THE IDEOPHONE IN HAUSA

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
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Mary Jo Moore
1968
only vowels manifest are well. These predict length in ideophones:
THE IDEOPHONE IN HAUSA

By

Mary Jo Moore

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of sound symbolism and non-arbitrary morpheme structure is widespread in the languages of the world, although often restricted to a minor role within a particular language. For example, in English there are recurrent patterns within some words which could be assigned some kind of semantic value apart from the meaning of the whole word, as in lump, hump, bump, clump, dump, and splash, spatter, splatter, and splat. That is, one could conceivable assign morpheme status to -ump, and spl- or sp-.

But in English as in many other languages, this phenomenon, though interesting, is not prominent. In the languages of Africa, the phenomenon is indeed prominent, and is particularly characteristic of a class of words normally referred to, in the literature as ideophones. ¹

This thesis will attempt a description of ideophones as they occur in the Hausa language of West Africa. Hausa is the first language of approximately 15 million people of Northern Nigeria and the second or trading language of perhaps another 10-15 million. It is classified by Greenberg as a member of the Chadic branch of the Afroasiatic family. ²

¹"Ideophones by count constitute, next to nouns and verbs, a major part of the total lexicon of African languages...." William J. Samarin, "Perspectives on African Ideophones," African Studies, XXIV (1965), 121.
²Joseph Greenberg, The Languages of Africa (Bloomington, 1966).
Hausa seems to participate in a Sprachbund linking it to African languages to which it is not related genetically. The ideophone plays an important role in this Sprachbund in that it is a feature of Hausa reminiscent of the Niger-Congo languages of sub-Saharan Africa. Hausa is in contact with some of the Niger-Congo languages, for example, Fulani, Yoruba, Nupe and Tiv. The precise family relationships of Hausa, its contact languages within the Niger-Congo group, and the other languages cited in this paper, are diagrammed in Appendix I.

Although ideophones in African languages are often classified with adverbs, they do not always function as such. While it is true that ideophones often function in Hausa in a manner that might be labeled "adverbial," they also function in other ways. Consequently, it seems best to define them primarily as a lexical category and only secondarily as a grammatical category. As a working definition, then, the ideophone may be taken to be an expressive unit of phonaesthetic speech which is most commonly used for intensification or high-powered description, and which is highly dependent on context for semantic value.

The corpus for this study includes examples of ideophones from texts (stories and some proverbs), from tapes (extemporaneous renderings of stories and life histories), from native speakers here at Michigan State University, and from Abraham's dictionary. Two

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1 It is only as a point of reference that the term "adverbial" is employed here. It is important to note this inasmuch as Hausa exhibits no morphological category which one would want to label "adverb."

2 R. G. Abraham, Dictionary of the Hausa Language (London, 1962). Many of the dictionary examples had to be discarded. It seems, from native speaker reaction, that many ideophones in the dictionary are either archaic or are dialectal or idiolectal variants.
The procedure for collecting the data was as follows: All of the ideophones in the texts and tapes were listed with as much context as seemed necessary. These were then checked with Mr. Ibrahim Wada, a native speaker of Kano Hausa, for accuracy in translation and pronunciation. This yielded approximately 100 items. Other examples, perhaps about fifty, were collected from Mr. Wada, from Mr. Benjamin Ishaku, a native speaker of Zaria Hausa, and from Mr. Steven Lucas, a near-native speaker of Niger Hausa. But the difficulty of obtaining a large enough corpus by this means made it necessary to resort to the dictionary for further examples. In this way, it was possible to collect from the dictionary some one thousand examples of ideophones, and so obtain a frame of reference for subsequent work with Mr. Wada and Mr. Ishaku. The majority of these examples were discarded for reasons mentioned in a previous footnote, reducing the corpus to 405 ideophones, with from one to ten contexts for each. This smaller corpus is henceforth referred to as the "selected data."
PHONOLOGY

Although the definitive description of Hausa phonology has yet to be written, the subject has been treated by a number of linguists and useful reference grammars are available. However, there is justification for giving special treatment to the phonology of the Hausa ideophone, inasmuch as various discussions of the phenomenon of ideophonic speech in African languages have made statements to the effect that ideophones manifest a subsystem (or by-system) within the phonology of the language under analysis.¹

The Phonemes

The consonant phonemes are charted as they occur in the ideophones in the selected data, yielding a total of thirty phonemes. This differs from Kraft's description² and also from Greenberg's

¹"The special features of ideophones in Shona lead us to recognize in this language a subsystem of syntactical, morphological, and phonological units and structures peculiar to ideophones." George Fortune, Ideophones in Shona (London, 1962), p. 3.
"Here is...a class of morphemes where is revealed a phonemic 'by-system' in the language." Samarin, op. cit., p. 119, in reference to Nguni ideophones.

²Kraft describes twenty-five consonant phonemes for Hausa, excluding the labialized and the palatalized series of velar stops, and including /'?y/ and two /r/'s, a trill and a flap. Charles H. Kraft, A Study of
description of the consonant phonemes of Hausa, but the discrepancies are due more to different analytical approaches than to differences between the phoneme inventory of the whole language and the phoneme inventory of the ideophones alone. For example, the decision to include a labialized and palatalized series facilitates the analysis of syllable types, since labialized and palatalized consonants are the only contoid clusters that occur word initially in Hausa. Treating them as single consonants yields two major syllable types (CV, CVC) instead of three (if CCVC were included).

The vowel phonemes are charted separately for long and short vowels, yielding a ten-vowel system in accord with both Kraft and Greenberg. Although the full spectrum of five long vowels and five short vowels occurs in ideophones, long vowels have a very low frequency and possibly a predictable pattern of distribution. This is in contrast with a more evenly balanced frequency of long and short vowels in the rest of the language and also an unpredictable pattern of distribution for vowel length.

The present analysis of tone in Hausa ideophones is compatible with the analyses of Kraft and Greenberg for the whole language.

Hausa Syntax (Hartford, 1963), p. 19. /f/ and /f/ do not contrast in the data, and */y/ doesn't occur at all.

1 Greenberg describes thirty-one consonant phonemes for Hausa, including the labialized and the palatalized series of velar stops, and both /g/ and /g/. He also includes /p/, and excludes /d/. Joseph Greenberg, "Some Problems in Hausa Phonology," Language, XVII (1941), 316-323.

2 Although Kraft analyzes an eight-vowel system in the above-mentioned reference (excluding /e/ and /o/), he describes a ten-vowel system later, in An Introduction to Spoken Hausa (East Lansing, 1965), p. 14.

3 It is interesting to note by way of comparison that vowel length, though phonemic for Fulani in general, is not distinctive for Fulani ideophones. See Stennes, op. cit., p. 19.
Chart 1. The Phonemes of Hausa Ideophones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart 1. The Phonemes of Hausa Ideophones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fronted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STOPS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiceless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FRICATIVES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFFRIGATES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESONANTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liquid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semi-vowel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>front</th>
<th>central</th>
<th>back</th>
<th>front</th>
<th>central</th>
<th>back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>mid</td>
<td>ee</td>
<td>oo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td>low</td>
<td>aa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

tones: high (unmarked) low (') falling (")

1The terms flat and sharp mean labialized and palatalized respectively. They are preferred here for convenience, and also because they will be used later to isolate a natural class. The term checked should be interpreted as meaning glottalized, and is preferred here for these same reasons. These terms are used with the understanding that they can be labels for articulatory features as well as acoustic features. See Morris Halle, "On the Bases of Phonology" in Fodor and Katz, The Structure of Language (Englewood Cliffs, 1964), p. 326.
The "transcription" employed in Chart 1 and in this thesis is the standard Hausa orthography but with tone and vowel length indicated. High tone is unmarked and low tone is marked with a grave accent. The falling tone is marked with a combination of acute and grave accents. Length is represented by doubling the vowels. One deviation from the standard orthography is /'f/ instead of /f/ for glottal stop. The diphthongs au and ai are analyzed as /aw/ and /ay/ respectively, since the pressure of admissible syllable types suggests treating the final vocoid as a consonant. However, the standard orthographical representation is preferred for the written Hausa in this paper.

