



ISSN 2455-7544  
www.daathvoyagejournal.com

# Daath Voyage : An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in English

A Refereed Open Access Journal  
Vol.6 No.4 December 2021

Editor: Dr. Saikat Banerjee

**Editor:** Dr. Saikat Banerjee  
Assistant Professor & Head, Department of English  
Assam Don Bosco University



: An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in English  
(A peer reviewed open access journal)

ISSN 2455-7544

www.daathvoyagejournal.com

Vol.6, No.4, December, 2021

## The Stylistic Devices of the Kanuri Nuptial Oral Poetry U

**Dr. Mohammed Alhaji Modu  
&**

**Dr. Kaka Gana Abba**

Department of Languages and Linguistics  
University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

**Email:** mmodu03@gmail.com

kakabba59@gmail.com

**Abstract:** The paper explored the nuptial songs of Ganaram, the popular Kanuri nuptial oral poet. She sings on matrimonial issues on the eve of marriage ceremonies, especially bridal counselling. Her choice of words, especially archaic Kanuri words and the ease with which she mixes or switches from the standard Yerwa dialect to her Bodoyi speech form and the matrimonial initiation, counselling and lessons to be learnt made her popular and unique in the Kanuri society. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. The primary data is her (Ganaram) oral songs and secondary data is the unstructured interviews. The fieldwork was done in four wards of Maiduguri, namely: Shehuri North, Shehuri South, Fezzan and Mafoni where the informants were selected. In this work we made linguistic analysis of her oral poem based on (Crystal and Davy 1985) formal linguistic/stylistic approach and the extra-linguistic situations. These extra-linguistic situations are broken down into, situational variables “ where each of these features plays a role in relation to one another or more of such variables. These include [a] (i) individuality, (ii) dialect, (iii) time, [b] discourse, [c] (i) province, (ii) status, (iii) modality and (iv) singularity. And the formal linguistic approach has features such as phonetics/graphetic, phonological/graphological, grammatical, and lexical and semantics. So, the stylistic devices she deploys via the above media have maximum impact on the bride in particular and the society in general.

**Keywords:** stylistic, nuptial, graphitic graphological, epithalamia, social satire, onomatopoeia.

### Introduction

Poet is a Greek word derived from the word *poete*, a variant of *poietes*, meaning, “to make”. Its noun refers to maker, composer, that is, one who writes poetry; a maker of verses. (OLD, 2017) On the other hand, a poet is one (such as a writer) having great imaginative and expressive capabilities and



possessing a special sensitivity to the medium. Oral literature was described and analysed into fourteen genres including epithalamia (El-Miskin 1987 and 1997). Epithalamia or nuptial poetry is known as *Kawe* or *Betā* in Kanuri language which is an ode honouring a bride and a bridegroom. Ganaram is one of the popular female nuptial oral singers in Maiduguri.

This paper focuses on the survey on that popular poet and her unique stylistic devices in the Kanuri society of Yerwa. The objectives are: to identify the stylistic devices in the nuptial poem, to examine the stylistic devices in the poem and to illustrate the stylistic elements. The method applied in the study is survey method. The word “popular poet” may mean “general” that is, a poet that is known, “common” that is, a poet that is known to many people but not made known officially, and “widespread” which means his or her (the poet) exists and performs in many places in the society or among many poets of the community etc.

The fieldwork was done in Yerwa (Maiduguri Metropolitan Council MMC) the capital city of Borno state. It was delimited to four wards of Yerwa (North Shehuri, Shehuri South, Fezzan and Mafoni) where the informants were selected. The open-ended method of interview was adopted; only five items are in the questions after the bio data of the informants. The statistical formula adopted for this work is simple percentage. The interview was restricted to 20 adult Kanuri native speakers, men and women, their ages ranging from 40-70 years, aristocrats and both Islamic and western elites who are familiar with the genre of Kanuri literature, and knew the singers/poets, and are people who are well known or popular.

