

Prostitute's Speech Style in Hausa Society: A Study of Ibrahim Sheme's Novel 'Yartsana'

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Abstract: This paper is titled Prostitute's Speech Style in Hausa Society: A Study of Ibrahim Sheme's Novel 'Yartsana'. The focus of this paper is to discuss the speech style of prostitutes of Hausa society as appeared in 'Yartsana'. The novel 'Yartsana' centres on the socio-cultural issue of prostitution as it relates to Hausa land. Prostitution is prohibited and negatively viewed in Hausa society. Prostitutes must leave their home town to other places for security purposes. In the other places, the prostitutes adopt a speech style different from that of non prostitute women in the society. The aim of this paper is to analyze the prostitute's speech style as obtained in the novel 'Yartsana'. It discusses speech styles in 'Yartsana' in five sub-heading. These are the taboo, Proverbs, and bitter words the forth part of the paper comprises conclusion where summary and findings were discussed. The last portion is the bibliography where sources of the paper are listed.

Keywords: Prostitute, speech, style, Hausa society, taboo, proverbs.

INTRODUCTION

'Yartsana' is a novel written in Hausa by Ibrahim Sheme in the year 2007. The novel's plot is generally about prostitution as it is in Hausa land. Prostitution from the Hausa perspective is when a female (a woman) commodifies and commercializes her sexual encounters with the males. In other words, a woman who receives money for her sexual favours, or indulges in illicit sex is regarded as a prostitute. In Hausa society, prostitution is totally prohibited and viewed negatively. A prostitute woman is hated even by her family. For that she must change location to a place where she is not known. In an environment where she is not known, the prostitute lives freely and frees to decide the kind of speech style she may adopt for communication. In most cases, the prostitutes use speech style not commonly used by other women who are not into prostitution. The aim of this paper is to study and analyze the speech style used by the prostitutes in their interaction as it is in 'Yartsana'. The novel 'Yartsana' is in Hausa language but the speeches concerned will be translated into English using free/contextual translation method. This may be regarded as independent translation. Independent translation implies the free choice that the translator has

in using his own initiatives to bring out what may be termed as the actual message from the source language [1].

Hausa People and Their Language

The Hausa people are those people whose mother tongue is Hausa. They are the people who originated from the territory called 'Hausa land'. According to Robinson [2] Hausa land or the country inhabited by the Hausa people, extends, roughly speaking, from lat. 8 N., to 14 N., and from long. 4 E. to 11 E., and includes an area of half a million square miles, the whole of which was within the British sphere of influence. Hausa is moreover the language of trade throughout the whole of the Central Sudan, and indeed the greater part of Africa north of the equator. Clarke [3] believes Hausa land covers a large part of northern Nigeria and part of the present-day Republic of Niger. Hausa language is said to be spoken by over 15,000,000 people by the years 1936 [4]. According to Furniss [5], the language (Hausa) is spoken by more than fifty million people. This includes native and non-native speakers. Presently, Hausa language is rated number eleven most spoken languages worldwide.

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Hausa language has two forms of writing; Ajami and Boko. Ajami is Hausa writing system through the modified Arabic sounds. The system came to Hausa with the advent of Islam. It is said that, Islam came to Hausa land since around the 11th century [6]. According to other authorities such as Clarke [3] and Yahaya [7], by the middle of the 14th century, there was a Muslim community in Kano. It was indicated that, 'In Yaji's time the Wangarawa came from Melle (Mali) bringing the Muslim religion. Their leader was Abdurahman Zaito...(they were) about forty in all. As a result of the advent of Islam in Hausa land the Hausa people developed a way of writing their language by the modification of Arabic letters. Robinson [2] believes that:

A part from the Hausas there is no race north of the equator, nor indeed in all Africa outside Egypt and Abyssinia, which has reduced its language to writing, or made do any attempt at the production of a literature. The Hausas have modified form of the Arabic alphabet, and have produced a number of national poems or songs, besides a limited amount of history in the form of annals and legal document.

