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Arabic Patterns in Hausa Poetry: Stanza, Metre and Rhyme in Comparative Perspective

Abstract: The paper deals with prosodic patterns of the Hausa poetry and investigates its stanzaic, metre, and rhyme structure with reference to the patterns developed in the Arabic poetry. Using the corpus of poems written in *ajami* by four contemporary poets the use of Arabic-based patterns as well as their “deviated” or “defected” forms have been investigated. The analysis confirms the cross-fertilization between the oral and written poems tradition in Hausa.

Keywords: prosody, stanza, metre, rhyme, Hausa

1. Introduction

Poetry is an art form that uses words and language not merely to express meaning or content, but to symbolize meaning and content (Eagleton 2007: 69). Generally, Hausa language has a single word for poetry, *waka*, meaning either ‘song’, with reference to oral poetry, or ‘poetry’, which is more associated with its written form. In Hausa literary tradition, the two notions are additionally distinguished by the socio-historical context. Written poetry is seen as a

consequence of contact with Arabs, whereas oral poetry represents Hausa literary heritage of pre-Islamic times.

When Islam came, scholars in Hausaland started to write in Arabic script. Later they evolved a variety of writing, namely *Ajami*, using modified or variant of the Arabic alphabet to write indigenous languages. Today the Hausa language functions in a digraphic style of writing as both Arabic (*Ajami*) and European (*Boko*) systems are used (Zima 1974: 54). The latter one which is based on Latin alphabet has the function of the official style of writing. As a consequence of this situation, there are two ways of composition in Hausa. The paper deals with the poetry which is written in *Ajami*. The corpus of my material attests to the fact that it is a living tradition also in modern times.

Metrical patterns of the Hausa poetry have drawn the attention of scholars for many years. Pioneer's study on Hausa verse prosody were Greenberg (1949; 1960), Hiskett (1969), but also Bayero (1970), Galadanci (1975), Sheshe (1977), Muhammad (1978), Sani (1978), Sipikin (1978), Sa'id (1978; 1983) and Junaidu (1981; 1988). Main attention was put on correlation of Hausa prosodic features with the Arabic patterns. Following the publication *Poetic Marriage Between Arabic and Hausa* by Galadanci (1975), Hausa poems have a similarity with Arabic poetry in terms of syllable structure, feet, metres, and even in types of deviations and defects of the basic patterns. Author's conclusion that 'the marriage' has come about by accident or by design, evoked a considerable number of studies, either to support, prove or to discard such assertion. The most significant steps made in subsequent works (Schuh 1987; 1988/89; 1989; 1995; 1996; Junaidu 1988) refer to including both Arabic and Hausa perspective in interpreting the nature of the Hausa metrics. Prosody remains subject of investigation also in recent studies on Hausa (Sa'id 2002; Dunfawa 2003; Dangambo 2007; Bello & Sheshe 2013); Zaria 2013; and Bello 2014).

The present paper investigates the stanzaic, metre, and rhyme structure in Hausa poems composed by four Hausa poets considered representatives of modern Hausa poetry. Main focus is put on how they fill the patterns of Arabic poetry from which they are derived. The poets are: Usman Jari Kurfi, Garba Gashuwa, Ibrahim Kaulahi and Raihanatu Usman. The corpus consist of 388 poems composed in *Ajami* script on several topics and these manuscripts were scanned directly from the sources.

2. Stanza

According to Cuddon (1991: 863), stanza is “a group of lines of verse”. Hirsch (2014: 608), putting it another way, defines stanza as “the natural unit of the lyric, a group of or sequence of lines arranged in a pattern”. Padgett (2000: 183), however, states that the stanza is “a group of lines in a poem separated from other lines by a space”.

2.1 Stanzaic structures in Arabic and Hausa

In literary Arabic, there exist a number of forms in the Arabic poetic tradition. A poem can consist of a stanza with a single line; that which has two lines per stanza is called *muzdawidj* or *qasida* (couplet); three lines per stanza is called *muthnawi* or *masnawi* (triplet); four lines per stanza is called *ruba'i*¹ (pl. *rubaiyat*) or *dubayt*. And finally, five lines per stanza is *mukhammas* or *khumāsiyya* (quintuplet).

Also, there is what is called *tarbii'i* and *takhmiis*, in which a poet supplies two or three hemistichs to a couplet or triplet in order to make it quatrain or quintuplet respectively.

In Hausa poetic tradition, a number of structures have been identified. According to Sa'id (1983: 50-54), there are seven

¹ An Arabic term meaning a quatrain, or four-line stanza. The term is nearly always included in the title of any Arabic poem that is built upon such quatrains (Greene *et al.* 2012).

Considering the given types of the stanzas, it can be seen that both Arabic and Hausa poems share a similar stanza type, although they have different terms. Furthermore, there are representations of all these kinds of stanzas structure in the poems of my authors. The commonest types have 'yar biyar quintet as well as 'yar tagwai couplet. 'Yar biyar, the quintet is the highest in number (171), followed by 'yar tagwai, the couplet (102), then 'yar uku triplet (53), then 'yar hudu quartet (42), and gwauruwa single (20) as the least type in the corpus.

