990:65), who suggests that “the study of discourse is the study of any aspect of language use” and Brown and Yule (1983:1) who define the analysis of discourse as: The analysis of discourse is “necessarily the analysis of language in use. As such it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistics forms independent of the purposes of functions which these forms are designed to serve in human affairs”. Language data are therefore sources for theorizing about society, for, as Schiffrin (1994:31) following Fairclough (1989:23) suggest, “Language is part of society; linguistic phenomena are social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena are (in part) linguistic phenomena” (emphasis in original), (Schiffrin, 1994:31, following Fairclough 1989:23). According to this view, language and society are so interwoven that the analysis of language as an independent system would be insufficient.

Discursive analysis may also be related to communicative practices which manifest social stratification and the attitude of speakers to traditional values of the society. The conflict between traditional and modern way of life finds confirmation in the language variation. The differences are expressed not only in using strictly distinct languages or dialects, but also in variations on the same language. It leads to the conclusion that differences in other practices affect how language is expressed and understood (Heath 1982). Many scholars including Goffman (1981); Schiffrin (1987) and Fairclough (1989) share or hold the functionalist views on discourse and its special application to the study of identity which “refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relation with other individuals and collectivities” (Jenkins 1996: 4).

If it is accepted that a text constitutes a code for itself. It varies according to areas of communication, and it undergoes changes according to the purposes of communication which reflect the tendencies in lifestyle and accepted values. Film text is a specific code which both reflects public discourse and causes to change it (Fasold 1990 & Gumperz 1982).

The Hausa film is a relatively new phenomenon in the development of Nigerian media. Despite the unquestioned role of entertainment, it also creates new ways of speaking of presented topics and situations and shows new stories. It is therefore for these reasons that the language of Hausa films can be considered as discourse that may be analyzed in comparison with a communicative practice accepted in traditional Hausa society. Although Hausa discourse practices are well recognized by native speakers as strong and important factors of their cultural identity, studies on them remain few and far less developed while the functional application of some grammatical structures as well as strategies of conducting conversation in

Hausa are largely presented in teaching materials¹, conversation guides² as well as grammars³.

This paper examines Hausa film dialogues with regard to their relevance in marking cultural values that are also significant in determining people's identity within the Hausa society. New speech practices identified in dialogues are recognized as a manifestation of new values and a new lifestyle; at the same time they preserve the rules of communication that do not separate speakers from the society. In presenting the language, our focus will be on lexicon and phraseology, use of proverbs, grammatical forms (imperatives) and strategies of showing politeness.

2. Hausa Film Industry

Film production in Hausa land can be traced to the 1950s when the Northern Region Authority launched *Baban Larai* (1955) to mobilize and inform farmers on the importance of practicing commercial farming with emphasis on the production of ground nuts and cotton. In the subsequent years, more films on various themes were produced. The films produced from 1950 to 1989 were mostly sponsored by government (either at regional or state level). The first commercial Hausa video film, *Turmin Danya* (produced by Tumbin Giwa) was released in 1990. Since then, the production and distribution of Hausa home video has continued to grow on large scale.

Currently, it is estimated⁴ that there are over one thousand companies registered with Kano State Films Makers Associations alone, let alone other registered companies throughout the Northern Nigeria. The Hausa film industry is located mostly in Kano. For its scale and popularity it has gained the name "Kannywood", representing a regional film industry within Nollywood – Nigerian film industry.

3. Discourse Features in Film Language

Speech practices have a cultural background and a profound "cultural shaping" (Goddard 2006). In Hausa, language etiquette includes many conventional questions and responses that are part of culturally accepted communication (Ma Newman, Gimba 1998). Film language reproduces only some of these aspects that can be analyzed through the use of discourse theory. Especially, linguistic evidence extracted from dialogues refers to social stratification that is manifested in language use. As has been shown (Grudnik 2010), Hausa language significantly marks the distinction between superior and subordinate, male and female, higher and lower status.

3.1 Proverbs to Preserve Indirectness

Proverbs, figurative expressions that carry a "hidden meaning" are called *Karin magana* (lit. "folded/broken speech") in Hausa. A skillful use of proverbial utterances is an essential part

¹ For example *Hausar baka* (Bature, Schuh 1998).