Several additional explanations are in order for the consonant phonemes in Chart 1. /f/ and /p/ are normally analyzed as allophones of one phoneme. Kraft describes them as freely alternating variants and Greenberg as dialectal variants. The decision here is to treat them as separate phonemes which, like many other consonant phonemes in ideophones, may alternate freely. There is a near-minimal pair in the language and possibly also in the ideophones. But regardless of this, it seems to be the case that certain words always are pronounced with /p/ and others always with /f/ and certainly it is common for them both to occur within one idiolect.

Although /gy/ occurs in only one ideophone in the larger (pre-selected) corpus, it has been included in the chart of consonant phonemes

1Kraft, A Study of Hausa Syntax, p. 20.
2"We may divide Kano speakers into f-speakers and p-speakers." Greenberg, "Some Problems in Hausa Phonology," p. 322.
3/paa/ 'ledge' /fa/ 'indeed'
because it completes the labialization and palatalization of velar stops that Greenberg posited in his description.\(^1\) Also, /dw/ occurs in the data, but only in one example, and in that example is freely variant with /d/.\(^2\) For this reason the phoneme /dw/ was not posited. /fy/ also occurs but not in the selected data, and thus does not appear on the chart.

**Syllable Distribution and Phonological Shape**

There is more than one possible analysis of Hausa syllable structure. A common analysis is that Hausa consists of long and short syllables, and that long syllables have two variants (CVC and CVV) resulting in the types CV, CVV, and CVC. This may well be the best analysis for the language as a whole, but it may not be the best analysis for ideophones. The long CVV syllable, though common in the rest of the language, is uncommon in ideophones. This plus the fact that vowel length may be non-distinctive in ideophones accounts for a decision here to represent syllable structure in Hausa ideophones by closed and open syllables, i.e. the types CVC and CV.

The two syllable types CVC and CV may both occur in isolation, or word initially, word medially, or word finally. The distribution of syllable types in relation to tone and vowel length is charted below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syllable type</th>
<th>high tone</th>
<th>low tone</th>
<th>high tone</th>
<th>low tone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>any CVC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any CV</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)/yaa yi gwa/ 'he relapsed into silence'  
\(^2\)/tan\'a tafiyya \`dwas-dwas \` tan\'a tafiyya \`das-das/ 'she's walking heavily'
That is to say, long vowels may not occur in a closed syllable. ¹

Ideophones may assume a variety of phonological shapes. These various shapes are charted in Appendix II in terms of syllable distribution, tone pattern, and frequency.

The most common shape for an ideophone to assume is CVC with a high tone. There are 68 examples of this type in the selected data. The second most common shape is CVGVC with a high-high tone pattern. There are 39 instances of this type in the selected data. The third most common shape is CVCCVC (with a low-high tone pattern). There are 27 instances of this type. It is interesting and indeed significant, considering the subsystemic nature of the ideophone, that the exception in phonological word shapes for the rest of the language is the rule in the phonological structure of ideophones. Most Hausa words (excluding ideophones) end in an open syllable. The majority of ideophones do not.²

Vowel Distribution and Tone

The vast majority of ideophones employed in this study manifest perfect vowel identity. In ideophones of the type CVCCVC with a high-high tone pattern (the second most common phonological shape, the first being monosyllabic) there is no exception to perfect vowel identity, and the vowels manifested are a-a, i-i, or u-u. These vowels have the highest frequency of occurrence in ideophones, while /e/ and /o/ have a comparatively low frequency of occurrence.³

¹This is not subsystemic but is true of Hausa in general.
²There are 304 ideophones in the selected data which end in a closed syllable and 101 which end in an open syllable.
³The infrequency of /e/ and /o/ is true for the whole language.
The relationship between vowel identity and tone can be stated in terms of the following generalization:

tone identity implies vowel identity

The reverse is not true; that is, vowel identity may occur without tone identity. Alternatively, the generalization may be stated:

vowel disparity implies tone disparity

Again, of course, the reverse is not true. Tone disparity may occur without vowel disparity. There are seven exceptions to the generalization out of 37 examples of vowel disparity in the data (and 368 examples of vowel identity):

lukwi-lukwi
riya-riya
sako-sako
\textit{carkoekeo}
\textit{buuyaayaa}
\textit{kiikam}
\textit{rankwi}

It has been mentioned in this paper that long vowels are less common in Hausa ideophones than in other lexical elements in the language. One suspects accordingly that vowel length is non-phonetic in the phonological subsystem of ideophones. The following rules, with some exceptions, attempt to predict length in ideophones:

/\textit{ee}/ and /\textit{oo}/ occur in any CV syllable\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1}An exception to this is the ideophone \textit{sako-sako} which ends in short /\textit{o}/ - possibly explained by the fact that identity of tone pattern in a reduplicated form tends to produce a levelling of vowel quantity.
/ii/ occurs in open word-final syllables with high tone if the tone on the previous syllable is low.

/aa/  
a. occurs in ideophones of the type CVCVC on the low syllable
b. occurs in CVCCVC on the final syllables; also occurs in some CV(C)CVCV word types

/uu/  
a. occurs in CVCCV on the high syllable
b. occurs in CVCCVCV on the final syllables; also occurs in some CV(C)CVCV word types

The vowels /ii/, /aa/, and /uu/ also occur as V in CV word types (that is, CV in isolation) but such a length is quite unrelated to inherent vowel length. Rather, it can be dragged on interminably, depending on how extensive a sound is being mimicked and how long the speaker's breath holds out. For example:

macïijii yaa naa tafiya smu....  
snake it in-state-of going 'the snake is slithering along'

Occasionally this type of prolonged length occurs in ideophones other than the type CV. For example:

it'acee yaa faadii kaca....  
tree it + compl. fall 'a tree fell with a crashing sound'

Like length in CV word types, this length would not be expected to conform to patterns of predictability.

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1 An exception to this is the ideophone runkwi, although the reduplicated form of the same ideophone follows the rule.

2 These word types line up semantically with CVCCVC in the sound symbolism categories, thus the lengthening of the vowel in the CV-syllable is not unexpected.

3 In the examples in context throughout this paper the ideophones and their free translations are underlined.
Consonant Distribution

Only the following consonants may occur word finally in ideophones: p, t, k, f, s, sh, m, n, l, r, w, y. This group of consonants forms two classes according to the divisions in Chart 1:

The first class is most elegantly depicted in terms of distinctive features:

| + cons | p, t, k, f, s, sh |
| - checked |
| - voiced |
| - sharp |
| - flat |

The second class is all the resonants in Chart 1:

l, r, w, y, m, n

The first consonant in a cluster occurring word medially is invariably one of the set m, n, r, l, w, y, unless the cluster consists of doubled consonants. The restriction isolates the class of consonants labelled as resonants in Chart 1.1

In three syllable words ending in an open syllable and in some three and four syllable words ending in a closed syllable, there is a pattern of identity of the second and third consonants. This is discussed in the section on Morphophonemics under the heading Recurring Partial.

Intonation and Juncture

The normal declarative intonation pattern of the Hausa sentence is a downward drift which maintains tonal distinctions but with the absolute pitch of each tone progressively lower on a five-pitch scale relative to its position in the utterance.2 To illustrate:

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1This seems to be true for the language as a whole, thus should not be considered subsystemic for ideophones.