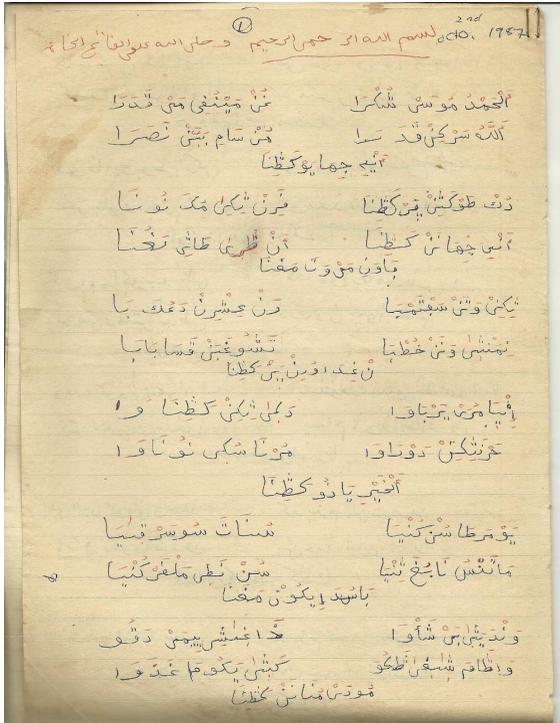


Figure 2. An example of a five line stanza by Usman Jari Kurfi

It is interesting to observe that, in my corpus, there are some poems with a mixed stanza. For example, in Garba Gashua's poems called *Muzurun sako* [The Hidden Tom-cat], there is a combination of 2, 5, and 7 stanzas.

Also, there is another example of a combination of six (6), seven (7), nine (9) ten (10) and fifteen (15) lines stanzas in a poem named *Achaba* [motorbike] composed by Alhaji Garba Gashuwa. Furthermore, from a poem named *Kebbi* there is a combination of two (2), four (4), and five (5) lines stanzas.

Other instances of mixed stanzas are from a poem named *Mulki sai wanda ya san shi* [Governing is for Those who have Knowledge about it] with a combination of one (1), three (3), and five (5) lines stanzas.

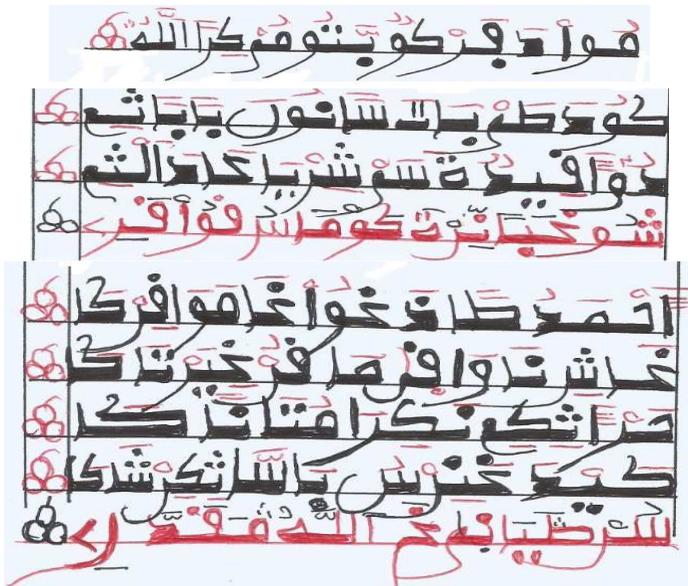


Figure 3. Instance of a poem with a mixed stanza by Garba Gashuwa

Alhaji Ibrahim Kaulahi's poem called *Kai ne abun yabona* [You are the One I praise] contains 22 stanzas in a whole, out of which 16 stanzas have 2 lines, others with 10, 14, 18, 25, and 29 line stanzas.

Also, there is a poem called *Naraguta*, composed by Alhaji Ibrahim Kaulahi with a combination of 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 10 line stanzas.

This is also a poem with a total number of 7 stanzas in which all the 7 stanzas have 14 lines, namely *Rai ya dadē*, [May you Live Long] composed by Alhaji Ibrahim Kaulahi.

On Hausa poetic tradition, stanzas of a written poetry are built up of the regular number of lines, the poems follow fixed verse structure, whereas in oral poetry stanzas are built up of the irregular number of lines range in length, from one to many lines. This is a typical characteristic of oral poetry incorporated in some of the modern written poems.

Another distinctive feature of the oral poetry found in the corpus, is the presence of *amshi*⁷ (refrains or repetend or chorus) in most of the poems in the corpus. In his paper, Muhammad (1978:80) outlined the twofold relevant structural implication as follows:

First, the *amshi* marks of the stichs (or stanzas); and from this fact flows the other significance of *amshi*: that its presence enables the stichs to be grammatically independent of each other.