The first question focuses on the informants- we wanted to find out whether the respondents listen to Kanuri poems or songs. Almost all of them answered in the affirmative. The second and third questions wanted to find out which of the poems or songs are generally known to the society, and why did they think they are popular. The responses showed that epithalamium (*Kawe*) is the most popular among the genres of Kanuri oral literature within the Kanuri society. Almost all the people in the society knew *wushe wushe*- an aspect of *Kawe* as part of the marriage activities and marriage as one of the social institutions in the community. It occurs always, and both the young and the old witness it. During the marriage activities, events like *Wushe-wushe* in which *Kawe* or *Fero Betā* occurs. Hence, some of the genres are not well known to the generality of the society. Because the



selected poems or poets are not open to the generality of the society and due to some societal circumstances, ordinary people may not know some of the genres. Examples are the performances/poems like the social satire of Manama and Kime Jirea, Kayawar, the Kanuri epic, the court poets such as Ngəjima, Zakkama and Babuma, hunters' song or poem etc. The Jentu poems of Fati Wasəli, Falta Alabe, Fanta Gubio and others are known but their poems are limited and lacked continuity. Then, the genre of *wushe-wushe* is alive throughout the society, in both villages and towns. It exists but keeps on changing its form, content and style from one performer to another.

The fourth and fifth questions dwell on the popularity of the poets- who is the most popular poet within this kind of the poem (*Kawe*) and why he or she is popular? Seventy percent (70%) of the respondents said that Ganaram is the most popular in terms of *Kawe* or *Fero Betə* within Maiduguri. Then, the remaining 30% goes to Hajja Gumsu-another nuptial singer.

Among the reasons they gave was that she knows how to counsel the bride and bridegroom, criticizes societal ills that need reforms and praises her patrons. Her use of language is soft, not harsh, and deeper in meaning and she applies archaic words and manipulates Kanuri language to convey her message. In terms of patronage, she is an all-rounder- admired by both royal and commoners. In addition, Ganaram praises the ecology of the environment and lists the genealogical patterns of her audience. The poems are highly philosophical, social, moral, and educative. These and others make Ganaram to be a popular poet in the Kanuri society.

### **Brief History of Fanna Aliram**

Fanna Aliram is known as Ganaram. She is a professional oral poet based in Maiduguri. She mostly performs on the eve of marriages. She was born at Zararam village near Dalwa town in Konduga Local Government Area of Borno State during the period of *Wuskaaram*. It is the tradition of the Kanuri to counsel a bride during wedding, either by a professional or non-professional poet. Moreover, the poet travelled widely in almost all the local Governments of Borno and Yobe States for this profession. She has also been to Kano and Kaduna to perform a *kawe* during several marriages there. Ganaram once performed at the Centre for Trans-Saharan Studies of the University of Maiduguri. Wakil A. Wasaram and Bosoma Sheriff recorded the performance for the Borno Musical Documentation Project (BMDP)

---



## **Stylistics and Ganaram's Poems**

Stylistics is synonymous with the word, "style". It has different description and functions from diverse specialists in different fields of study such as literary critics, linguists, psychologists, rhetoricians and philologists. Despite these perspectives, stylistics is regarded as the domain for the study of textual or discourse style. To sum up, style or stylistics is a fallacy of conceptual realism, something which merely exists in the mind or intuition (Amuseghan 1997:124). In other words, it refers in this way to a selection of language habit, the occasional linguistic idiosyncrasies which characterizes an individual's uniqueness, (Crystal et al 1985:8). The purpose of stylistics is to explain the connection between language use and function: expressiveness and informativeness. In this paper we are going to look into the linguistic analysis of Ganaram's oral poem based on the (Crystal and Davy 1985) formal linguistic approach.

The analysis to be carried out for this poem will employ the Crystal and Davy (1985) method. The approach especially aims at studying the variety of language use by identifying the language's formal linguistic approach: by undertaking a linguistic description of a poem, identifying such features: (i) Phonetic/Graphitic (ii) Phonological/Graphological (iii) Grammatical (iv) Lexical and (v) Semantic. Crystal and Davy (1985) provide an exposition on these features. They advocate that the phonetic and graphetic features of a poem to be identified for the study are the basic phonic and graphetic substances of the language. These include even the organization and pattern of the  
Language. The organization of phonological and graphological features of the language builds up the larger complex units of the language. Even the use of punctuation marks, capitalization, foregrounding and structural organization of a poem says much about the larger context.