2The idea of a five-pitch scale is from Kraft's An Introduction to Spoken Hausa, pp. 17-21 (as originally described by Carleton Hodge in his Hausa: Basic Course (Washington, 1963).
It is normal for the ideophone to violate this pattern. The ideophone occurring utterance finally is likely to have an extra high pitch which ignores the downward drift of the rest of the utterance, or it may have an extra low pitch. To illustrate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>ruwaa yaa kwa</th>
<th>yaa</th>
<th>til</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>taa</td>
<td>yaa</td>
<td>gu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>an</td>
<td>yaa</td>
<td>bu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>taa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

`ruwaa yaa kwanta` `malala` `yaa bu` `testit` 'water is lying all over the place' 'he's drunk'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>ta</th>
<th>gaa</th>
<th>yaa tsa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>fa</td>
<td>yaa</td>
<td>tsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>naa ta</td>
<td>yaa</td>
<td>tsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>saa</td>
<td>yaa</td>
<td>baatsaatsaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6al 6al 6al</td>
<td>yaa</td>
<td>baatsaatsaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

`tana tafasaa 6al 6al 6al` `gaashinsa yaa tsayaa baatsaatsaa` 'it's boiling briskly' 'his hair is standing on end'

It is common for the ideophone to be set off from the rest of the sentence by a pronounced juncture. This is equally true of utterance final position and utterance initial (emphatic) position, and seems to

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Fivaz associates pronounced juncture with an aberration of the tonal pattern in his discussion of Zulu ideophones. "The junctures surrounding ideophones have the effect of isolating the ideophone tonologically from the rest of the utterance. Across these junctures no tonal down-step takes place." Derek Fivaz, *Some Aspects of the Ideophone in Zulu* (Hartford, 1963), p. 17.
be directly related to the "cause and effect" notion or "sentence aloofness" of some ideophones.¹

¹See page 27 of this paper.
The semantic value of ideophones is derived from internal and external factors. The internal factors are overall phonological shape and the recurrence of certain phonemes, both of which contribute to the non-arbitrary nature of the ideophone, that is, its sound symbolism. The external factor is context. It seems appropriate to handle the internal factors morphophonemically. Some reference to context will be made later.

**Vowel Alternation**

Alternation among full phonemes is common in the phonological sub-system of Hausa ideophones. Two kinds of alternation are apparent: one which seems unrelated to a change in semantic value, and another kind which affects semantic value minimally so that two words can be very similar but yet not identical. The first kind is semantically irrelevant (SI) alternation and the second, semantically relevant (SR) alternation.

In the vowel system, alternation is found among short vowels only. SR alternation is restricted to alternation between /a/ and /i/, and there seems to be no SI alternation between these two vowels. SI alternation is found between /a/ and /o/ (only one example occurs in the data), between /a/ and /u/ and between /i/ and /u/. The most

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1 Sometimes referred to, in linguistic literature, as phonetic symbolism or phonaesthesia.
The prevalent form of SI alternation is of /i/ with /u/. Vowel alternation can be diagrammed as follows:

![Diagram of SI alternation]

The "attraction" between /a/ and /u/ and the "repulsion" between /a/ and /i/ would be evidence in the subsystem for categorizing /a/ as [+ grave] in a distinctive feature analysis, as shown in the second diagram above.

The slight difference in "meaning" between SR-differentiated pairs is often brought out by differences in contextual distribution. For example, in the pair of ideophones /farat/ and /firit/ which manifest /a/ and /i/ in SR alternation, both words mean something like "suddenly" but /farat/ is commonly used in the context of a sudden entrance into a conversation, while /firit/ is commonly used in the context of a sudden entrance into or exit from a place. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yaa} & \quad \text{yi} & \quad \text{farat} & \quad \text{yaa} & \quad \text{amsaa} \\
\text{he + compl.} & \quad \text{do} & \quad \text{he + compl.} & \quad \text{answer} & \\
& & & & \text{he answered suddenly!}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yaa} & \quad \text{fita} & \quad \text{firit} \\
\text{he + compl.} & \quad \text{go-out} \\
& & \text{he left suddenly!}
\end{align*}
\]

Apparently, /farat/ is not necessarily restricted to the context of conversation; /firit/, however, is not used in such a context at all.

Other examples of SR alternation between /a/ and /i/ are:
Examples of SI alternation between /i/ and /u/ are:

- zir, zur  'very red'
- rimis, rumus  'meat, leaves dried up'
- birjik, burjik  'people, grain in abundance'

An example of SI alternation between /a/ and /u/ is:

- lagaf, luguf  'limp, overcooked'

**Consonant Alternation**

The problem of determining the limits of alternation with consonants is far greater than with vowels, if only because there are more consonants. Yet there may be an explanation other than this obvious one, for there is a sense in which there is greater phonetic similarity among vowels than among consonants. That is, when the whole set of vowels is considered for possible pairings, one against the other, one would not be as surprised to find SR or SI alternation between any two long vowels, or any two short vowels, as one would be to find such alternation between any two diffuse consonants, for example, or any two voiced consonants.

The fact is that SI and SR alternation can be observed between the most unexpected pairs of consonants as well as between expected pairs. The question is whether or not it can be usefully described. One soon
reaches a point of no return whereby all words that rhyme and have something in common semantically are candidates for SR alternation, if not SI alternation. It is only reasonable, then, to restrict attention to SI alternation among consonant phonemes.

One normally expects alternation between full phonemes that share distinguishing features. But among ideophones, where seemingly unlike phonemes alternate freely, new criteria must be sought for isolating alternating pairs. In other words, it might prove revealing in the areas of sound symbolism and expressive speech to search for phonemic alternation between consonants previously believed too unrelated phonetically to be paired in this way.¹

It seems useful here to consider the notion of primary oppositions, that is, oppositions which cut the whole set of vowels or the whole set of consonants more or less directly in half. In the Hausa vowel system, this would give us one primary opposition, i.e. long vs. short, but among the consonants four primary oppositions: voiced vs. voiceless, stopped vs. continued,² diffuse vs. compact, grave vs. acute.³ Two consonants might conceivably alternate even if they share only one primary opposition.⁴

¹The writer has in mind the types of relationships between consonants set forth in Kenneth L. Pike's *Phonemics*, p. 70.
²There are enough stops in Hausa to warrant this a primary opposition.
³These last two oppositions are used here with the understanding that they can be defined in articulatory terms as well as acoustic terms.
⁴In the phonology of Hausa ideophones, the consonant pairs which are totally unrelated in terms of the primary oppositions are: /p/ with /y/, /j/; /b/ with /sh/, /c/; /h/ with /sh/, /c/; /n/ with /d/, /d/; /k/ with /z/, /n/, /l/, /r/; /kw/ with /z/, /n/, /l/, /r/; /ky/ with /z/, /n/, /l/, /r/; /k/ with /z/, /n/, /l/, /r/; /kw/ with /z/, /n/, /l/, /r/; /ky/ with /z/, /n/, /l/, /r/; /s/ with /g/, /gw/, /g/; /v/ with /z/, /n/, /l/, /r/. Within this notion, all other pairs would be suspect for phoneme alternation.
At any rate, SI alternation can be described in Hausa ideophones among the following pairs of consonants:

- t/тся ratata, rasasa 'fruit all over the ground'
- f/بة funjum, bunjum 'splash into deep water'
- j/ة بunjum, bündum 'full of water'
- k/esse tikis, tīsis 'very tired'
- k/ка kal, kwal 'very clean'
- k/к cik, cif 'stopped completely'
- g/r jùgum, jùrum 'absent-mindedly'
- k/кे kēerèe, kyeereerèe 'disrespectfully'
- f/t fāl, tāl 'shining brightly'
- l/r lip, rip 'smooth, flat'
- b/m buzūu-buzzu, muzu-muzu 'hairy'
- k/k tikis-tikis, tīkis-tikis 'walking tiredly'
- g/k garās-garas, kārās-kārās 'crunchingly'