The second system of Hausa writing is Boko. Boko is a Hausa writing system by the modification of Roman letters. The Boko writing system was started through the contact of Hausa speaking people and white men through colonialism. As a result of that contact, the white man wrote Hausa as he heard it. It was said that such writing started since around 1773 in Denmark [7, 8].

The establishment of Western schools in Hausa land serves as a factor for the development of Boko writing. The Western school system was started in Hausa land in the 20th century by colonialists. In the year 1905 the school was started in Sokoto by a Colonial Master called Burdon. In the year 1906, Miller of Church Missionary Society began his school in Zaria. Hans Vischer (known as Dan Hausa) started another one in Kano in the year 1909 [9]. In addition to schools, various agencies such as Translation Bureau [10] and Literature Bureau [11] were also established for production of Hausa Boko literature. At present, many Hausa elites are versed in both Islamic and Western education.

Prostitutes in Hausa Society

Prostitute in this paper refers to profligate woman who runs a life of her own. This is a woman who has sex for money or material gain. In Hausa Society, prostitutes are negatively viewed. They are considered as shameful, useless without any semblance of morality. A prostitute must decide to leave her town

and all her relatives to find somewhere in order to live freely. It was said that, if a prostitute stayed close to members of her family, she would be harassed, attacked by any member of her family for bringing dishonour to them, even if she was forced into prostitution by any reason.

There are socio-economic causes of prostitution in Hausa land. These causes include illiteracy, poverty, death of parent(s) and forced marriage. Forced marriage is one of the most powerful causes of prostitution in Hausa land. There, parents are vested with unlimited power to marry out their daughter to a man of their choice even without the interest of the girl. In some families, if the girl rejects the marriage, she stands the risk of being cursed, beaten and harassed. This kind of situation forces some ladies to run away from their family and go into prostitution.

In Hausa Society, prostitution, for whatever reason, is always negatively viewed. In some Hausa folklore the general views of prostitutes are shown, here are a few including proverbs and songs. The proverbs are:

Karuwa kafirar dangi.

Prostitute the pagan of the family.

Karuwa matar kowa.

Prostitute every one's wife.

Da auren karuwa gara kiwon zakara.

Better rear a cockerel than marry a prostitute.

Some Hausa praise singers also bring out the general views of the society of the prostitute. Mamman 'Dankashi, Sani Sabulu and 'Dan Shu'aibu among others. Mamman 'Dankashi views prostitutes in his song as follows:

Malam, kar ka auro karuwa,

Auren karuwa sarin kosai,

Shi ba gaba ba ka baya,

Sai dai ka kwanta gado mai laushi!'

Mister do not marry a prostitute,

Marrying a prostitute is a gainless venture,

No profit, no loss,

You only sleep on cushioned bed.

While according to 'Dan Shu'aibu a prostitute is worst than fire. He sings:

Ke wannan kilaki,

Gobarar naira 'yar cin amana,

Karuwa ta hi wuta bala'i,

Ta dara shaho cin amana

Oh you prostitute,

Conflagration of money, consummate deceit,

The prostitute is worst than fire,

She is worst than an eagle in mischief.

Generally, prostitution in Hausa land is considered nothing other than a trademark of useless, irresponsible and shameful people who are irreligious.

Prostitute's Speech Style in 'Yatsana

Speech according to [12] is the language used when speaking. While language according to Fagge [13], is the means of communication chosen by somebody or a group of people. Style according to Dangambo translated by Mukhtar [14], is an additional aesthetic quality in a writing or speech that is not necessarily found in every writing or speech. In 'Yatsana, there are three different speech styles used by prostitutes in their interaction. These are taboo words, proverbs and sarcasm (bitter words in Hausa).

Taboo

Taboo in Hausa Society is some words linguistically avoided to be spoken. According to Robins cited in Usman [15] linguistic taboo refers to the avoidance by speakers either of whole topics or of certain words in particular situations. Usman [15] emphasized that, linguistic taboo are certain topics, words or expressions that are stigmatized and hence could not be spoken of in particular situations, mainly because speakers will like to portray themselves in the most appropriate manner with regard to their speech, as being culturally non-deviant.

