

**HYPONYMY IN HAUSA**

**BY**

**Dr. Abdullahi Garba Wurma**

**Department of Nigerian and African Languages, Ahmadu Bello University,  
Zaria.**

**ABSTRACT**

Words' meaning in languages relate to one another when the senses, ideas, and thoughts become associated. One way in which they can be associated is through inclusion of one meaning into another. A word's meaning that encompasses other meaning assumes the position of a general meaning, distinguishing itself from a specific one which essentially become inclusive.

Hausa language is naturally far more to show an appreciable relationship between a word's general meaning and its specific than other languages. Besides the hierarchical relation of words' meaning, Hausa words can also be seen to have an associate relationship of meaning. It may be even be undoubted that socio-linguistic accounts for this usage.

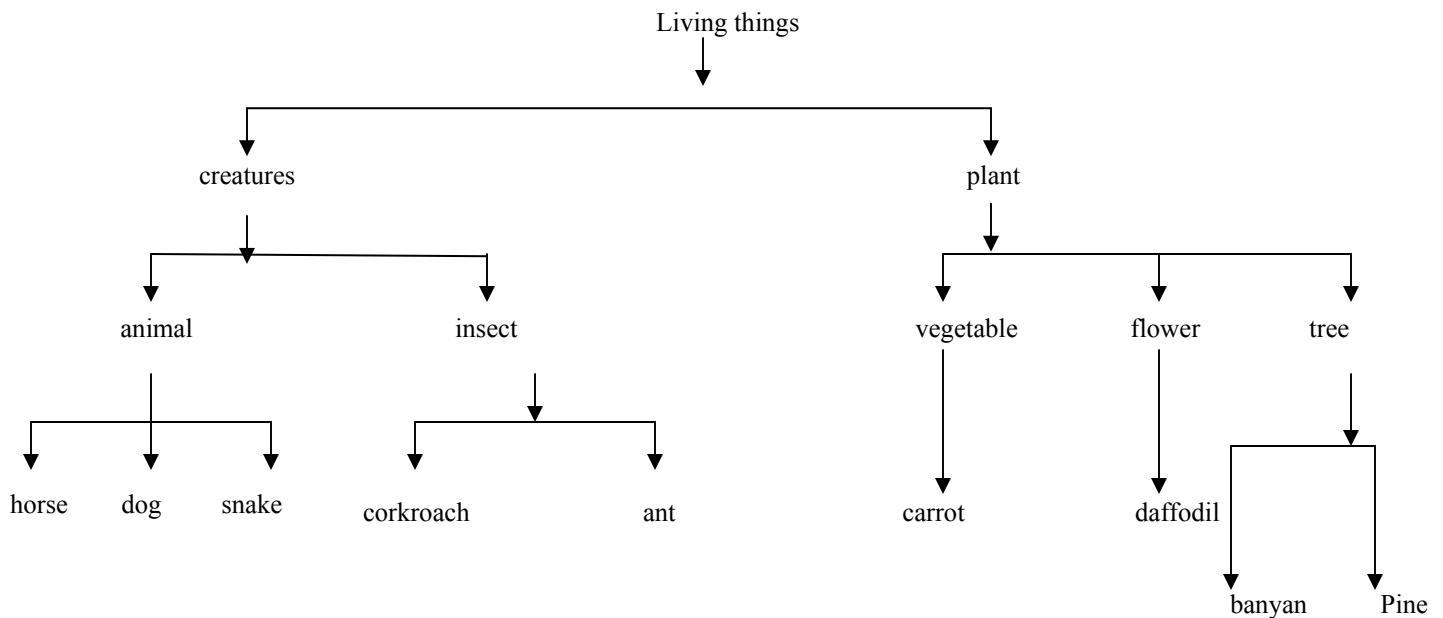
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**Introduction**

Hyponymy is a word that shows relationships between a general and a specific meaning of a word. This means that the meaning of a word is included in the meaning of another word, Zule (1996) defines hyponymy as when the meaning of one form is included in the meaning of another, the relationship is described as hyponymy, and some typical example pairs are daffodil – flower, dog – animal, poodle - dog, Carrot - vegetable, banyan - tree. The concept of 'inclusion' involved here is the idea that if any object is a daffodil then/it is necessary a flower, so the

meaning of flower is included in the meaning of daffodil. Or, daffodil is a hyponymy of flower.