Amshi is a distinctive feature of Hausa oral poetry, incorporated in some Hausa modern poems, as we can see it in Garba Gashuwa's poem (example presented in Figure 1):

Da karkarā da cikin birnī Ku dūbi yanda mukē fāmā

⁷ Though it differs significantly from that of oral song.

‘From village to the city look at how we are suffering’

3.0 Metre

Metre is the basic rhythmic structure of a verse, “a way of describing the rhythmic patterning in poetry, of keeping time, of measuring poetic” (Hirsch 2014: 375). To Jansson (2010: 8), metre is “the pattern of repeated sound-units in the line of a poem”.

The metrical system of classical Arabic poetry has been studied by Arab lexicographers and philologists since 700s⁸. They laid the rules of interpreting the variations of patterns depending on the types of feet and their sequence.

The works on the Hausa metre keep a reference to the Arabic metre and show the correlation of patterns in the two languages (Galadanci 1975, Sani 1978, Sa’id 2002, Bello & Sheshe 2013, and Bello 2014). The transmission of the rhythmic scheme from Arabic to Hausa was termed as “poetic marriage between Arabic and Hausa” (Galadanci 1975) as highlighted in the introduction. The analysis of the Hausa metre is basically oriented at Arabic metric patterns as one-to-one correspondence, but some attempts were also made to show the ‘defects’ and ‘deviations’ from the Arabic metres (Galadanci 1975, Dunfawa 2003 and Bello 2014) and to indicate the Hausa linguistic features exploited in the poetry (Junaidu 1981; Junaidu 1988). This will be elaborated in 3.1.

3.1 Metre in Arabic and Hausa

Both Arabic and Hausa metres are quantity based, i.e. built up on the changing of long and short syllables. The short syllable in Arabic is a consonant (C) followed by a short vowel (v), while the long syllable is any of the following: CV,

⁸ Khalil ibn Ahmad Al-Farahidi (d. 791), the author of Arabic prosody, is the inventor of a measure for studying prosody of Arabic poetry (Abbas 2001: 29).

C + diphthong, CvC, CVC or C + diphthong + C, where capital V represents a long vowel (Retso, 2002: 18 quoted in Jansson 2010: 9).

Hausa has only two syllable types: light syllables: CV in which V represents short vowel, and heavy syllables: CVV, CVC in which VV is a long vowel or diphthong (Schuh 1995: 1).

In both Arabic and Hausa, the syllable, either long or short, is the basic unit of the metrical system, and combination of syllables makes up a foot (pl. feet). Feet, *tafā'īl* (in Arabic), *kafāfiwà* (in Hausa), refer to a group of syllables, which further combine and form a metrical unit.

There are ten (10) feet in all that both Arabic and Hausa use. In fact, the Hausa units are of Arabic origin. Their names representing the sequence of syllables confirm that they have been adopted directly from Arabic. The tables below indicate the names of these bases in both Arabic and Hausa:

1. فَعُولُنْ	1. ⁹ <i>Fa'uulun</i>
2. مَفَاعِلُنْ	2. <i>Mafaa'ilun</i>
3. مُفَاعِلَاتُنْ	3. <i>Mufaa'ala-tun</i>
4. فَاعِلَاتُنْ	4. <i>Faa'ilaatun</i>
5. فَاعِلُنْ	5. <i>Faa'ilun</i>
6. مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ	6. <i>Mustaf'ilun</i>
7. فَاعِلَاتُنْ	7. <i>Faa'ilaatun</i>
8. مُتَفَاعِلُنْ	8. <i>Mutafaa'ilun</i>
9. مَفْعُولَاتُ	9. <i>Maf'uulaatu</i>
10. مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ	10. <i>Mustaf'ilun</i>

(Galadanci, 1975: 3ff.)

A certain number of feet forms the metre. Some metres consist of two, three or four feet of the same type. Some

⁹ The long line placed under the moras indicates the position of stem/*turkē/watad* of that particular foot.

metres are composite (consisting of different feet) (Abbas 2001: 35).

Classical Arabic has sixteen (16)¹⁰ established metres. Al-Farahidi (d. 786 or 791) divided Arabic metres into fifteen parts, but Al-Ahfaš (d. 793) added one further metre *al-mutadārik* which makes sixteen (Abbas 2001:34).