In Hausa society taboo is of two types. One of the Hausa taboo is that connected with belief. It is traditionally believed that some words should not be called because the object will appear instantly if the name is mentioned. Names such as 'Maciji' (snake), 'Kunama' (scorpion) should not be called. Some terms are used such as 'igiya, or 'ma ja ciki' for snake. While scorpion is called 'mai kari sama' instead of the proper name 'kunama'. The second taboo and the concern of this paper is linguistic taboo which means 'Batsa' in Hausa language. In Hausa society, it is prohibited for a responsible woman to speak freely on anything that has to do with anatomical parts of the human body that are related to natural and sexual functions. For that reason different euphemisms are coined in order to help them to avoid mentioning these body parts directly. Women in Hausa society are viewed and considered as mothers and the foundational stage in the training and discipline of a child. For this reason, they are expected to behave well and abide by the cultural and religious norms of the society. Women of integrity are not expected to use taboo words in their conversation. They are always expected to be careful and selective in their use of language so that they should not be viewed negatively.

On the other hand, the prostitutes speak freely about anatomical parts of the human body that are related to natural and sexual functions as their speech style because of some reasons. One, they are rejected by the society. They are viewed as outcasts and shameful.

They are therefore socially ostracized. For this, they feel free to speak about anything, and anyhow as a way of getting at the society.

Additional reason is, in Hausa society a prostitute is mostly a stranger in the community she is found without any family relatives or familiar faces. There, she is new and viewed as stupid. This may lead her to become shameless about anything. As a shameless person, she feels free to do anything she likes including speaking of taboo in her conversation. Her taboo-laden speech will open her for soliciting by men currying for her favour or company. In addition, it will give her the opportunity to have many friends among fellow prostitutes especially if she is new to the system. In 'Yatsana the speech style of most prostitutes is laden with taboo. For instance, on page 55 when a prostitute called Bebi Sai-Tumoro in her effort to clarify some things to Asabe. Here are words:

To me ya sa take kururuwa? Asabe ta tambaya.
Bebi ta ce saboda
girman abarsa tafi karfinta' Ta murda wuyan
hannunta ta ce, Ance ta yi nan dina!

So, why is she shouting? Asabe asked.
Bebi said because of the big nature
of his thing, is beyond her capability.'
She rounded up the wrist of her hand
and said, 'It was said to be as big as
this (page, 55).

Similarly, on page 112, another taboo is spoken by a prostitute called Tatsula as follows:

Tatsula ta yi wuf! Ta ce, 'To 'yar uwa
ai dole ne ta rame; yarinyar da kato
mai karfin doki ya dingi ragargaza
safe da rana da yamma ba hutawa har
sati d'aya!

Tatsula quickly chipped in and said,
'So, sister she must become thin; a
girl someone with a horse's power
constantly sex day and night without
let for complete one week!

The issue of marital relationship especially sexual intercourse is taboo and therefore prohibited to be discussed in the open. A decent woman in Hausa society is not expected to engage in the discussion of the sexual intercourse even if is her own except where it is inevitable for a solution to any marriage issue. On the other hand, the prostitute as a free and irresponsible woman can discuss it just for pleasure. In the quotation above, the conversation between Asabe and Bebi Sai - Tumoro is just for leisure as it resorts to taboo. The demonstration by Bebi Sai -Tumoro accompanied by the phrase 'It was said, like this' is a prostitute's speech style in Hausa society. The non prostitutes cannot say such taboo words as it will diminish her integrity and

respect. On page 150 the taboo speech style is also adopted when Maijigida is relating her story to Asabe. She (Maijigida) narrating her encounter speaks as follows:

To, in taƙaita miki labari dai, ba sai
nema ya auku tsakanina da uban gidan
Abdullahi ba! Keko ya ga sukuta-
sukutan dūwawu

Let; cut the story short for you. There
–after, friendship developed between I
and Abdullahi’s master! Because he
was attracted by my big buttocks.