² Newman, Gimba 1998.

³ Newman 2000; Jaggar 2001.

⁴ According to Alhaji Sa'idu Gwanja, chairman of Kano State Film Makers Association, 2007.

of the stylistic norm in Hausa literary texts⁵ and has received great attention from literary scholars who have investigated the functions of proverbs in literary language⁶. However, few scholars have paid attention to the function of proverbs in discourse. If one understands that in Hausa society the use of proverbs reveals one's competence and proficiency in language use and that it is generally accepted that proverbs are mostly used by elders, one would wonder why such a rich source of cultural discourse is not explored.

In Hausa films, contrary to real life situations, generational boundaries are not clearly identified through the use of proverbs, therefore this kind of figurative expressions do not correspond to the advanced age or special qualifications (such as that of singers) of film heroes. Actors use proverbs to facilitate communication, to convey commitment, to draw attention, to be polite. In discourse situation, they mark indirectness in conveying the message rather than informing about the speaker's language competence. For these reasons, actors also use proverbs to express their feelings and emotions, especially when they praise, or criticize someone.

In film dialogues, proverbs are often used by women to make their statements more indirect, even when the dialogue is conducted in a straightforward language. For example in *Dijangala*, a woman called Goggo uses the proverb "A rika sara ana duban bakin gatri" [lit. You should be looking at the edge of your axe when you cut], a sort of 'Look before you leap', to question the decision of her husband Kawo to send his niece Dije to work in a bachelor's house, something the Hausa society frowns at. By using the proverb the wife criticizes her husband indirectly. And when it comes to light that the girl has been raped, Goggo uses another proverb, "Duk tsuntsun da ya ja ruwa shi ruwa kan doka" [lit. when the bird draws water, the water hits him] which can be interpreted as the woman's reminding her husband of the consequence of his act.

In the film *Ruwan bagaja*, the character Yarima expresses the opinion about his wife after his friends have been praising her. He says "Mai daki shi ya san inda yake masa yayyo" [lit. The owner of the room knows where it leaks], a proverb by which the husband argues that his wife has some bad habits apart from the good ones the friends know. By using the proverb of "Idan kana da kyau ka kara da wanka" [lit. If you have beauty, increase it with a bath] in another film *Mulkin zamani*, Dumba advises 'Yarmulki, a gubernatorial aspirant to continue the struggle and not relent in her effort to win the election.

Actors use proverbs to give an advice or inform about a situation, as Lubabatu does in *Kasko*. She tries to explain to Daso the situation she is in by saying "Barin kashi a ciki ba ya maganin yunwa" [lit. leaving excrement in the stomach doesn't stop hunger], a proverb that shows that the Hausa people believe in the need to share one's problems, instead of keeping them to themselves

⁵ Cf. (Furniss 1996).

⁶ See Dikko and Usman 1991.

There is a scene in *Hausa Bakwai* which shows that proverbs are also used to criticize or warn politely. By saying “Ina amfanin tonan gyaɗa a gaban kurege” [lit. what is the benefit of digging groundnut in front of a ground squirrel], Haina’u is warning Mai Aya against the danger of doing bad things in front of the younger ones, because the latter could be tempted to emulate bad behavior.

In *Adabiyya*, Adam uses the proverb “Shimfidar fuska ta fi shimfidar tabarma” [lit. to spread face is better than to spread mat] to show appreciation to his girlfriend Alawiyya when she complains of not being able to offer much to him. The proverb is to express positive emotions of the film hero towards the girl.

Sadiya speaks about her position to her boyfriend Ahmed in *Kansakali* by using “Allura a cikin ruwa mai rabo ka ɗauka” [lit. A needle in the river, only a lucky person can pick it up] where she describes herself as a needle in water. This way she informs that she is not interested in the relationship. An indirect communicational strategy is used in films to ease tension between the story heroes.