<i>No.</i>	<i>Metre</i>	<i>Feet Combination</i>
1.	طويل	فَعولُن مَفاعِلُن فَعولُن مَفاعِلُن
2.	بسيط	مُسْتَفْعِلُن فاعِلُن مُسْتَفْعِلُن فَعِلُن
3.	مديد	فاعِلاتُن فاعِلُن فاعِلاتُن
4.	واقر	مُفاعِلاتُن مُفاعِلاتُن فَعولُن
5.	كامل	مُتَفاعِلُن مُتَفاعِلُن مُتَفاعِلُن
6.	هزج	مَفاعِلُن مَفاعِلُن
7.	رجز	مُسْتَفْعِلُن مُسْتَفْعِلُن مُسْتَفْعِلُن
8.	رمل	فاعِلاتُن فاعِلاتُن فاعِلُن
9.	منسرح	مُسْتَفْعِلُن فاعِلاتُ مُتَفاعِلُن
10.	خفيف	فاعِلاتُن مُسْتَفْعِلُن فاعِلاتُن
11.	مقتضب	مَفْعولاتُ مُسْتَفْعِلُن
12.	مجثث	مُسْتَفْعِلُن فاعِلاتُن
13.	مضارع	مَفاعِلُ فاعِلاتُن
14.	سريع	مُسْتَفْعِلُن مُسْتَفْعِلُن فاعِلُن
15.	متقارب	فَعولُن فَعولُن فَعولُن فَعولُن
16.	متدارك	فَعِلُن فَعِلُن فَعِلُن فَعِلُن

Figure 4. The 16 Arabic metres with their feet combination

The analysis of meter in Hausa poetry is usually conducted with reference to the patterns of Arabic meter. M. Hiskett (see Bello 1983/85) examined poem written by Dan Fodio

¹⁰ For description of these metres, see Abbas 2001; Siwec 2005; Ibrahim 2005; Hashimi (no date).

and his contemporaries and discovered that the poets used 10 of the 16 basic Arabic metres, namely: *Basit*, *Kamil*, *Khafif*, *Mutadarik*, *Mutaqarab*, *Rajaz*, *Ramal*, *Sari*, *Tawil* and *Wafir*.

Galadanci (1975) identified additional metres that function in Hausa poetry, namely: *Madid*, *Hajaz*, *Munsarih* and *Muqtalib*. Sani (1978) discovered the existence of *Mujtath* as an additional metre in Hausa. Zaria (2013) added the sixteenth (16) pattern, i.e *Mudaari*'ii.

From the foregoing, according to Bello (2014: 33), sixteen (16) Arabic metres have found their way into Hausa poems.

No.	Metre¹¹	Feet Combination
1.	Dawil	<i>Fa-uu-lun Ma-faa-ii-lun Fa-uu-lun Ma-faa-ii-lun</i>
2.	Basid'	<i>Mus-taf-i-lun Faa-i-lun Mus-taf-i-lun (+Faa-i-lun)</i>
3.	Madid	<i>Faa-i-laa-tun Faa-i-lun Faa-i-laa-tun (+Faa-i-lun)</i>
4.	Wafir	<i>Ma-faa-a-la-tun Ma-faa-a-la-tun (+Ma-faa-a-la-tun)</i>
5.	Kamil	<i>Mu-ta-faa-i-lun Mu-ta-faa-i-lun (+Mu-ta-faa-i-lun)</i>
6.	Hajaz	<i>Ma-faa-ii-lun Ma-faa-ii-lun (+Ma-faa-ii-lun)</i>
7.	Rajaz	<i>Mus-taf-i-lun Mus-taf-i-lun (+Mus-taf-i-lun)</i>
8.	Ramal	<i>Faa-i-laa-tun Faa-i-laa-tun (+Faa-i-laa-tun)</i>
9.	Munsarih	<i>Mus-taf-i-lun Maf-uu-laa-tu (+Mus-taf-i-lun)</i>
10.	Hafif	<i>Faa-i-laa-tun Mus-taf-i-lun (+Faa-i-laa-tun)</i>

¹¹ As can be noted from the above table, some Hausa metre names are the same as Arabic ones, while others have undergone modifications in phonetic shape.

11.	Muqṭalib	<i>Maf-uu-laa-tu Mus-taf-i-lun</i>
12.	Mujtat	<i>Mus-taf-i-lun Faa-i-laa-tun (+Mus-taf-i-lun)</i>
13.	Mudari'i	<i>Ma-faa-i-ii-lun Faa-i-laa-tun (+Ma-faa-i-ii-lun)</i>
14.	Sari'i	<i>Mus-taf-i-lun Mus-taf-i-lun (+Maf-uu-laa-tu)</i>
15.	Sari'i	<i>Mus-taf-i-lun Mus-taf-i-lun (+Maf-uu-laa-tu)</i>
16.	Mutadarak	<i>Faa-i-lun Faa-i-lun (+Faa-i-lun) (+Faa-i-lun)</i>

Figure 5. The Hausa 16 metres originated from Arabic

In describing a metric structure of the Arabic poetry, it's pertinent to mention a metrical change or deviation called *zihāf* (pl. *zihāfāt*) and a metrical irregularity or defect 'illa (pl. 'ilal).

According to Abbas (2001: 319) *zihāf* in prosody is a metrical change which affects feet. He further goes on to say that this change is not obligatory, but it is regularly made on syllables *asbāb* in all feet of a poem and is specifically connected with 'arud, darb and hasw, i.e. the last foot of the first hemistich, the last foot of the second hemistich, and the remaining part, respectively". Quoting Ibn Rasiq al-Qayrawanii Abbas (2001: 31) pointed out that "there is no poetry without *zihāfat*. *Zihāf* gives the poem *qasiida* much melody".