The phrase ‘sukuta-sukutan dūwawu’ is taboo to every responsible person, particularly women in Hausa society. Maijigida being prostitute speaks it freely. In Hausa society, speaking about human anatomical parts (male and female genitals) is taboo. These parts include ‘penis’ and ‘buttock’. In Hausa society, penis as a linguistic taboo word, has a milder term with which to speak about it such as *bindi*, *zakari*, *gaba* and *al’aura*. While buttocks is called *dubura*, *baya* and *takashi*. These are the terms the decent women speak about taboo in their conversation. But for the prostitutes to speak freely of taboo words is part of their profession.

For the prostitute, speaking freely taboo words open to her the opportunity to have many male clients ready to bear the cost of her everyday expenses. This makes her a favorite among other prostitutes.

Proverb (Karin Magana)

Proverb means a short phrase with a wider meaning. Gidley in Bada [16] describes proverbs as: The use of words to illustrate a certain action but completely unrelated to the literal meaning of the words...Just as metaphor is the use of words to indicate something different from the literal meaning, so is karin magana the use of a phrase to indicate something literally different from the phrase itself. Mieder cited in Ibrahim and Abdulsalam [17], defines proverb as ‘a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed memorable form and which is handed down from generation to generation.’ Skinner [18] also defines a ‘Karin Magana’ as ‘a sentence or sentences which a group of Hausa people agree is a karin magana.’ Usman [19] sees, proverbs as folk wisdoms, which form an essential part of the experience and way of life of the people who produce them. Ibekwe in Usman [19] believes ‘Proverbs and aphorisms may be described as terse general statements often using figurative language; touching on some aspects of life.’ Abba [20] defines proverb as ‘An expression which, owing its birth to the people, testifies to its origin in form and phrase’.

Proverb in Hausa people’s communication is of multiple importance. It is used to summarize a wide statement in just a few words. In addition, it is also used to beautify the language especially in literature, such as poem, and prose.

Proverb is a very important speech style among many prostitutes in Hausa society. There are reasons Hausa prostitutes choose proverb as their speech style. One of the reasons is innuendo.

Innuendo (Habaici) means talking about the character of persons in their presence without mentioning their names [11]. Innuendo is a speech style in which prostitutes insult (soka magana) other prostitutes or men within the prostitution circle or other persons outside the circle. Among their co-prostitutes, prostitutes use proverb in their speech to insult other prostitutes when there is misunderstanding between them, or are envious of one another. Prostitutes use innuendos to throw insults at men, to expose the weaknesses of their male patrons as well as to lessen the cruelty or harshness of some of the pains inflicted on them from the nasty things they do with those men.

Other persons prostitutes use innuendo to insult are the outsiders. This means those who are not in the prostitute’s trade or circle. The prostitutes use proverb to insult such persons if they curse or degrade their business, or they give undue attention to their activities (sa ido). Such persons could be religious clerics, or a head or any responsible person. In a situation where the prostitute uses proverbs to insult responsible outsiders, the persons will not mind her even if they understood that they are the target because to them the prostitute is a degenerate who deserves not to be taken seriously. For that reason, the prostitute must be selective of the proverb to be used so that it will not go off the intended target.

Another reason why prostitutes use proverbs in their communication is counseling (nusarwa). In Hausa society, prostitutes use proverbs to counsel or warn their fellow prostitutes or their boyfriends against the occurrence of anything either important (counseling) or dangerous (warning) to them. This only occurred in a situation where there is love, sympathy and good relationship between them. In this situation, the prostitute must be cautious in selecting the proper proverb to suit the purpose.

Likewise, a prostitute uses proverbs in her quarrel invectives with others. This is mostly with people in the prostitute’s trade: either women or men. In this situation, the prostitute chooses some proverbs with which she will say so many insults in few words. In Hausa society, in the prostitutes’ dispute, eloquence is the most potent weapon. In the verbal dispute chance is not given to any party to finish their speech before the other side takes over. It is words against words in which

the entire place becomes rowdy and noisy. In this kind of situation, the prostitute who is good in verbal dueling speaks various proverbs in few minutes. Through them she will throw innuendo at the other party with heavy and disgracing insults in few words.