In contrast, examples of SR alternation among consonants would be:

- tak 'only or exactly, in reference to one thing'
- rak 'only or exactly, in reference to more than one thing'
- or wur 'very, in reference to the color red'
- wul 'very, in reference to the color black'

The list of examples of SI alternation above should not be taken as a definitive classification. Subtle differences in meaning and/or contextual distribution are difficult to determine, but are certainly to be suspected. This is perhaps especially true of consonant alternation occurring in a series:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kundum} & \quad \text{zundum} & \quad \text{tsundum} \\
\end{align*}
\]

'\text{the sound of a splash in deep water}'}
Bloomfield gives an example of this in English, but without the accompanying sound symbolism found in the Hausa series: quick, fast, swift, rapid, speedy. The assumption that genuine synonyms are rare seems valid for any language. That is, although it is difficult to pinpoint the differences in meaning among the five English words listed above, it is apparent that for speakers of English the words are similar, not synonymous. This may reasonably be the case with Hausa ideophones in pairs and series of forms that alternate by one differentia, so that what appears to be alternation between phonemes may be, at least in some cases, a manifestation of subtle distinctions in meaning.

Alternation Between Phonological Shapes

Semantically relevant and semantically irrelevant alternation among phonological shapes is suggested by the following examples:

1. SR alternation between CVC and CVG:

   CVC "the sound of something small falling"
   CVG "the sound of something heavy falling"

   pan, gan "sound of small object falling (such as mango or drum)"
   dam, dim "sound of heavy object falling"

---

2It is intended here that the term phonological shape includes tone pattern unless otherwise indicated.
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or CVC 'to refer to a sweet taste'

CVC 'to refer to a hot taste'

dau 'very sweet'

dau 'very hot (as with hot pepper)'

2. SR alternation between CVC and several other phonological shapes:

CVC 'one thing falling'

CVCVC, CVCVCVC 'many things or parts falling'

dam 'heavy object falling'

rugum 'hut or wall collapsing'

ruguzum 'house collapsing or tree falling'

3. SR alternation between CVCVCV and CVCVCV:

CVCVCV 'spread out'

CVCVCV 'spread out, but with connotations of something ominous or unpleasant'

rashashaa, lamama 'sprawled out'

sheeemée 'sprawled out from death or sickness'

tururu 'thongs (of termites)'

tururu 'refers to the termites coming out of their hole, half of one, the head of another, etc.'

4. SI alternation between CVCCVC and CVCCVC:

zundum, funjum 'loud splash'

5. SI alternation between CVVCVCV and CVCV-CVCV (tone patterns variable):

nikikii, niki-niki 'overloaded'

buzuuzumu, buzuu-buziu 'hairy'

rashashaa, rashaa-rashaa 'sprawled out'

---

1It is interesting to note the following pair of Ewe ideophones with this differential: lili 'a pleasant smell' lili 'an unpleasant smell'. Diedrich Westermann, A Study of the Ewe Language (London, 1930), p. 188.
These examples are meant only to be suggestive. The description of significant alternation between phonological shapes can be carried much further, but demands a larger corpus and a more systematic method of semantic description.

Reduplication

Reduplication is productive in (non-ideophonic) Hausa in several ways, including pluralization (iri 'kind', iiri-iiri 'kinds'), de-intensification (koore 'green', koore-koore 'greenish'), and specification (kwabo 'penny', kwabo-kwabo 'a penny each').

In ideophones, reduplication is used to indicate intensification. The meaning of the reduplicated form, that is, the degree of intensification, is probably relative to the particular situation in which it appears. For example, in the use of the reduplicated form below,

\[\text{yaa dauree shi tam}\]
\[\text{he + compl. tie it}\]
\[\text{'he tied it securely'}\]

\[\text{yaa dauree shi tam tam}\]
\[\text{'he tied it very securely'}\]

the speaker may have doubled the ideophone to assure someone that a package is indeed quite securely bound. However, it is not possible\(^1\) to look at a securely-bound package and decide whether it is tied tam or tam tam.

According to Abraham, pluralization can be indicated by reduplication in some ideophones. Several examples are listed below, but with an alternative to Abraham's translation, as suggested by Mr. Ishaku.

\(^1\)According to Mr. Ishaku.
Mr. Ishaku feels that these forms are more accurately interpreted in terms of specification rather than pluralization, the idea being that each item in its turn "has a long neck," or each item in its turn "is standing listlessly." It may be worth noting that each "plural" form listed by Abraham is a disyllabic (or polysyllabic) form with a high-high(-high) low-low(-low) tone pattern, as in the examples above and below.

Parsons has also posited plural forms for Hausa ideophones.1 His two examples are listed below, with the ideophones and their free translations underlined:

ya naa da geemuu buzuu-buzu
'he has a bushy beard'

su naa da gammma buzuu-buzu
'they have bushy beards'

But it is also correct to say:

ya naa da geemuu buzuu-buzu
'he has a bushy beard'

which seems to substantiate the hypothesis of Mr. Ishaku that there is no plural form for ideophones but rather reduplicated forms involving specification, for specification could work with a singular noun composed of many parts just as well as with a plural noun.

Recurring Partials

Most of the CV(C)CVCV ideophone types in the selected data fall into two possibly related semantic groupings:

1. being spread about or spread out:
   malala\(^2\) 'spilled liquid'
   turumu 'insects in abundance'
   baatsatsa 'unkempt hair, beard'

2. being loose or unbalanced:
   dagoogoo 'unbalanced'
   dorkoookoo 'shakily, ill-at-ease'
   dorkoookoo 'top-heavy'

---

\(^1\) Such as geemuu 'beard' and gaashii 'hair', both of which can be qualified by the ideophone buzuu-buzu that Parsons has designated as a mutated form controlled by a plural noun. A distinction between singular composed of one part and singular composed of many parts would parallel the distinction between monosyllabic and disyllabic representations of sounds described on page 21.

\(^2\) Fivaz notes a -lala suffix in Zulu which, when added to a stem, produces an ideophone which carries the meaning of "being spread out." A similar form occurs in the ideophone malala cited below, but does not occur elsewhere in the data. Fivaz, _op. cit._, p. 76.
All CV(C)CVCV ideophones manifest syllable duplication in the second and third syllables, so that \( C_1 V_1 (C_2) C_3 V_1 C_3 V_1 \) is a canonical form with high frequency and possibly, semantic relevance.

There are other three-syllable and four-syllable ideophones in which the final syllable is a repetition of the preceding syllable. There is evidence from the data that this type of partial reduplication may be as productive for intensification as complete reduplication:

\[
\text{miya taa yi kitib} \quad \text{miya taa yi kitibkitib}
\]

soup it + compl. do \quad 'the soup is very thick'

'the soup is thick'.

Other ideophones in the data referring to thickness and/or heaviness are of the shape \( S_1 S_2 S_2 \) or \( S_1 S_2 S_3 S_3 \):

\[
\text{kusulbul 'squat, podgy'}
\]

\[
\text{ringingin 'huge'}
\]

\[
\text{jagalgel 'slushy'}
\]

\[
\text{jingimgin 'heavy'}
\]

\[
\text{jigibgib 'heavy'}
\]

\[
\text{katafarar 'thickly'}
\]

Metathesis

There are several examples from the selected data that suggest metathesis plays a role in the formation of ideophones. They are:

\[
\text{malala 'spread all over, as liquid that has spilled or flooded'}
\]

\[
\text{lamama 'spread all over, as a lazy or exhausted person or animal lays down'}
\]

---

The symbol \( S \) stands for syllable.
tururu, rututu 'in abundance, e.g. insects'
takanas, katanas 'expressly, for the sole purpose of'

The alternation is semantically relevant in the first pair and semantically irrelevant in the second and third. These are the only examples of metathesis in the selected data.
The grammatical distribution of ideophones can be described in terms of one list of words with members that function in various positions within the major clause types. A discussion of these clause types is not necessary in the present analysis. What is significant for Hausa ideophones is that they do occur in all major clause types, although this does not seem the case with ideophones in some other African languages.