The analysis of grammatical features studies the internal structures of the units called sentences and the way they function in sequence. Such internal structures include the choice and use of words in different classes, phrases and clauses. Crystal and Davy (1985:18) state that "grammar is the central part of linguistic statement". The study of syntax and morphology of the language therefore falls under the grammar.



Lexical features studied under the linguistic description include the study of how individual words and idioms are used in special contexts. The semantic features being studied include how meaning of sketches larger than the single lexical item is used.

All these linguistic features are going to be described in terms of their correlativity to different kinds of situational functions. We are going to examine the extra-linguistic context to establish the, “why” of using the language in a particular way. These extra- linguistic situations are broken down into, “situational variables” where each of these linguistic features plays a role in relation to one or more of such variables.

The study will start by looking at the situational variables or dimensions grouped into three: [a] (i) Individuality (ii) Dialect (iii) Time; [b] Discourse; [c] (i) Province (ii) Status (iii) Modality and (v) Singularity. The linguistic features will be extensively discussed under singularity since it (singularity) is more or less related to “style or stylistic” as a choice. This is where all the linguistic idiosyncrasies of the composer in the oral poem will be studied. It is the process which Crystal and Davy (1985) refer to as making an attempt to isolate, define and discuss those linguistic features which are felt to be peculiarly hers [the speaker’s] which help to distinguish her from other poets.

### **Stylistic Devices of Ganaram’s Poem**

The paper will focus on the aesthetic values in Ganaram’s peculiar way of presenting oral poetry under following variables or dimensions:

#### **Individuality**

Under this situational dimension, idiosyncratic features such as graphetic and graphological features are studied. The poem under analysis being spoken or in oral mode, voice quality is described from the choice of words and foregrounding. For foregrounding, she places more emphasis on the verbs by repetition in order to convey her messages in a highly qualitative and melodic voice. She said:

Examples

[A]

*Gæle letcinga songowoye,*

If she is asleep wake her up,

*Ferodə galange.*

Let me advice the girl

*Təngakcinga songowoye*

If she is cat napping wake her up.



*Ferodā galanye* Let me advice the girl  
*Galange gotāro wawonoga,* If she refuses to take my advice,  
*Wudāma sāmāna zandengo, diya* Mine is just a mere conversation, I say. <sup>1-6</sup>

[B]

*Buwur kura bāri dearo kanede,* Desist from having a big wooden bowl without food,  
*Kazamga diya.*<sup>28-30</sup> If you could. <sup>28-30</sup>  
*Nje kura beri baaro kane,* Desist from having a big pot without food,  
*Yanyi kazamga diya.*<sup>33-34</sup> My mother, if you could. I say. <sup>33-34</sup>

[C]

*Fero Hauwa Mada yande dunyabe,* Daughter of Hauwa Mada our mother of the world.  
*Mananyi fane.* Listen to my talk.  
*Kai diya tiwu wazāro kane,* Desist from hating brother-in-law,  
*Yanyi kazamga diya.*<sup>13-16</sup> If you could, my dear<sup>13-16</sup>  
*Kai diya tiwoma wazāro kane* Desist from hating brother-in-law,  
*Yanyi kazamga diya* <sup>21-22</sup> If you could, my dear

[D]

*Yanyi sala duwarbe sātīyama, Nonamma.* My mother when the time for *zuhur* prayer comes,  
You know it  
*Sala duwarbe sātīya,* When *zuhur* prayer comes,  
*Bājidā yadāmiya ferne,* And when you convey the mat, spread it,  
*Waltām yadāmiya fernām.*<sup>349-353</sup> Then again you convey it spread it. <sup>349-353</sup>

[E]