According to Al-Hashiimi (no date), Abbas (2001), Ibrahim (2005) and Ayagi (2011) there are two kinds of *zihāf*: *mufṛad* (single) and *murakkab* (*muzdawā*) (double, mixed composed).

Changes qualified as *zihāf mufṛad* include deleting the fifth moving letter from the foot *mufā'alatun* / V-VV- of *waafir* metre; as a consequence, the foot becomes *mufā'ilun* / V-V- (the change is termed as *aql*); within this meter the change into *mufā'altun* / V- - - may also occur (termed as 'asb).

The deviation *zihaaf murakkab* occurs, when, for example, *maf'uulātu* / – – –V changes to *fa'ilātu* / VV–V, whereas *mustaf'ilun* / – – –V– changes to *fa'ilatun* / VVV–).

The changes recognized as deviations operate within the metrical pattern. They are connected with the replacement of one type of syllable by another one to fill the metrical limit. All the deviations found in Arabic may also occur in Hausa. The names of particular changes also function in Hausa and they are direct equivalents of the Arabic names, e.g. Arabic *aql*, Hausa *akalii*, similarly *'asb* (*asabī*), *habn* (*habnī*), *idmār* (*ilmārī*), *kaff* (*kaffī*), *qabd* (*kablii*), *tayy* (*dayyi*), *waqs* (*wakasī*) within *zihāf mufrad* (*gwauron zihāfi* in Hausa), as well as *habl* (*hablī*), *hazl* (*hazlī*), *naqs* (*nakasī*), and *sakl* (*shakalī*) as *zihāf murakkab* (*tagwayen zihāfi* in Hausa)¹². These deviations are found only in the affixes of the feet and never in the stems (Galadanci 1975: 6).

'*illa* in prosody according to Abbas (2001: 106) is "...a metrical irregularity. It appears in syllables *asbab* and *awtād* concerning two feet: '*arud* and *darb*. Following Al-Hashiimi (no date), Abbas (2001), Ibrahim (2005) and Ayagi (2011), there are two kinds of '*illa*: *naqs* (decrease), and *ziyāda* (increase). Like *zihāfat*, poets use these metrical changes in order to give their composition more harmony and melody (Abbas 2001: 106).

The defect of decrease (or omission) *naqs* ('*illar ragi* in Hausa) takes place when, for example, the *faa'ilātun* / – V – – foot changes to *fā'il* / – –) or the *maf'uulātu* / – – –V foot changes to *maf'uulā* / – – –. They represent the changes termed as *batr* (*batarii* in Hausa) and *kasf* (*kashafi*) respectively. Other defects are *hadad* (*hadad*), *hadf* (*hazfi*), *qat'* (*kada'i*), *qatf* (*kadafi*), *waqf*, and *qasr*.

The defect of increase (or addition) *ziyāda* ('*illar dadī* in Hausa) refers to adding one long syllable (or two moras) at

¹² See Galadanci 1975, Dunfawa 2003, Bello & Sheshe 2013.

the end of a foot Q Q-Q O-O + O-O (the change termed as *tarfil*, *tarfili* in Hausa) and also includes two other kinds of changes *tadyiil* (*tazyīlī*) and *tasbīg*.

According to Galadanci (1975: 8) once the defect occurs in a feet in any particular position in a line of a poem, it must recur in that foot in that the same position in every line of the poem.

As stated above, in both Arabic and Hausa poems there exist a number of deviations and defects with almost the same characteristics and functions. Similarly to meters, the Arabic terms for the type of changes (slightly modified on phonetic ground) are used.

With respect to my corpus, I did come across some poems that conformed with some of the classical Arabic metres. I have found few irregularities and also some units that are not metrically structured according to Arabic pattern.

Scansion¹³ of the following verse from a poem by Usman Jari Kurfi which is in *Mutadārak* (*Faa-i-lun Faa-i-lun* (+*Faa-i-lun*) (+*Faa-i-lun*)) metre is to illustrate:

(1) Fa'lun/ fā'ilun /fā'ilun Fa'lun/ fā'ilun /fā'ilun
 - * - - V - - V - - * - - V - - V -
 Fa'lun/ fā'ilun /fā'ilun Fa'lun/ fā'ilun /fā'ilun
 - * - - V - - V - - * - - V - - V -
 Yasbī /Chāma mai/ cī gabā
 - * - - V - - V -

(First verse of Usman Jari Kurfi, *Yasbī Chāma*)

¹³ The analysis of metrical pattern. In Hausa it is called *yanka* or *fēdē wākā*.

This poem above, is in Arabic metre *Mutadārak*, which repeats *Fā'ilun* (- V-), three times in a line. However, sometimes one finds *Fālun* (- -), as in those places marked with asterisk (*) as a result of a metrical irregularity namely *kada'ī* (*qaṭ'* in Arabic) which is an accepted variant. Consider other examples from the corpus below:

(2) Ibrahim Kaulahi, *Allah Sarki Rabbana ga Kaulahi* [Oh my God, Here is Kaulahi], which follows *Rajaz* metre.