Artists also use proverbs to express doubt, as Amina does in chat with her husband in *Ciwon Ido2*. After discussing the marriage of their children with Saratu she uses the proverb “Da akwai sauran rina a kaba” [lit. there is still hornet in the fronds], to say that the case is not yet ended. Although the fiancée’s mother may not see any problem concerning the marriage, she has noted some matters to be solved. She even reports it to her husband with a suggestion that he intervenes in the wedding. She uses “Abin da babba ya hango yaro ko ya hau rimi ba zai hango ba” [lit. what an elder sees a boy cannot see it, even if he climbs a tree] to stop her son Nura Husain from inviting Saratu Gidado to his wedding ceremony.

In *Abinfahari*, where Ciroki tells Maryam that she is less important than his daughter Fati, he uses “Sawun giwa ya take na rakumi” (lit. elephant’s foot covers that of camel), a proverb used to show the significance of one thing with respect to another. Ali in *Mulkin Zamani* informs his girlfriend Maimuna about her elder brother Abba who disrespects people’s opinion about the political situation. He uses a proverb “Karen bana shike maganin zoman bana” [lit. dog of the time deals with rabbit of the time], i.e. ‘wicked strikes a deal with a wicked’ to remind her that one day Abba will be dealing with people of his (Abba) type.

These are few examples of proverbs used in Hausa films to demonstrate the conversation strategy that is well-settled in the Hausa traditional system of communication but its discourse function is somehow different from the regular every-day practice. In film text, proverbs are used to make statements indirect or less abrupt rather than to signify someone’s competence and proficiency in language use. This strategy is introduced into the film dialogs intentionally. As it was confirmed by a film director,⁷ producers usually ask to involve the use of proverbs into the film text to attract customers and show that they preserve traditional

⁷ Interview given by Ahmed Salisu Alkanawyo one of the Hausa films directors on Monday 1/08/2011 in his office at Zoo road in Kano.

system of Hausa communication. Although this strategy does not follow the real life situations, it corresponds with a preference for indirectness in expressing views, wishes and emotions.

3.2 Imperative to Secure Directness

The Imperative is a verb form that is used to issue an affirmative command, e.g. “Shiga!” ‘Enter!’ The Hausa imperative has a similar function to the imperative in European languages although this special verb form is limited to the giving of affirmative commands to singular subjects only (Newman 2000:262). In communication practice, the imperative in the form of a bare stem⁸ is not abrupt in meaning, though in polite conversation it is either accompanied by some other forms of address to mark social hierarchy of the speakers (see below) or the impersonal form is used⁹. However, the imperative form in Hausa is seen to be connected with marking social hierarchy, as it is commonly used in the communication between the superior and the subordinate, person of high social rank and low social rank, and between elders and children. In the dialogue, the simple imperative form can be used by a person of a higher status only (Grudnik 2010:37).

In Hausa films, the use of imperatives appears to be common among actors. In this form, the parents used to express the command addressed to their children, e.g. Duduwa (in *Rana da wata*) tells her daughter Shamsiyya “Debo wa babanki ruwan wanka” [fetch water for your father to bath], in *Ciki daya*, Ali uses it to invite his brother’s wife Rukayya to enter the house by saying “shiga ciki,” [enter the house] when she meets him and his friend Hamza in the house. Also in *Mace ta gari1*, Ladi tells her husband Al’assan “ka tafi ka nemo kuɗi duk inda yake ka kawo mini” [go and find money wherever it is and bring it to me].

The subjunctive form (with a personal pronoun) is also used to form the command. In *Rana da wata* Alhaji directs his children Maishinku and Fati KK to enter their rooms by saying “Ku shiga daga ciki” ‘enter inside (the room)’. In the conversation between parents and children imperative/subjunctive form is used by both sides. In the same film Maishinku also tells his mother: “Ki yi waya ki gaya wa Baba” [make a phone call to inform the father]. “Ka saki matarka” [divorce your wife] says Hajiya Amina to her son Baballe in *Babbar Magana ce*, whereas Kalla in *Maliya 2* asks his children to leave his house with “Ku bar mini gidana” [you should leave my house].