The question arises whether ideophones are constituents of clause level constructions or whether they are in a sense superimposed on the clause structure. There are three reasons for raising such a question. First, ideophones have been classified with exclamations and interjections in some previous analyses of African languages; second, there is often a pronounced juncture between the ideophone and the rest of the sentence; third, there is no overt syntactic linkage between ideophones and other words in the sentence, whereas most other grammatical units in Hausa normally manifest syntactic linkage of some kind:

---

1 Kraft describes five major clause types in his Study of Hausa Syntax. It is obvious from the data for this thesis that ideophones may occur in any of the five types or sub-types within the five types.

2 For example, Fortune's description of Shona ideophones restricts their occurrence to four construction types only. These construction types would represent finer divisions than the clause types of Kraft, and thus represent a significant contrast to the wide distribution of ideophones in Hausa clause types. Fortune, op. cit., pp. 6-17.

3 See page 13.
Although the possibility of a special by-systemic relationship between the ideophone and the rest of the clause might be suggested for some ideophones, one could not posit such a relationship for ideophones in general since ideophones can occur as obligatory constituents within the clause as well as, and more characteristically as, optional constituents. In no sense could an obligatory ideophone be said to be "superimposed" on the clause structure.

In describing the possible positions of the ideophone within the clause, the most useful division of syntactic constructions for this description of ideophones does not coincide with a typological division of clauses, probably because clause types in Hausa are defined primarily in terms of differences between predicate nuclei, whereas ideophones typically occur outside the predicate nucleus. The references, then, will be to kinds of constructions rather than clause types.

The labels that appear with the examples below are meant to signify positions within the constructions. The type of element which fills a particular position is indicated only when the description demands it. Thus the label \(+N\) would read "obligatory nominal position" and \(\#m\) would read "obligatory nominal position filled by a noun." The following labels appear in the description that follows:

---

1 Such as gender agreement, a genitival link between possessor and possessed, agreement of verb forms with their objects, agreement of verbal auxiliary (person-aspect indicator) with the subject noun, etc.

2 As observed by Mr. Ishaku, the relationship between certain sentences and certain ideophones seems to be one of cause and effect. The sentence states the cause "the stone fell into the water" and the ideophone states the effect "a sound like \(\text{tsundum}\)."
Ideophones in Obligatory Positions

In the first construction type to be considered, the subject nominal is obligatory in the absence of a normally obligatory person-aspect indicator, and the predicate nucleus is filled by the obligatory verbal *nāa* followed by an obligatory nominal:

\[ + N + V + N \]

ruwa *nāa* tafasa

water in-state-of boiling

'the water is boiling'

If modified by an ideophone the obligatory nominal in the predicate can be deleted, in which case the ideophone itself becomes the obligatory element:
An obligatory ideophone can also occur with the verb yi, in which case (and this is the ordinary situation in Hausa clause structure) the subject nominal is optional and the first obligatory element is the person-aspect indicator. The obligatory verbal element is followed by an obligatory nominal (the filler of) which is deletable if modified by an ideophone, the ideophone itself becoming the obligatory element in the instance of such a deletion:

\[ + PA \quad + V \quad + N \]
\[ sun \quad yi \quad nauyii \]
\[ they \quad do \quad heaviness \]
\[ 'they are heavy' \]

\[ + PA \quad + V \quad + N; n \quad + M; ideo \]
\[ sun \quad yi \quad nauyii \quad jigibjigib \]
\[ they \quad do \quad heaviness \]
\[ 'they are very heavy' \]

\[ + PA \quad + V \quad + N; ideo \]
\[ sun \quad yi \quad jigibjigib \]
\[ they \quad do \]
\[ 'they are very heavy' \]

---

\(^1\)It is interesting to note that the commonest ideophonic construction in Shona is also the verb "do" (\(-v\) in Shona, \(yi\) in Hausa) followed by an ideophone. Fortune, op. cit., pp. 6-7.
Every instance of a potentially (structurally) obligatory ideophone will not be realized as such, as there are semantic restrictions in some cases. Just when the obligatory nominal modified by an ideophone can be deleted and when it cannot is not clear, but it is clear that the conditioning is semantic, not structural.

It the situation calls for it, an ideophone can function as an obligatory nominal without a structural deletion:

```
abin nan kayau-kayau nee
thing this is
'this is crunchy'
```

**Ideophones in Optional Positions**

In one construction type ideophones occur with adjectival nominals as optional intensifiers:

```
+ PA + V + N + AN
naa gaa tsuntsuu farii
I + compl. see bird white
'I saw a bird that was white'
```

---

1. The ideophone here occupies an obligatory nominal position. The construction (in terms of Kraft's clause types) is + NP + NP + nee.

2. Adjectival nominals comprise a semantic and distributional sub-class of nominals such as farii 'white', bakii 'black', zaafii 'hot', dayaa 'one', etc.
If the adjectival nominal were to precede the noun it qualifies, it would manifest a genitival link:

\[
\text{naa gaa farin tsuntsuu} \quad \text{I + compl. see white-of bird}
\]

'I saw a white bird'

It is interesting to note that no linkage occurs when an adjectival nominal precedes an ideophone, as in the first example on this page. It is also interesting that the ideophone must follow the adjectival nominal directly and thus could not occur in the example immediately above where the necessary syntactic linkage prohibits such a positioning.

In another construction type ideophones occur with transitive or intransitive verbs as optional verb modifiers:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{mutaanee sun cika daakinsa cinkus} \\
\text{people they + compl. fill room-his}
\end{array}
\]

'people filled his room to overflowing'

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{mun kashe garaa tururu} \\
\text{we + compl. kill termites}
\end{array}
\]

'we killed throngs of termites'

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{yaa faadii 'ruwaa tsundum} \\
\text{it + compl. fall to water}
\end{array}
\]

'it fell into the water splash'
If one were to make a case for the "aloofness" of ideophones in the clause structure, it is this use of the ideophone as optional verb modifier that would provide the best evidence. Here is where a case could be made for "topic and comment" or "cause and effect" relationships between the ideophone and the rest of the sentence.

Grammatical Functions

It seems beside the point to categorize the ideophone grammatically. The ideophone is primarily a modifier, and if it modifies a noun, then it functions adjectivally. When it replaces the noun it modifies, then it functions nominally. Or it may function nominally without a structural deletion. When it modifies a verb, then it functions adverbially. The following examples illustrate ideophones fulfilling various grammatical functions within the constructions.

1. Kayau-kayau functioning (a) adverbially and (b) nominally:

(a) ˚kwiya˚ ta naa cin karmaamii kayau-kayau
she-goat she in-state-of eating leaves
'the goat is munching on dried leaves'

\[ ^t \mathrm{N} + ^t \mathrm{A} + ^t \mathrm{V}_1 + ^t \mathrm{M}: \text{ideo} \]
\[ \text{tuulun yaa cika maakil} \]
\[ \text{jug it + compl. fills} \]
\[ \text{'the jug is full to the brim'} \]

1It is interesting to note here Westermann's ambiguous grammatical classification of Ewe ideophones: "From their function they must be classed as adverbs, for they all describe the action of a verb; but most of them may be used as substantives or adjectives." Westermann, op. cit., p. 187.