When we consider hyponymous relationships, we are essentially looking at the meaning of words in some types of hierarchical relationship. You could in fact, represent the relationships between a set of words such as animal, ant, asp, banyan, carrot, coclcroach, creature, daffodil, dog, flower, horse, insect, living things, pine, plant, snake, tree, and vegetable as a hierarchical diagram in the following way:



In the paper, attempts will be made to explain this kind of hierarchical relations of hyponymy in Hausa Language.

**Distinguishing Features of Hyponymy**

There are some semantic features which are very particular to hyponymy, and they include:

1. Inclusion: A hyponymy is encompassed in its super-ordinate. That is to say that a word's meaning is included in another word's meaning.
2. Hyponymy is implicative as regards to definition. Lyons (1972) is of the view that hyponymy is definable in terms of unilateral implication. For example 'crimson' is established as a hyponymy of 'red' and 'buy' as a hyponymy of 'get' by virtue of the implications. "She was wearing a crimson dress" → "She was wearing a red dress" " I bought it from a friend" → "I got it from a friend". (i.e. between the prepositions expressed by the sentences 'she was wearing a crimson dress' and 'she was wearing a red dress', etc. when these sentences are uttered to make an assertion). The definition of hyponymy in terms of unilateral, or symmetrical, hyponymy: if X is a hyponym of Y and Y is a hyponym of X, then X and Y are synonymous. If hyponymy is defined as on - symmetrical, then proper hyponymy may be distinguished from synonymy as being

asymmetrical. This distinction of asymmetrical hyponymy as a special case of non - symmetrical hyponymy is analogous with the standard distinction of proper inclusion in the logic of classes.

3. Lexical representation. Hyponymy in most languages performs or indicates the class of words' category as regards to meaning and relationship. This relationship, however is between the general term and the specific. For instance, apple, mango, guava, banana, pineapple are all fruits. Thus, apple is a hyponym of fruits.

**Hyponyms in Hausa**

Like any developed language, Hausa is a language that emphasises the use of hyponyms. For any language to be well understood, speakers must know the meaning of words in the language and be able to relate the words to one another hyponymously. In Hausa words' hyponymous relationship is conceived into two ways:

- Hierarchical relationship.
- Associate meaning relationship

**Hierarchical Relationship**

Hierarchical relationship is simply a way in which the meaning of set of words in a language is related. Hausa is full of words that show this subordinate and super-ordinate relations. Consider the following examples:

B

Hausa	<u>Gloss</u>
(A) Kaftaanii	Kaftan
Wando	trousers
Riigaa	Gown

Farii	white
Bili	black
Jaa	red
Rawayaa	yellow
Shuudn	blue
Kooree/tsanwaa/algashii	green

Jallaabiiya (borrowed from Arabic) - a long flowing shirt with wide sleeves  
 Huulaa cap  
 Taguwaa loose - fitting shirt with circular neck - hode.  
 Zanee wrapper  
 Kallabii head tie  
 Buuje large trousers with big crutch - piece

C.

Doogoo	tall
gaJeeree	short
Siiriirii	thin
Kakkauraa	fat
Mummuunaa	urgly
Kyakkyawa	beautiful
Makeetacii	crnel
Mayaudarii	craftly person
Mazambacll	cheat
e.t.c.	
D kasa	soil
yunbuu	clay
yaashii	coarse sand