Allāhu Sar/kī Rabbanā/ gā Kaulahī,
 - - V - - - V - - - V -

Zai addu'ā /bāwanka dān/ baiwarka.
 - - V - - - V - - - V *¹

(First verse of Kaulahi, *Allah Sarki Rabbana ga Kaulahi*)

The poem, like the previous *Yasbī Chāma* [S.B. Chamah]¹⁴ also is in one of the classical Arabic metre *Rajaz*, which is a repetition of *Mustaf'ilun Mustaf'ilun* (+ *Mustaf'ilun* (- - V -). However, in the second hemistich of the second line, at the point of rhyme, one will notice a cut off of the last long syllable, this happen as a result of a an *Illa* called *hazfī* (*hadf* in Arabic).

(3) Alhaji Ibrahim Kaulahi *Adalci* [Justice]:

a. Allah gaa mu garee ka Allah,	Mun daawoo a garee ka Allah,
- - - V V - V - -	- - - VV - V - -
Mu nan baayi nee naa Allah,	Allah gaa mu garee ka Jallah,
V - - V - - - -	- - - V V - V - -
Don baa zan iya yin shiruu baa.	
- - - VV - V - -	

¹⁴ Brigadier General Samaila Bature Chamah was a former military administrator of Katsina State during Abacha's regime, from 1996 to 1998.

- b. Kuukaanaa Allah garee kaa, Na kaawoo Allah don isarkaa,
 - - - - - V - - V - - - - - V - -
 Don sirrinka da annabinkaa, Jalla Wahaabu ka shaaren kuukaa,
 - - - V V - V - - - V V - V V - - - -
 Ba sai nai maka maagiyaa baa.
 V - - V V - V - -
- c. Zaamaanin nan am matsee muu, An kaamaa an taakuraa muu,
 - - - - - V - - - - - - - V - -
 Haƙƙooƙi duk an hanaa muu, Allah gaa mu gareeka gaa muu,
 - - V - - V - - - - - V V - V - -
 Don baa yaafeewaa mukee baa.
 - - - - - V - -

In the above quintuplet verse we see a combination of different feet in each stanza (a - c), including feet that are not metrically structured. Moreover, there are some specific adaptations of the text to conform with the metrical ‘length’ of the verse. They concern final syllables in which short syllable is lengthened, mostly pronominal forms, therefore *isarka* has the form *isarkaa*, *taakuraa mu* is *taakuraa muu* and *gaa mu* is changed into *gaa muu*.

(4) Alhaji Garba Gashuwa’s triplet *A Daidaita Sahu*
 [Straightening the Rows]¹⁵

- a. Da farkoo bismillahi Allah Rabbanaa yaa lillahii,
 V - - - - V V - - - V - - - V -
 Taabaaraka Alhayyu Waahidun yaa Jallaa,
 - - V V - - V - V - - - -
 Jalla Allahu ceecee mu daa ba zaa mu iyaa baa.
 - V - V V - - V - V - V V - -

¹⁵ Social reorientation programme initiated by the Kano State Government under the administration of *Malam Ibrahim Shekarau*.

- b. Allahu mai yamma mai gabas mahaliccii,
 - V V - - V - V - V V - -
 Shii yai kudu har areewacii makadaicii,
 - - V V - V - V - V V - -
 Jalla Allahu ceecee mu daa ba zaa mu iyaa baa.
 - V - V V - - V - V - V V - -
- c. Jalla Allah kee bai mutum walau ya hanaa shii,
 - V - - - - V - V - V V - -
 Tun da shii nee Rabbi Ganiyyu baa a tukee shii,
 - V - - - V V - V - V V - -
 Jalla Allahu ceecee mu daa ba zaa mu iyaa baa.
 - V - V V - - V - V - V V - -

The above examples indicate that Hausa poems do not copy the Arabic metrical system in all its variants. From the corpus, so far, I came across a handful number of classical Arabic meters employed by my authors and the results are as follows: *Mutadāarak*, being the predominant and followed by *Muktalib* and *Rajaz*. Regular combination of feet in each line are manifested in poems (1) and (2), while (3) and (4) are instances of an irregular combination of feet in each line. The lack of abiding to strict metrical rules, as in some of the poems analyzed, direct our attention to another factor, namely the cross-fertilization between the oral and written poems tradition.

As cited earlier, following the publication of Galadanci (1975), a number of approaches surfaced to explain the sources and inspirations for the Hausa metrical system. Some of them view Khalilian system of Arabic metres as adequate to distinguish also the Hausa patterns (Sani 1978; Sa'id 1978, 1979, 1981, 1983 and 2002; Dunfawa 2002; Dangambo 2007; Bello and Sheshe 2013; Zaria 2013, and Bello 2014). Some other ones see the Arabic-oriented analysis as neither adequate nor satisfactory and additionally supporting the theories of cultural imperialism (Sipikin 1978). It has drawn

the attention to the features that are indigenous in Hausa culture (Furniss, 1996: 212). According to Schuh (1996), a theory of Hausa metrics must use information extracted from both phonological structure and from various aspects of oral performance.