2The terms "adjectivally" and "adverbially" are employed merely as points of reference. The morphological categories of adjective and adverb do not exist in Hausa. See previous footnote on page 2.
(b) abin nan kayau-kayau nee
thing this is
'this is crunchy'.

2. birjiik functioning (a) adjectivally and (b) adverbially:
(a) akwai hatsii birjiik a kaasuwa
there is grain at market
'there is plenty of grain at the market'
(b) mayaakaa sun cika fiili birjiik
warriors they + compl. fill field
'warriors completely covered the field'

3. 6ul 6ul functioning (a) adjectivally and (b) nominally:
(a) sun yi Riba' 6ul 6ul
they + compl. do fatness
'they are plump'
(b) yaa yi 6ul 6ul kamar gliwa
he + compl. do like elephant
'he's as fat as an elephant'

The Emphasis Transformation

The ideophone normally follows the element that it modifies although not necessarily contiguously. That is to say, an ideophone functioning adverbially will follow the verb and also the noun object if there is one. The result is that the most common position for an ideophone to occupy as modifier of the predicate is at the end of a clause or sentence. However, there are permutation rules which move the ideophone (or other modifiers) to a position preceding the predicate for emphasis. Example (b) below is the result of applying the emphasis transformation to (a). Examples (c) and (d) are not related in this way, but merely illustrate the ideophone tem in normal
position (c) and emphatic position (d).

(a) ya nā tāfiyāa tinkis tinkis
he in-state-of walking
'he is walking slowly and tiredly'.

(b) tinkis tinkis ya kee¹ tāfiyāa
he in-state-of walking
'slowly and tiredly is how he is walking'.

(c) mun ci abinci mun yi tem
we + compl. eat food we + compl. do
'we've eaten and are stuffed'.

(d) tem mu kee bɔ̀ zaa nī yà cīn wāni âba ba
we in-state-of neg. fut. we can eat certain thing neg.
'stuffed as we are, we couldn't eat another thing'.

---

1 kee is in complementary syntactic distribution to nā.
It is characteristic of ideophones that they are not pure symbols, but require a context or situation in order to have semantic value. This semantically elusive nature of the ideophone creates problems in analysis, some of which are discussed below.

The Problem of Context

It has been suggested that a sentence acquires meaning by virtue of a kind of peeling away of possible meanings through contextual clues until it comes to mean whatever possible meaning is left after the subtraction process is complete. If this is true for sentences, it is true to a far greater degree for words, and especially words such as ideophones which are virtually meaningless (or multiply meaningful, which amounts to the same thing) apart from a context. Many words in language are meaningful with or without a context: that is, they symbolize more or less equally well with or without a referent. The ideophone, however, requires a referent, although to be sure this referent may be either linguistic or non-linguistic. That is to say, the particular context which peels away all other possible contexts may be a noun, a verb, a phrase, or a clause, or it may be an event or situation. But some type of

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1"Sentences mean what they do, so to say, BY DEFAULT, the competing meanings having been eliminated in one way or another." Martin Joos, "Semology: A Linguistic Theory of Meaning," Studies in Linguistics, XIII (1958), 53-70.

2As if the event or situation were the "topic" and the ideophone the "comment."
referent, be it linguistic or non-linguistic, is essential if an ideophone is to "mean" something.

An ideophone has a broad semantic field in which it operates, which is why we are able to approximate a definition in a list of ideophones out of context. But this is also why a literal translation has been consistently avoided in examples in context throughout this paper. The ideophone acquires meaning within the context of the whole sentence, hence its meaning is most accurately glossed within a free translation.

The Problem of Semantic Categorization

The various semantic fields of Hausa ideophones fall into categories which are worth listing inasmuch as they reveal the areas of meaning in the language "covered" by ideophones. But there is the danger of imposing artificial semantic categories on the language, rather than allowing the natural categories to reveal themselves.

Perhaps a valid method of delimiting semantic categories would be to present several native speakers with ideophones listed without reference to context or translation, and ask that they arrange into groups those items which seem to "fit" together. The resulting categories might have greater validity than an externally-conceived listing in which there would necessarily be much overlap due to non-native judgment.

A thorough attempt at semantic categorization is not possible at this time. A broad approximation of the semantic categories pertinent to ideophones in Hausa is as follows: movements, sounds, appearances and states of mind, and intensity or measure. An attempt was made to
use Samarin's fifteen categories for African ideophones, \(^1\) but it did not seem possible to describe accurately the semantic categories of Hausa ideophones in this way. For one thing, the senses are represented by two verbs (instead of five as in English), i.e. jir 'hear, taste, smell, feel' and ganii 'see'. This would seem to indicate patterns of perception that an external list such as Samarin's might likely distort.

The Problem of Determining Relationships Between Morpheme Structure and Meaning

To come to terms with the phenomenon of sound symbolism is to attempt to isolate the elements within an ideophone which make it "mean" one thing rather than another, that is, to isolate the predictable elements within a morpheme. This has been attempted in Appendix III by grouping together ideophones with similar sounds and related meanings. It should perhaps be made clear that these sound/meaning groups were arrived at by inspecting data. In other words, at no time was a native speaker of Hausa asked to list all the ideophones meaning "splash in deep water" or "a dragging sound." It was strictly a matter of matching sound with meaning after the data was collected. It was not apparent at the start of the project that such groups could be isolated.

Determining the exact nature and extent of sound/meaning groups would of course require further research. Appendix III is an approxi-

\(^1\)Samarin has suggested the following semantic categories for classifying ideophones in African languages: appearance, arrangement, emotion, measure, motion, odor, quality, shape, sound, state, taste, temperature, time, touch, and weight. William J. Samarin, "Perspective on African Ideophones," p. 119.
mation of what some of these groups might be.

At this point in the research one can only suggest the nature of the non-arbitrary elements of morpheme structure in the sound/meaning groups. The following list is an attempt to suggest non-arbitrary morpheme structure in some of the sound/meaning groups. Reference should be made to the groups themselves in Appendix III.

- \( \text{Cun} \{\text{j}\} \text{um} \) 'the sound of a splash in deep water'
- \( \text{Caw} \) 'the sound of a blow'
- \( \text{Cum} \) 'a bad feeling or smell'
- \( \text{C}_{1}\text{i}(\text{C}_{2})\text{C}_{3}\text{is} \) or \( \text{C}_{1}\text{i}(\text{C}_{2})\text{C}_{3}\text{ii} \) 'a dragging sound' (tone patterns variable)
- \( \text{C}_{1}\text{V}_{1}\text{C}_{2}\text{V}_{1}\text{C}_{2}\text{V}_{1} \) 'spread about, spread out' (either all high or all low tones)
- \( \text{C}_{1}\text{V}(\text{C}_{2})\text{C}_{3}\text{ooc}_{2}\text{co} \) 'unbalanced, loose'
- \( \text{C}_{1}\text{V}_{1}\text{CV}_{1}\text{is} \) 'crunchy, coarse'
- \( \text{CV}_{1}\text{CV}_{1}\text{f} \) 'limp'

Even when the non-arbitrary elements of morpheme structure are determinable, it is not to say that these are necessarily the onomatopoetic elements within the ideophone, but rather that these are the elements with which the native speaker associates certain noises or movements or states in real life. For there is a relationship between sound and meaning that is well established in the mind of the native speaker, established, that is, psychologically, in the manner of phoneme recognition. It is perhaps one reason why the language learner remains an outsider for so long. For until he masters the sound/meaning relationships, i.e. until he can predict what an ideophone will probably mean, the foreigner remains well outside of the Hausa speaker's frame of reference.


APPENDIX I

THE AFROASIATIC AND NIGER-KORDOFANIAN LANGUAGE FAMILIES

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1From Greenberg's The Languages of Africa, 1966. The names of languages are in capital letters. The names of language families and sub-families are in small letters.