'*Yartsana*, as a novel mainly on prostitute's activities in Hausa society, contains dialogues laced with proverbs. The prostitutes, as we have earlier observed, resort to proverbs for a number of reasons. One of the reasons is abusive. The proverb-laced innuendos in the speech of prostitutes in this novel are many, but let's take the example of the following as spoken in the course of a quarrel between two prostitutes:

'Kai na dubu don kwandon buhun uban ki! Shegiya 'yac Chadi bakuwah haure! Ke Bebin ga ana dan raga miki, ashe 'yab banza ta ke? Wato ki na neman ki hadda ni da saurayi na don mu bata ko? Wato ki na da kishi na kenan. *Tanda mai bakin ciki! Aradu ko ba a hwaɗi ba an san cewa kaska tana da haushin kifi: kifi ya na ruwa sai dai ta ganai, ta je ta sha jinin nagge! To bari in hwaɗa miki: hawainiyak ki ta kiyayi rama ta! Shiru ba tsoro ba na! Kuma sabo da kaza ba shi fa hana a yanka ta!* (shafi na 56).

My head are thousand stupid of you! Bastard! a native of Chad illegal immigrant! You Bebi I pity you but you are stupid. So you are jealous of me? A jealous woman! O it needs not even be mentioned, it is a common knowledge that the tick detests the fish. It caveats the blood of the fish but helplessly watches it swim freely in the river, and it has to make do with sucking the blood of a cow. So, let me tell you, you should stay out of my business. Quietness should not be mistaken for fear. And familiarity should not breed contempt (page 56).

On page 173, proverbs are repeated in few words thus:

Asabe ta yi damara, ta ce, 'Ke Iyani tsaya ki ji...Ni Kur'ani ba ki ishe ni fada ba. *Bakin rijiya ba wurin wasan makaho ba ne. Idan fadan na ke ji sai in je in yi da daidai da ni, ba wata ci-ni-in-ci-towo ba!* (shafi na 173)

Asabe tighten a cloth round her waist and said, 'You Iyani look I swear you are not enough to fight me. The site of

a well is not a safe playground for the blind. If I feel like fighting I will go seek for a befitting opponent, not you a sex-for-food harlot (page 173).

Looking at the above proverbs, they are used in a quarrelling situation. The first excerpt is between Maijigida and Bebi Sai-Tumoro. They are both high class and experienced prostitutes though not in good terms with each other. Here they are in a dispute because of a misunderstanding. Maijigida is an old hand in the system, so she is a prostitute eloquent in the use of proverb. She demonstrated it in the passage above. She speaks of five proverbs at a time and in just few words.

The second passage is between Asabe and a prostitute called Iyani 'Yarkwatano. Both of them are well known, and proud of their beauty. 'Yarkwatano is not a Hausa-Fulani, while Asabe is a Fulani who lives in Hausa society. She is good in Hausa communication and even uses Hausa language just as her mother tongue. Here she shows the evidence of her proficiency in speaking the Hausa language. She speaks two good proverbs in few sentences. The most uncommon proverb and highest insult to prostitute is 'Ci-ni-in-ci-tuwo' which means sex-for-food harlot. If a prostitute is addressed with this proverb it means she is useless who has not makes any saving for the future. She only sells herself to get what to eat.

One of the reasons for resorting to proverb is for counseling. This proverb is spoken by Bebi Sai-Tumoro in her effort to advise her friend Asabe to accept Basiru as her boy friend. Here is the proverb:

Tun da Basiru ya ce ya na son ki, ba sai ki bari ba tukuna ki ga kamun ludayinsa. *Idan yaro ya ce zai hadiye garma ai sai a sakar masa kota* (shafi na 86).