In the film dialogues, the use of the imperative/subjunctive form is a conversation strategy for people of equal status, for example, when Adam (in *Sarki goma*) tells his friend Sha’aban to acknowledge he had killed Binta “Ka faɗa wa duniya cewa kai ka kashe Binta ba ni ba” [Tell

⁸ Hausa has another verb in which command may be expressed, the subjunctive, i.e. *ka shiga* ‘Enter!’. In practical use, however, there is not much difference in its significance for the degree of politeness.

⁹ See (Pawlak 2009). In Hausa films, an impersonal form is often used to mark a certain degree of politeness, as in *Maliya2*, where Bashir Nayaya asks his wife Nanana to bring him tea by the phrase *a kawo mini shayi*, ‘bring tea for me’.

the world that you are the one who killed Binta, not me]. The use of this form helps to secure equal status in conversation between siblings, friends, and between husband and wife. In *Yayyee*, Daso gives an advice to her younger brother Suleman in the imperative form “Dole ka k ara aure” [You must marry a second wife], whereas in *Mace ta gari* Maikaba turns to his wife Amina with a negative imperative statement “Kar ki kara yi mini haka” [Don’t ever do me that again].

All the above presented forms are not distinctive for marking hierarchy. They show that the communication refers to the merit rather than to the identity of interlocutors. A real command is marked by the use of an imperative form of the verb *je*¹⁰ preceding the verb in subjunctive (Pawlak, in press). In film dialogues, this form is also used and it distinctively marks superiority, as it appears in commands addressed to servants, bodyguards, or sometimes also in unpleasant statements made by a husband and addressed to his wife. For example Sani (in *Ministan kuɗi*) speaks to his wife Samira by using the imperative, namely “Je ki ki yi abinci a kitchen”, [go and cook the food in the kitchen]. He strengthens his command with the phrase “je ki” [go!] because he wants her to leave him alone. In *Abin fahari* also Mai’aya communicates with a girl in the same way, when she wants Zainab to clean the carpet, i.e. “je ki ki goge leda”, [go and clean the rubber carpet]. In *Farauta*, the form “ku je” [go!] (pl.) proceeding the verb is used in the command expressed by Zango while speaking to his bodyguards, namely “Ku je ku nemo mini ’yar Fulani a duk inda ta ke” [You should find a Fulani girl for me, no matter where she is].

Imperative as a regular grammatical form of Hausa verb, has gained a new discourse function in the dialogues of the Hausa films. In regular conversation practice, when used in simple imperative sentences without additional markers of politeness, it marks abrupt statements. For that reason, imperatives are generally adopted to command subordinate. In film dialogues, the conversation with the use of imperative forms is commonly conducted between the persons of equal status or close relationship. Quite unusual, in comparison with traditional style of conversation, is the use of this form by children while addressing their parents.

3.3 Forms of Address to Protect the Hierarchy and Cultural Background

The norms of politeness in Hausa which include many forms of address that are part of good speech behavior has been the subject of much research in which the function of greetings in marking social hierarchy has been treated (see, Daba 1987; Grudnik 2010, among others). As far as film dialogues are concerned, they provide us with a rich material for the study of both lexical and functional variety of the forms to use when addressing interlocutors. This section deals with traditional and modern titles and other forms of address used in conversation. Regarding topics of film stories, earlier Hausa films usually maintained the use of traditional terms, as in Hausa society, while modern Hausa films introduce new terms (for example

¹⁰ The stem *je* ‘go’ has an archaic pattern in imperative in which the personal pronoun follows the verb, i.e. *je ka/je ki/je ku* ‘go!’ (m./f./pl.); ‘be off with you’.

those used in intimacy) and add some to the existing ones. Terms used in family relations and titles of occupational hierarchy are also taken into consideration.