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APPENDIX II

PHONOLOGICAL TYPES OF IDEOPHONES

Monosyllabic and disyllabic forms are listed according to the distribution of syllable types within the word. Tone is indicated. Polysyllabic forms are listed according to the number of syllables within the word, plus the recurring syllables. Tone is not indicated except in citing the most common types. The frequency with which each phonological shape occurs in the selected data is indicated in parentheses. Variations of types are listed in descending order of frequency. The symbol etc. means that a particular form can continue to be reduplicated depending on the extent of movement or sound of the referent.

**Monosyllabic Ideophones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cvc</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>cvc-cvc</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>cvc cvc cvc etc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvc</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>cvc-cvc</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>cvc cvc cvc etc.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvc</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>cvc-cvc</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>cvc cvc cvc</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cv</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>cv cv cv cv etc.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cv</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>cv cv cv cv etc.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disyllabic Ideophones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cvcvc</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>cvcvc-cvcvc</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>cvcvc cvcvc cvcvc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvcvc</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>cvcvc-cvcvc</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>cvcvc cvcvc cvcvc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvcvc</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>cvcvc-cvcvc</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>cvcvc cvcvc cvcvc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvgcvc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cvcvc-cvcvc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cvcvc cvcvc cvcvc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvgcvc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cvcvc-cvcvc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cvcvc cvcvc cvcvc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvgcvc</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>cvcvc-cvcvc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cvcvc cvcvc cvcvc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvccvc</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>cvcvc-cvcvc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cvcvc cvcvc cvcvc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cvccvc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cvcvc-cvcvc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cvcvc cvcvc cvcvc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

41
Polysyllabic Ideophones

closed syllable final:

\[ S_1 S_2 S_3 \] (22) \[ S_1 S_2 S_3 - S_1 S_2 S_3 \] (5)

\[ S_1 S_2 S_2 \] (9)

\[ S_1 S_2 S_3 S_4 \] (3)

\[ S_1 S_2 S_3 S_3 \] (2)

The most common type is \[ S_1 \hat{S}_2 S_3 \] (12).

open syllable final:

\[ S_1 S_2 S_2 \] (38) \[ S_1 S_2 S_2 - S_1 S_2 S_2 \] (1)

\[ S_1 S_2 S_3 \] (2)

The most common types are \[ S_1 S_2 S_2 \] (19) and \[ S_1 \hat{S}_2 S_2 \] (17).

Summary

The majority of polysyllabic ideophones ending in a closed syllable are of the type \[ S_1 S_2 S_3 \]. The majority of polysyllabic ideophones ending in an open syllable are of the type \[ S_1 S_2 S_2 \].

Altogether there are 148 monosyllabic, 175 disyllabic, and 82 poly-
syllabic forms in the corpus of 405 ideophones.
APPENDIX III

SOUND/Meaning Groups

splash in deep water
or full of liquid
kundum
tsindum
tsin Dum
zundum
bundum
bunjum
kindim
funjum
bunjum
bundum-bundum

flutter of wings
fir
fur
fir-fir-fir
jirif

footsteps, hooves
kararap kararap
sakalat sakalat
sukutum-sukutum

splash in shallow water
facal
faca-faca

up-and-down motion as in
bubbling or waving
dul-dul-dul
sal sal sal
balsal
ril
pil pil pil

dragging, tired sound
tinkis-tinkis
tikis-tikis
 tikis
ti'isi
biris
kii
nikiki
niki-niki
runkwiirunkwi
bikiki-bikiki
cisicisi
tikis-tikis

dripping
dâ lâ lâ lâ lâ
râ tâ tâ tâ tâ
### Clean, neat, "slick"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Breaking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kwal</td>
<td>fus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sal</td>
<td>pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fes</td>
<td>pashe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tas</td>
<td>ras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cas</td>
<td>karas karas (sound of eating nuts, raw potato, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsaf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsaf tsaf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Falling: the sound upon landing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Beyond reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gan</td>
<td>kau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pam</td>
<td>kakau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tim or tim</td>
<td>katakau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rim</td>
<td>fintinkau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dam</td>
<td>kintinkau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dim or dim</td>
<td>fau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bam</td>
<td>faufau</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Completely

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quiet</th>
<th>Completely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kus</td>
<td>cik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kus kus</td>
<td>cif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mukus</td>
<td>caf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kakat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cancak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dandak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dungum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kusakum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kacockan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dookacakam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kaca-kaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full</td>
<td>coarse texture, crunchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fam</td>
<td>saras-saras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fal</td>
<td>saras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faakil</td>
<td>garas-garas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maakil</td>
<td>girls-girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taatil</td>
<td>kuras-kuras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fantsartsar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dried up, well-cooked</th>
<th>preponderance of things or people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rimis</td>
<td>birjik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rumus</td>
<td>barjik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rus</td>
<td>farjak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rau</td>
<td>barduk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ramau</td>
<td>mankas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rayau</td>
<td>cinkis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>karau</td>
<td>cinkus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kararaau</td>
<td>tirmis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kayau</td>
<td>tiimis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kayau-kayau</td>
<td>oacacim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kanganarau</td>
<td>oincim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jingim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tinjim</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fine texture, soft</th>
<th>exactly, expressly</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bulus</td>
<td>rak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lalas</td>
<td>tak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lilis</td>
<td>sak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lisis</td>
<td>takanas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lumus</td>
<td>katanas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lukwi-lukwi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all over, sprawling</td>
<td>intensity of color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malala</td>
<td>zir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lamama</td>
<td>zur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yamama</td>
<td>wur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samama</td>
<td>wul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ratata</td>
<td>sul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raśaśa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caśaśa</td>
<td>tight, straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daśaśa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rashashaa</td>
<td>car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṛabajaa</td>
<td>cir</td>
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<tr>
<td>sheemeeme</td>
<td>kir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hululu</td>
<td>das</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rututu</td>
<td>dos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṛurtutu</td>
<td>tam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rududu</td>
<td>kam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuṣuru</td>
<td>kan-kan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tāṇurā</td>
<td>dandan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gam-gam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>zam-zam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suddenly</td>
<td>kyam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wuf</td>
<td>sham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caf</td>
<td>zāṅkarāi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caraf</td>
<td>sarbādai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>karaf</td>
<td>sarmandai</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>intensity of taste or feeling</th>
<th>buttocks shaking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dāu</td>
<td>būsursùrsùr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dāu</td>
<td>tūsursùrsùr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lau</td>
<td>tumṣursùrsùr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kalau</td>
<td>kataṣursùrsùr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Wolof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unbalanced, loose, slouched</td>
<td>length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cock-cookoo</td>
<td>zalau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cork-cookoo</td>
<td>zalau-zalau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cirk-coo-cirkoo</td>
<td>sakal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cirk-coo</td>
<td>zankal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dagoogoo</td>
<td>zaraa-zaraa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dook-cookoo</td>
<td>zoorooro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sook-cookoo</td>
<td>zurun-zurun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sako-sako</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lakoo-lakoo</td>
<td>shivering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lañoo-ñoo</td>
<td>mar mar mar mar mar mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kàtoo-kàtoo</td>
<td>kar-kar-kar-kar-dar-dar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one after the other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rii</td>
<td>limp, light in weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rii rii</td>
<td>sakwaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>riya-riya</td>
<td>lagaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>luguf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lugub-lugub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suction (as when walking in mud)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cafal</td>
<td>bad disposition, bad smell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cafal-cafal</td>
<td>dum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>café-café</td>
<td>dum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silent, still</td>
<td>gum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsai</td>
<td>darum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsam</td>
<td>sum sum sum sum sum sum sum sum sum sum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
damp, moist, fresh
shar
sharaf
sharaf-sharaf
shakaf
shataf
shaw-shau

thick, heavy
kit dib
kit dib
kusul sul
katafar far
jagal gal
jig dib
jingim ingim
ring ring

falling, landing in a clump
yaraf
gwaraf
jirif

noiselessly, smoothly
sau...
sululu
suling umb
sururu
suli
sumul

shining
fal
tal
ryal-ryal
val-val-val

dusty, hairy
budu-budu
butu-butu
buguu-bu zuu
buzuzuu
bursu suu
buruya ya
baatsatsa

mass movement
dii...