Since Basiru says he loves you, why can't you wait a moment and see his effort? 'You should let go the handle of a hoe for a boy who is intent on swallowing it.' (page 86)

Basiru is a student of Kaduna Polytechnic. He wants to start a relationship with Asabe. Asabe being a prostitute of high class, does not want to accept someone like Basiru. But her closest friend Bebi Sai-Tumoro advises her to give him a chance to display his effort. Already, in Hausa society this proverb is used to solicit for opportunity for a person even when the person happens to be weak.

Bitter Word (Bakar Magana)

The prostitute's speech style is embellished with bitter words (sarcasm). There are many instances of its occurrence in the novel, '*Yartsana*. Bunza [20] defines bitter words in Hausa and I translated it into English as:

A short utterance spoken in response to a question. Such responses may be with intent to provoke, or retaliate an earlier unpleasant action or utterance. The response may likewise be uttered genially or morosely (haughtily). It is often uttered in response to provocative or disdainful question.

Bitter word in Hausa society is considered as abusive especially when it is from a younger person to an elder person. It is also viewed as jokes when it is spoken among friends or peers in a playful situation. In Hausa society, there are seven categories of people who use bitter words in their communication, and the prostitute is one of these categories [10].

In Hausa society, prostitutes are viewed as women who indulge in practices which are against the religious teachings. This perception is strengthened by the fact that a woman in prostitution avoids most of the religious and cultural injunctions. For the prostitute's shameful nature of life, she uses bitter words in response to any expression of prejudice against her person and profession. There are many motivating factors for the prostitute to resort to bitter words in her interlocations. The reasons include; disdainful question, request of something using improper words among others.

In 'Yartsana, there are instances in which the prostitute uses bitter words in her utterances to achieve some goals. The bitter words spoken are of two types based on the situation, and aim behind the utterances. There is one uttered for the purpose of insulting and disgracing the addressed. This type is witnessed (on page 95) between Asabe and Naranda. Naranda is a member of the prostitution circle. He is *dan daudu*. Another Hausa word for *dan daudu* is *dan tada*. This is a man who dresses as a woman, speaks in a falsetto voice and trades mainly with women. Most of his trade involves selling prepared food such as fried egg, fish, meat etc. His role in prostitution is selling food and playing the clown among the prostitutes. This makes him very close to prostitutes. Asabe is a new member in the prostitution trade at the time. She has little knowledge of many things in the business, especially the position and role of *dan daudu* to her. That is why when she understood the meaning of Naranda's persistent staring at her, she became infuriated and uttered some bitter words at him thus:

Can sai ta lura da cewa *dan daudu* nan ya dingi kallon ta, har haushi ya fara kama ta. Ta dube shi ta ce, 'Yaya dai, ko na yi kama da mayyar da ta cinye maka da ne?' (shafi na 95). Soon, she realises that, *dan daudu* has been staring at her. She becomes angry. She looked at him and said,

'How far, do I look like the witch who has eaten your child?'

Considering the nature of these bitter words, it is understood that, Asabe was totally miffed by Naranda's staring at her. She was unaware of her situation which Naranda, as a long time member and close associate of women has seen in her. He (Naranda) has mastered the changes that occur in women when they are pregnant. He has seen the signs of the changes in Asabe and wishes to inform her. Bebi, as a long time prostitute and aware of Naranda's experience and as a close friend to Asabe, advised her to go and listen to Naranda. For that they went aside and he told her of the nature of her changes, and promises to take her somewhere to abort it. Another bitter words is of this reason is on page 171 when Asabe's boyfriend Basiru deserted her only to come back later. In his effort to convince her of his love this time around, she angrily retorted thus:

A fusace, ta rage sautin rikodar, sa'annan ta yarfa masa amsa: '*Ai kai ne sarkin karuwancin, tunda har gajoji ka ke diba*' (171)

Angrily she reduced the volume of the record player and answer: 'You are the chief of prostitution, thus you even engage useless women'

When looking in to this speech style, it is realized that, it is used purposely to disgrace or provoke the addressed-Basiru. He (Basiru) asks his prostitute Asabe a foolish question. He knows that he went into relationship with another prostitute not knowing that Asabe has seen him, but he pretends he did not know anything at all. The nature of the question is one of the important reasons which lead to the use of bitter words in Hausa society.