The studies on the metrical system of Hausa poetry tend to distinguish the specific features at the level of foot. Dangambo (2007: 26ff) revealed the existence of 8 feet, in addition to those originated from Arabic. Bello (2014: 70), presented an approach based on the foot-counting procedure. He stated that the most predominant or dominant foot will be ensured as the one along which the metre shall be established. The illustration of the verse which functions in modern poetry has confirmed the variation of feet patterns.

As for meters, the survey of 252 poems published during 1950 and 1960s (Furniss 1996: 211) found that *Kamil* was the most common metre, followed by *Mutaqarab*, *Wafir*, *Ramal* and *Mutadarik* and the rarely used metres were *Basit*, *Rajaz*, *Tawali* and *Kafif*. Taking this into considerations, one can say that now there is gradual departure from the conventional Arabic patterns, despite the fact that some of the remaining metres that were not identified earlier were identified recently in modern poetry.

As noted earlier, I came across only three classical Arabic meters that my authors employed, namely *Mutadāarak*, *Muktalib* and *Rajaz*. Withal, the poets adopt metrical feet, but in most of the cases they hardly follow their combinations in order to get the patterns characteristic of Arabic. In some poems, the metrical structure cannot be attributed to any established Arabic metres.

4.0 Rhyme

Rhyme is “a structural and/or semantic pattern formed by the repetition of syllables with identical or similar sounds”

(Goring *et al*, 2010: 417ff) or the regular occurrence of a particular sound or word in a poem (Sa'id 1983: 62).

Referring to Arabic, *qafiya* "is the last word of each verse of the *qasida*" (Al-Ahfaš quoted in Abbas 2001).

4.1 Rhyme in Arabic and Hausa Poems

In Arabic poetry, a rhyme can be *mutlaqa* (loose rhyme) or *muqayyada/muğarrada* (fettered one) (Abbas 2002: 181). *Mutlaqa* is when when the *bayt* 'verse' ends with a vowel. Using this criterion, a half dozen kinds of loose rhyme can be distinguished (Abbas 2012: 181ff). *Muqayyada* is when the *bayt* ends with a consonant. The fettered rhyme can be found in three cases (Abbas 2002: 181ff). There are further classifications and terminology concerning the names of rhymes, vowels in rhymes and letters of rhymes.

As for Hausa, according to Sa'id (2002: 287ff)¹⁶, there are four types of rhyme in Hausa poetry¹⁷. These are as follows:

***Babban amsa-amo* (Terminal rhyme)¹⁸**

This is the steady occurrence of a sound or syllable at the end of each stanza, continuing to end of the poem. The below example is from Raihanatu Usman's poem, namely *Gasar Bege Annabi* [Competition on the Prophet's Eulogy]:

¹⁶ Sa'id (1983: 62-70) mentioned five types of rhymes in Hausa, namely; terminal rhyme, initial rhyme, internal rhyme, tonal rhyme and independent rhyme.

¹⁷ Dunfawa (2003) distinguished five types of rhymes in Hausa namely: *babban amsa-amo*, *karamin amsa-amo*, *amsa-amon farawa*, *amsa-amo mai zaman kansa*, *amsa-amon karin sauti*.

¹⁸ Birniwa (1987) called this rhyme *external rhyme*.

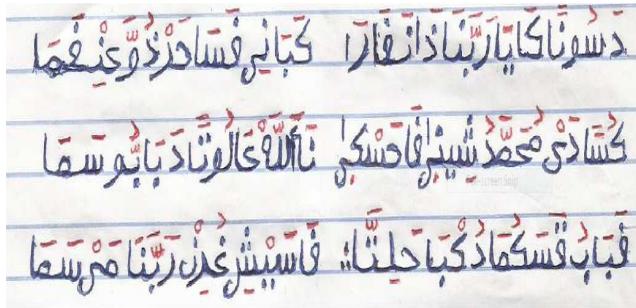


Figure 6. Example of terminal rhyme in Hausa

Da suunankā Yā Rabbanā zā ni fārā,
 Ka bā nī fasāhar zuwwā in *gamā*.
 Kusā dai Muhammadu shī nē fā haskē,
 Na Allah ā lūtā da bābū *samā*
 Fa bā bu fasa kumā duk bā halittā,
 Fā sai shi gurin Rabbanā mai *samā*.

This type of rhyme can be observed in the whole couplet poem consisting of a total number of 20 stanzas; each stanza ends with terminal rhyme *mā*.