duu...

buu....
tuu....
yu u....
tee....
sha a....
ca a....

restless, discontented
tunkur
tairas
tshmu
tsuru
APPENDIX IV
EXAMPLES OF IDEOPHONES IN CONTEXT

kàcòokan

yaa dauki sulensa kàcòokan yaa baa yaaròo
he+compl. take shilling-his he+compl. give boy
'he took his last shilling and gave it to the boy'

an daukee su kàcòokan
one+compl. carry them
'they have all been removed'

sun taashii kàcòokan
they+compl. get-up
'they moved out lock, stock, and barrel'

caf

caf sai zàkaràa yaa cafè faaraa yaa hàdìyee
then rooster he+compl. snatch locust he+compl. swallow
'all of a sudden the rooster snatched the locust and gulped it down'

yaa cafè kwalloo caf
he+compl. catch ball
'he caught the ball adroitly'

riigar yaa yi caf då shii
gown-the it+compl. do with him
'the gown suits him'
tsaf

taa shaare gidanta tsaf
she+compl. sweep house-her
'she swept her house very clean'

mun shiryaa tsaf
we+compl. prepare
'we're all ready'

taa zaunaa tsaf cikin gidan mijinta she+compl. stay in home-of husband-her
'she lived peacefully in her husband's house'

tas

yaa wanku tas
it+compl. is-washed
'it's washed spotless'

i naa da sulée goomaa tas
I in-state-of with shilling ten
'I have only ten shillings'

sun fashee tas
they+compl. disperse
'they have all dispersed'

tak

ruwaa yaa dumkee tak
water it+compl. cease
'the rain has completely ceased'
I in-state-of with slave unit one
'I have only one slave'

anyone he says then death
'it is death to anyone who makes even a single comment'

thieves they+compl. remove stuff-his
'thieves stole all his stuff'
	hey+compl. do to-you circle
'they completely surrounded you'

they+compl. soak him
'they attacked him tooth and claw'

'I'm exactly seven years old'

he+compl. stop
'he came to a complete stop'

'the box is tied tightly'
circ

teebì yaa tsayàa cir
table it+compl. stand
'the table is sturdy'

sheekaraa ñeairin cir sai naa gan kà
year twenty then I+compl. see you
'it's been a full twenty years since I've seen you'

taului yaa ñìka cir
jug it+compl. fill
'the jug is full to the brim'

cìbàl

yaa fàdì mìgànaa cìbàl
he+compl. speak word
'he spoke uncouthly'.

hànyàa taa yi cìbàl
road it+compl. do
'the road is muddy'

taa zub ñà miyàa cìbàl
she+compl. pour with soup
'she made a big mess when she threw away the soup'.

sumul

yaa fita sumul
he+compl. go-out
'he "got off" without difficulty (i.e. he was acquitted)'
samān teebir yaa yi zumul
'the top of the table is very smooth'
yaa warkeey sumul
'he healed completely'

suful
zoob ēn yaa fita suful
'the ring slipped off easily'

baraawon yaa fita suful
'the thief escaped safe and sound'

gaašin kārēn bakii suful nē
'the dog's hair is a glossy black'

dānkam
matāfiyaa sun tseyăn dānkam
'the travellers stopped short (undecided what to do next)'

Audū dānkam nē
' Audū is taciturn'

ruwaay yaa nāa nān dānkam
'this expanse of water is stagnant'
dungum

zan baa kà shii dungum
'I will give you it'
'I will give you all of it'

sun bar kasarsù dungum
they+compl. leave land-their
'they completely migrated'

an yi masa dungum
one+compl. do to-him
'he's been stripped of his possessions'

siìngudum

bàskon yaa tàfi siìngudum
guest-the he+compl. go-off
'the guest went off without a word'

soojàa yaa tàfi siìngudum
soldier he+compl. go-off
'the soldier went off unarmed'

jirgin kasaa ya nàa tàfiyàa siìngudum
train it in-state-of going
'the train is approaching quietly (i.e. with its engines off)'
APPENDIX V
ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF IDEOPHONES
IN THE SELECTED DATA

The following ideophones are listed without glosses in accordance with the decision discussed on page 37 to avoid literal translations of ideophones. The list is alphabetized according to the traditional orthography.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideophone</th>
<th>Phonetic</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>badoo</td>
<td>6al</td>
<td>cancak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bal-bal</td>
<td>6al-6al</td>
<td>car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barkatai</td>
<td>6al-6al</td>
<td>caraf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baatsaatsaa</td>
<td>6alak-6alak</td>
<td>oarkookoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bazar-bazar</td>
<td>6am-6am</td>
<td>cas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bikiki-bikiki</td>
<td>6aras</td>
<td>cas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biris</td>
<td>6aras-6aras</td>
<td>cawket cawket cawket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>birjik</td>
<td>6ingilgil</td>
<td>cif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buu</td>
<td>6ul</td>
<td>cik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>budu-budu</td>
<td>6ul 6ul</td>
<td>cincim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bulus</td>
<td>6untur</td>
<td>cinkis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bum</td>
<td>6utuk</td>
<td>cir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bundum</td>
<td>caa....</td>
<td>cirkoo-cirkoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bundum-bundum</td>
<td>caasa</td>
<td>cokookoo</td>
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<td>bunjum</td>
<td>caasa-cafa</td>
<td>cukuu-cukuu</td>
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<td>bunjum</td>
<td>caa-cafa</td>
<td>cinkus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burduk</td>
<td>caashal-caal</td>
<td>cu</td>
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<td>birjik</td>
<td>caal</td>
<td>dau-sa</td>
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<td>bursusumu</td>
<td>caae-caae</td>
<td>dau-sa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burum</td>
<td>caacim</td>
<td>dau-sa</td>
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wir
wurjanjan

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yaraf
yuu....
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Texts for the Corpus


*-----*. *Karamin Sani; Littafi Na Biyu*. Zaria: Gaskiya Corporation, 1958.

Tapes for the Corpus

The tapes for this corpus were recorded by Charles H. Kraft in Nigeria at various times during the last nine years. They are listed below by date.

Recorded 1959-1960:

1. Hausa fables told by Audu Mwada
2. Stories told offhand and from *Littafin Koyon Karatu* and *Ka Karatu* Karatu by Musa Mwada, Audu Mwada, and Sha'aibu Mubi
3. Stories told by Audu Mwada and Sha'aibu Mubi
4. Riddles told by Sha'aibu Mubi and Ishmaila Mubi

Recorded 1966:

5. *Zeman Mutum da Sana'arsa* as read by Ibrahim Wada

Recorded 1967:

6. Hausa fables told by Umaru Mohammed
7. Hausa customs discussed by Umaru Mohammed and Ibrahim Mohammed
8. Life and courtship of Umaru Mohammed, Umaru Mohammed and Ibrahim Mohammed discussing Nigerian history. Umaru interviewing Ibrahim regarding the latter's life history
9. Life story of a Zaria woman

10. Hausa riddles told by a Zaria woman

Other References


______. Letter dated November 22, 1967, from Mr. Parsons to Charles H. Kraft concerning the problem of defining Hausa ideophones.