The second category of the use of bitter words in utterances in 'Yartsana is the one made for the purpose of entertainment. This kind of bitter words is mostly found within the circle of close friends of same age bracket and while engage in banter. On page 99, there is this dialogue between Asabe and Bebi as follows:

Jin haka ya sa Asabe ta riƙa kallon Bebi cikin mamaki. Can ta ce mata, '*Uban wa ya gaya miki haka ake yi.*' On hearing this, Asabe looked at Bebi with surprise. Then she said to her, 'Whose father told you this?'

Bebi is a very intimate friend to Asabe. She is the prostitute Asabe trusts more than any other prostitute. They do discuss many things together. They usually engage in many humorous conversations about

many things. Here, in one of their funny conversations Bebi teases Asabe on the issue of abortion. Asabe instantly replied her with bitter words. Ordinarily her choice of words could be offensive, but on this occasion, it is a mere joke which elicited laughter from the addressed.

Another bitter word in the narrative is between Basiru and Asabe. Before their quarrel, they were friends and very intimate. They love each other. They are in good term. Thus, trading in jokes is common between friends, as in Hausa society, the responses to this kind of jokes may be a resort to bitter words only for the people to laugh. That is what happened between Basiru and Asabe. He teases her, and she responds with bitter words:

Can Asabe ta ce, ‘Kai dai ka dan rika lekawa makarantar, domin fa kada ka yi biyu babu: kai ba ka samu ilimin ba, kuma gobe lahira ka sha wuta’ Da jin haka sai ya ce mata a cikin hassala, *Uban wa ya ce maki kona ni za a yi?* (shafi na 141)

Then Asabe said to Basiru, ‘You should keep going to school, to avoid losing both ways: you lose your studies, and you end up in hell in the here-after. On hearing this, he angrily asked: ‘Whose father told you that I will be burnt in hell fire? (page 141).

The words are clearly insulting in nature, but the leisure situation of their utterance made them to elicit only laughter and not anger.

CONCLUSION

In Hausa society, prostitutes are viewed with some contempt as useless, shameful and free women who illegally associate, in sexual union with irresponsible men. This kind of free and illegal association with various irresponsible people give the prostitute the opportunity to choose a speech style different from other responsible women. This speech style is found in the novel *Yartsana*. This paper studied the prostitute’s speech style found in the novel.

Another thing this paper found with respect to prostitute’s speech style in this novel is the style which it divided into three: taboo, proverb and bitter words. The paper analyses the reasons behind the use of these speech styles by the prostitutes. Moreover, it also recognised that the use of taboo words is mostly associated with prostitutes more than with other women who are viewed as responsible.

The paper likewise found that in the prostitution circle in Hausa society the more eloquent speakers of this peculiar speech style are the long- time prostitutes. A newly member in the circle cannot

constantly make use of the style because she is still restricted by some cultural and religious feelings and influences. That is why Bebi Sai-Tumoro, Hajiya Abu Maijigida and Tatsula are the most eloquent prostitutes in terms of speech style because they are old hands in the system. While, on the other hand, Asabe, initially new, had to learn it from her close friend Bebi. Later she (Asabe) became proficient.

The paper also came across some towns and cities mentioned in the novel such as Mararrabar Jos, Kaduna where prostitutes are free to do as they wish without harassment or disturbances. In these places, the prostitutes are free and unhindered to use any speech style of their interest because such places are infamous for their accommodation of what is considered a loose life. Most unmarried women there are viewed as free and irresponsible.

Finally, the paper observed that, in Hausa society, a prostitute still cannot be free to use the speech style she wants until she moves away from her community to another. In the choice of another community, she must be far where it would be difficult for her to meet any known person. There, she will be free to use any speech style she wants at any time, any place and before anybody just like what Bebi Sai-Tumoro, Hajiya Abu Maijigida, Gambo Ruwan-Abarba, Tatsula, Fati Gidauniya and Asabe do. All of them have left their various home towns and settled somewhere.

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