3.3.1 Family Relationship Terms

When communicating with their family members, the actors show politeness by addressing them with different terms. For example, in *Zarge1&2* Aisha dan Kano calls her husband Ciroki “Maigida”, [house owner], following the standards of communication accepted in traditional Hausa society. In family relations, kinship terms are often used, depending on the relationship. Thus Nura addresses Ciroki as “Kawo”, [uncle], whereas Hajara Usman is called as “Goggo” [Aunt]. Ciroki and his wife call Hajara Usman *Yaya*, ‘senior sister’. In *Mulkin zamani* Bash and Maimuna address Abba as “Yaya” which means [elder brother or older sibling] In *Kasko1&2*, Ali calls his father, “Baba”, [father] and in *Takun girma* Hayatu calls his mother Hajjara Usman “Mama” [mother]. The terms “Baba” for [father] and “Mama” for [mother] are the most frequent forms used by children to address their parents. Along with “Yaya” [elder sister/brother] and “Kawo” [uncle] some original kinship terms are also used for other members of the family. In *Zumunci*, for example, Baballe calls his in-laws “magabata”, which can be translated as [elders, ancestors or parents]. Some films also introduce in their dialogues some new forms of address borrowed from English. In *Maliya2*, Ahlan calls his brother Yakubu “bros”, [brother]. In *Yayee*, Ahmed and Zainab call their fathers Dad. This form of address also appears in *Kura ta ci kura* and *Sharafi*. One newly introduced form of address is Sir, a form with which Saratu calls her husband Alhaji (Ibrahim Mandawari) in *Ciwon ido1&2*.

3.3.2 Religious Terms

Religious orientation has left a special impact on address terms in Hausa. In Hausa films, like in the Hausa society, it is very common to hear people addressing their addressee by “Alhaji” or “Malam” for a male, and “Hajiya or Malama” for a female. “Alhaji” (Hajiya) is normally meant for addressing someone who has performed a pilgrimage to the Muslim holy land of Mecca. In Islamic society, “Malam” or “Malama” are used to address people with high Islamic knowledge. However, the two latter terms are also used without their religious connotation, and they are the accepted forms to address strangers.

In Hausa films, both “Alhaji” and “Malam” (and their female equivalents) seem to mark Islamic orientation and cultural background. A person addressed in this way in the film is supposed to be Muslim. There is also another aspect of marking identity by using terms of Islamic origin. In modern Hausa films, for example, wives call their husband “Malam” or “Alhaji”, and sometimes children call their father “Malam” or “Alhaji” and their mother “Hajiya”. In both official and non-formal situations, some husbands also address their wife or wives “Hajiya” or “Malama”. The films in which some of these elements of Islamic culture and religion are very present, including the following: *Kasko1&2*, *Rana da wata*, *Zumunci*, *Harshen Laraci*, *ciwon ido*, *Maliya1&2*, *Abin Alfahari*, *Dijangala*, *Ruwan bagaja*.

3.3.3 Marking Social Status or Rank

Actors in Hausa films follow Hausa etiquette in their communication with people of high status, where the latter are addressed with different names and conventional phrases. For example, the traditional title holder, “sarki” [emir], is addressed as “Maimartaba”, [Your highness] with the accompanying phrase “Ranka ya dade” meaning [may your life last longer], as it happens with Ali and Ibrahim in the film *Sarki goma*. A prince is called “Yarima” and a princess “Gimbiya”. The films are often set in the palace of the traditional ruler as can be observed in such films as *Gimbiya Fatim*; *Abin fahari*; *Ruwan bagaja*, therefore emirs, princes and princesses are called with such titles as a sign of respect.

Film stories set in modern environment reflect new habits in addressing the people of high social status. The Hausa title (of Fulani origin) “Yallabai” ‘great man’ is often used as a respectful form of address to a person of high status. For example in *Linzami da wuta*² Kabiru Nakwango (rich man) is called “yallabai” also in *Gimbiya Fatima* Dan’iya (traditional title holder) is addressed as “yallabai”. It is also common for specific terms of English origin to be used. In *Mahandama*^{1&2}, Ibrahim Mandawari and Aminu Hudu are addressed with *Your Excellency*, and their wives are *First lady* or *Ladies*. *Wulaya*¹⁻³, *Kece reni*, *Tutar So*, *Sarki goma* are some of films where such a practice is common. With this English influence, a Senator is addressed as “Sanata”, “Honarabul” is used for a member of the State House of Assembly and “Ciyama” for Local Government Chairman, as portrayed in such films as *Wulay*^{2&3}, *Jaruman Kaduna*, among others. However, the same title holder can be addressed in both traditional and modern style.