***Karamin amsa-amo* (Internal rhyme)¹⁹**

According to Sa'id (2002), this is usually found within three types of Hausa verse: triplet, quartet, and quintet, where two, three or four repetitions occur on each stanza, and there is terminal rhyme repeated throughout the poem. Consider the following couplet from the corpus:

(5) Bi'ismika Sarkii Raahimi*i*, Mahaliccin raanaa har daree
 Sarkin da ya tsaida saman bakwai*i*, Bai sa turkee ba ya tookaree*i*.

¹⁹ It is also called *amsa-amon ciki*.

As can be noted from the above couplet, *e* stands as the rhyming scheme of the stanza or verse. It is the external rhyme of the poem, whereas *i* stands for the internal rhyme of the stanza and it can vary from one stanza to another.

Amsa-amo mai cin gashin kansa (Independent rhyme)

It is the case, each stanza has its own independent rhyme. Internal rhyme and terminal rhyme are not relevant here.

Consider the following example of this type of rhyme from Alhaji Ibrahim Kaulahi’s poem called *Ya Allah ya Allah taimaki Gaddafi* [Oh Allah, oh Allah, please help Gaddafi].

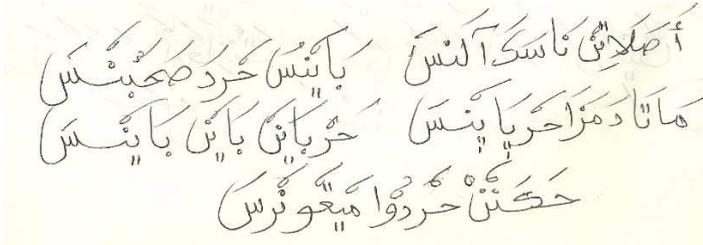


Figure 7: Example of independent rhyme (sa) in Hausa

A Salātin nā saka ālansa, Bāyan su har da Sahabbansa,
Mātā da mazā har 'yā'yansa, Har bāyin bāyin bāyansa,
Haka nan har dū mai kaunarsa.

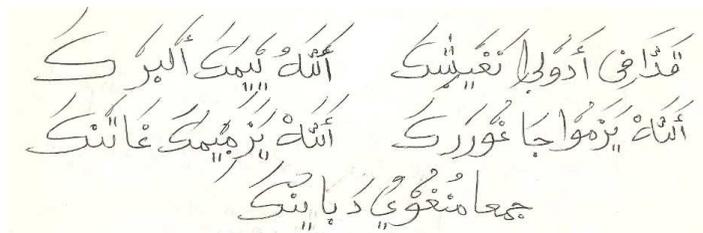


Figure 8: Example of independent rhyme (ka) in Hausa

Gaddāfi a dōlē na gaishe *ka*, Allahu ya yi maka albar*ka*,
Allah ya zamō jāgōrark*ka*, Allah ya zamē maka gātank*ka*,
Jama’aa mun gōyu da bāyank*ka*.

***Amsa-amon somin-tabi* (Initial rhyme)**

Here the same sound comes at the beginning of each stanza or each line in the stanza. This is very rare in Hausa. I did not come across this type of rhyme in the corpus.

From the foregoing classification of rhyme in Arabic (though not extensively explained) and Hausa it is interesting to note that the classification of rhyme in Hausa differs from Arabic. In Arabic, loose rhyme (when the *bayt* ends with a vowel) have six varieties, each with a unique name. Likewise, the fettered rhyme (when the *bayt* ends with a consonant) also has three cases with each with a different name.

In Hausa, *babban amsa-amo* (terminal or external rhyme) can be loose or fettered. Likewise, the *amsa-amon ciki* (internal rhyme), or *amsa-amo mai cin gashin kansa* (independent rhyme) can terminate with either vowel or consonant.

In my corpus, there is the presence of three rhymes (*babban amsa-amo*, *amsa-amon ciki* and *amsa-amo mai cin gashin kansa*), but I did not come across *amsa-amon samin-tabi* (initial rhyme).

5.0 Summary

In this paper, an attempt was made to present and compare some prosodic elements (stanza, metre and rhyme) of Arabic and Hausa poems. The presentation is to manifest that almost all (except for those modified phonetically and phonologically) terms used in the analysis of the prosody of Hausa poetry, particularly, the metrics, have been originally borrowed from Arabic. The influence of Arabic prosody on classical Hausa poetry, particularly those poems written during the 19th century is a well known fact, but also the

presence of such influence in some modern Hausa poems is undeniable. In terms of stanzaic structure, my authors still follow the theoretical account of Arabic poem stanzas despite numerous irregularities in their application. With regard to metrical patterns, there are poems that exhibit greater or lesser degree of resemblance with that of Arabic model, though the majority is marked by deviations which make the metrical analysis based on Arabic-oriented method impossible. With regards to rhyme, the Arabic patterns are still in use, however, there are differences in their classification.

To sum up, metrically unexplainable deviations, defects and modification in some modern Hausa poems (manifested, for instance, in using *amshi* and accompanying instrument while performing it) confirm that the prosodic nature of the modern Hausa poetry needs additional attention which would include mixing of oral and written traditions in creating the metrical patterns of the Hausa poetry.

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