D			keekee	bicycle
	kasa	Soil		
	yunbuu	Clay	baabur	motor cycle
	yaashii	coarse sand		
	laakaa	Mud	moota	car
	kalgoo	a common tree of uncultivated land	G. Jirjin samaa	plane
	dooroowaa	lucust beans tree	jirjin kasaa	train
	markee	the chew - stick tree		
	kanyaa	African ebony tree	reediyoo	radio
	kadanyaa	the shea - butter tree	talabijin	television
	dunyaa	a tree with black plum -like fruit used in making <u>madi</u>	jaridaa	newspaper
			mujallaa	magazine
	Geeroo	millet	etc	
	Daawaa	Corn		
	Masara	maize		
	Maiwaa	bulrush millet		
	shinkaafa	Rice		
	Waakee	beans		
	Alkama	Wheat		

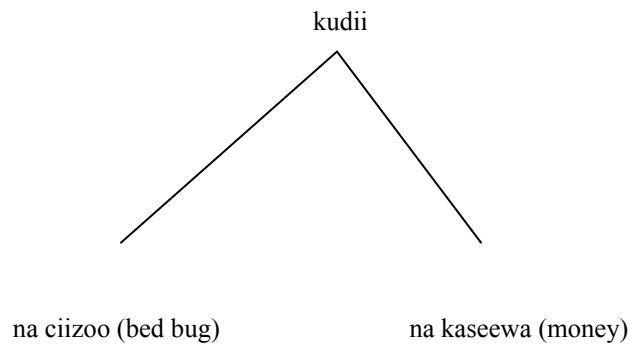
From the innumerable examples above, it would be seen that there is always a relationship of the words' meaning and this relationship is between a more general term and a specific one. Thus, the meaning of one word is included in the meaning of another word invariably.

In example "A", the words are dress terms, which means that their lexical representation, have the characteristic (dress) showing a class to which they all belong. In the case of (B), the terms are for colour .in general term, while the words such as fari, baki, ja, etc are specific.

As for (C), it is an inescapable fact that the whole of the words are specific term for the word adjective. More specifically, the words in (D) have the feature (sand) which indicates a class to which each one of them belong. The case of (E) is nothing but a mere lexical representation of a tree. In spite of their different names and fruits, we are acutely sure that the word kalgo or dorowa is a hyponym of a tree. In (F), it would be of some interest to see that the whole of the words can be reduced to food items, which is their general term when we consider the hyponymous relationship of the words.

The words exemplified in (G) show nothing but the relationship between general and specific terms, as we have had for the others. The general terms for this group of words is the means of transportation. Hence, keekee, baabur or mootaa is a hyponymy of the means of transportation. Lastly, which by no means not the least, Consider the following example:

(i)



the terms in (H) simply indicated their general words as media.

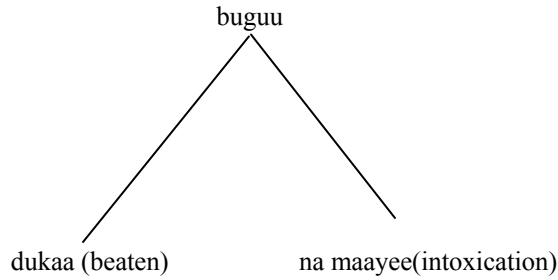
### Associate Relationship of Meaning

Like human beings, the relationships of some words' meaning can always be traced to a single source. Divergence and differentiation in meaning does not necessarily put words apart, but rather associate them. Associate relationship of meaning of words can be seen to occur in most languages, but is commonly found in Hausa language. Many factors account for such a linguistic relationship, among them are:

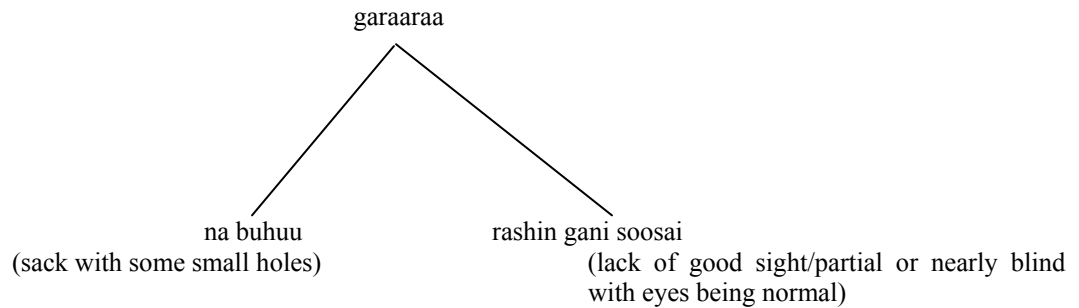
- (a) Historical knowledge about the development of meaning of words
- (b) Adaptability and adoptability of language.
- (c) Meaning inclusion and insertion
- (d) Extension of words' meaning.
- (e) Shift of meaning over time

Words' linguistic meaning relatedness reveals that words' meaning, no matter the number can be reduced to one, using the associate relationship of meaning. Hausa as a rapidly changing and metamorphosing language has a lot of these terms.

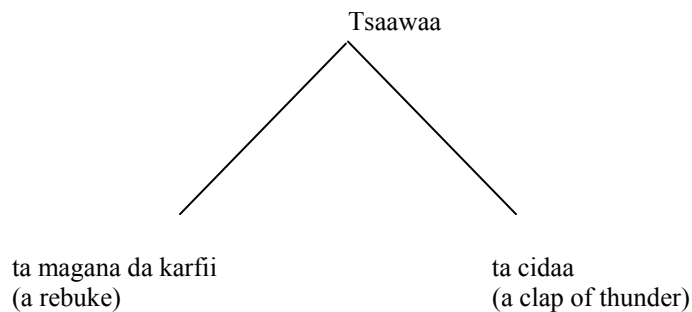
(ii) Another example is:



(iii) Garaaraa is yet another example of associate relationship of meaning.

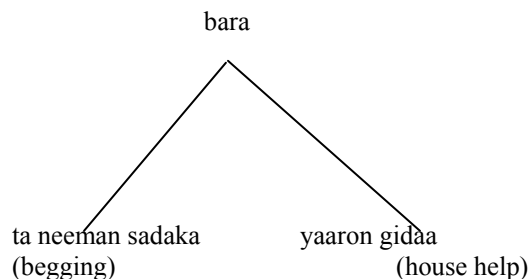


(iv) In this example, the notion of darkness is what associated the two meanings.



The word tsaawaa is applied to noise or sound on one hand and the clap of thunder usually at rainy season on the other hand. These meanings are related to the idea of loudness.

(v)



Both meanings are related to the concept of seek. In this example, the word kudii (money or bed-bug) has its two meanings related as they are bound by one common thing. Money which means kudii is spent for daily and occasional needs. On the other hand, bed-bug is killed whenever it is found. The Hausa word that binds the two meanings is kisa (literally means kill) and used for both money and bed-bug. The huge mass of Hausa people believed that kudii (money and bed-bug) are killed.

In Hausa the term buguu is used for a beaten or an intoxicated person. A person who is seriously beaten will lose his sense, so also an intoxicated person. The idea of losing sense is what made the two meanings, to be related.

This is far from being a complete list of the Hausa words with a related meaning, let alone of the group words, but the examples cited above will suffice to give the reader an idea of the extent to which words' meanings in Hausa can be related and encompassed.

However, it would be of some interest to note that the two related meanings usually found in a word's meaning are from different grammatical categories. For instance, the meaning of the word beguu in (II) above, is manifold. The first one is a verb (i.e. the meaning of beaten) and the other one is a noun (intoxication). The same applies to example (V) above where the first meaning of the term bara belongs to a verb (beg) and the second meaning is a noun (house help). One major reason for this pure linguistics development is sociolinguistics.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has attempted to discuss hyponymy as a component in the sphere of semantics. It explained the existing relationship between a more general and a specific meaning of words. Specifically, it showed further that words' meanings in Hausa could be associated to a single idea, notion or concept. Thus, the further we go into the words meaning relationship in Hausa, the less difference we will discover. The huge mass of Hausa words when studied closely would be found to fall into this category.

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