It is very common in Hausa films to hear actors use address terms that refer to a particular career or occupational status. In *Sanafahna*^{1&2}, Aminu uses Doctor, when he asks about his wife’s condition: Doctor, “yaya ta ke”? [‘How is she doing, Doctor’?] A borrowed Hausa word “Likita” [doctor] may be also used in this situation. Actors playing this role are to be seen in *Nasaba*^{1&2}, *Ibtila’I* and *Lunzami da wuta*².

Some professions do not have established forms of address attached to their title holders. Barristers and judges are called by their professional name in English, or its translation in Hausa, “Mai shari’a” as shown in *Babban gida* and *Ibtila’I*. Also policeman may be addressed both as “Yallabai” and “Ofisa” [officer]. Ranks such as “Kofur” [corporal], “Saja” [sergeant], and *D.P.O.* ‘Divisional Police Officer’ are also forms of address, as portrayed in *Badakala*, *Wulaya*^{2&3}, *Sarki goma* and *Zumunci*, among others. Most of the professional terms of address are borrowed from English and they are generally used as in the source language. Only in a few situations they are translated or transformed into Hausa.

3.3.4 First Names as Forms of Address

Communication in peer groups representing youth of both genders in general and has its specific sub-code (See Chamo, 2011). Boys and girls address themselves in less formal style, mostly by using their first names in modern Hausa films. This practice is also becoming common and is spreading to conversations between married women and men.

In films, traditional forms of address, such as “Maigida”, [house owner]’, “Uwar gida”, [first wife], (lit. mother of the house), “Amarya” [newly married woman], bride or “Ango” [bride groom] are being replaced by the first names, as in *Takun girma* where Ai’asha addresses her husband Mustapha as “Mustapha” and in *Wulaya1* where Hauwa calls her husband Ali by his first name. Husbands also address their wives by their first names.

3.3.5 Expressing Emotions

The language of Hausa films shows emotions and a degree of intimacy between actors. A majority of young couples and girlfriends and boyfriends address themselves by special terms in order to express their feelings toward one another. For example in *Bahijja*, Nura addresses his wife by “My Love” while Maimuna in *Zumunci* and Rukayya in *Ciki daya* each call her husband “Sweet Heart”. In return, Ahmed (Aminu Momo) calls Rukaya “Darling”. This latter form “Darling” has become popular in communications between young people as is the case With Dan’Auta who addresses his girlfriend Maryam with this term in *Babban gari3* and with Maimuna when she calls her boyfriend Ali in *Mulkin zamani*. In *Tarairaya*, Hussain calls his wife Mansura “Honey”, whereas in *Gurnanai*, Hajiya calls her husband Alhaji “Habibi”, [my beloved] which is an Arabic word.

Many of the terms used in communications between artists of Hausa film actors are borrowed from English and Arabic. It is worth mentioning that only elderly people use the Arabic term “Habibi”, as shown in the above example, the younger ones prefers to use English terms.

In the use of address terms, Hausa films reflect traditional and modern Hausa society. The accepted norm of conversation in Hausa includes the obligatory use of the term of address to mark the hierarchy or social rank of the addressee. The films show the development of new terms of address and new tendencies in their discourse functions. In this context, special terms of expressing feelings and emotional attitude are worth mentioning. They contradict the traditional concept of “kunya”¹¹ which forbids Hausa people to show intimacy in relationships between a man and a woman (including husband and wife) in public.

4. Conclusion

Hausa films are both a cultural and a social phenomenon. Their function of introducing new values to Hausa culture lies not only in their stories and pictures but also in their language. The analysis of the film texts shows that the film stories encourage new strategies of communication and change the established norms. What may shock the audience is the directness in communication, addressing interlocutors by their first names and manifesting emotions toward them. With all these new tendencies, of presenting both modern and traditional terms in the films, there are strategies to preserve the traditional way of language behavior in Hausa such as marking social hierarchy and acceptance of figurative expressions. The first option is expressed by a wide range of titles and other forms of address; the second option is realized through the use of proverbs. Both strategies have a symbolic function that preserves cultural identification of language.

¹¹ “Kunya” is a key cultural word which expresses pivotal Hausa cultural values and whose meaning includes (at least) embarrassment, shame and modesty.

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