*Kuruman kalinām bangne,* Then again fold it and dust it,  
*Kalinām baknāmiya,* When you fold it and dust it,  
*Ambātilan cinne,* You clean it with hand-held fan,  
*Diya.* <sup>354-357</sup> I say. <sup>354-357</sup>



Daath Voyage

: An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in English  
(A peer reviewed open access journal)

ISSN 2455-7544

www.daathvoyagejournal.com

Vol.6, No.4, December, 2021

[F]

*Yo yabe,*

*Baji yaskaro fernami wa?*

*Baji yaskaro fernam*

*Nji sakkanye gone,*

*Soso gonamiya,*

*Waltam nji surobe suwabe,*

*Danam kujangro yirne,*

*Diya.*<sup>397-404</sup>

Yes of the mother

Have you spread the mat three times?

When you have spread the mat three times,

Fetch water in the kettle,

Then when you take the sponge,

Then, the remaining water of the morning,

Pour it while standing,

I say.<sup>397-404</sup>

[G]

*Lenamiya muskonzaye,*

*Lawu muskonzabe namne,*

*Lawu muskonzabe,*

*Kamburamyin namne,*

*Diya.*<sup>423-427</sup>

When you go, of his hand,

Sit on the side of his weak hand,

Of his weak hand,

On the right hand side,

I say.<sup>423-427</sup>

[H]

*Kale-kaletam yadeye,*

*Langawatam yadeye,*

*Kale-kaletam gonem*

*Langawatam gone,*

*Diya.*<sup>430-434</sup>

Convey it majestically,

Convey it majestically,

You hold it majestically,

Hold it majestically,

Isay.<sup>430-434</sup>

[I]

*Shima lottagamawun*

*Wolozanaman,*

*Wolo bawo,*

*Diya.*<sup>451-454</sup>

As he would peep and be watching you,

Even the ablution he performs

Is void of an ablution

I say.<sup>451-454</sup>





Daath Voyage

: An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in English  
(A peer reviewed open access journal)

ISSN 2455-7544

www.daathvoyagejournal.com

Vol.6, No.4, December, 2021

*Woloji yaye wolo bawo* Even the ablution he performs is void,  
*Saliji yaye sala bawo,* Even the prayer he performs is void,  
*Diya.*<sup>457-459</sup> I say.<sup>457-459</sup>

[J]

*Ale yabe,* Oh! Of my mother  
*Wai yaanyi gulle* Call him my brother,  
*Nandi kwanam cidan kadeoga,* If your husband returns from work,  
*Wushe yaanyi gulle,* Say, “welcome my dear brother.”  
*Zoli tada yanyibe,* Foolish son of my mother,  
*Maigidanyi gulle,* Call him, ‘my master.’  
*Bāndi bāne njimndelan ngur-ngurtamadā gulle,* Tell him the that the lion that murmurs in our  
room in the night,  
*Gāle kurwuli kausā dawube yaanyi gulle,* Tell him the noon lion, my dear brother,  
*Kuru dawu kulwunzābe tam kängāsanzā yeje,* Then hold the neck of his gown and kill his lice,  
*Kängāsanzāma cejimga,* And when you kill the lice on him  
*Awo suro liwunzābe,* Of the things in his pocket,  
*Tajiwuma koljinba,* Without even sparing his rosary Beads he  
would give you all,  
*Diya.*<sup>462-474</sup> I say.<sup>462-474</sup>

[K]

*Kaka cari kurtungemiro,* To an old man *kurtungemi,*  
*Ashirnām gullāmi,* Don’t tell your secrets,  
*Cari dawu kaulu dinzāgairo,* To an old man whose neck is like expired *kaulu* soup  
leaves,  
*Ashirnām gullamga,* If you tell your secrets,



*Wajiyama dawu laiben*

On the following day it would be heard in the streets. <sup>203-208</sup>

*Diya.* <sup>203-208</sup>

I say. <sup>203-208</sup>

[L]

*Kalayaskā karmabero,*

The young girls of nowadays

*Rinamma dāgai.*

Fear them in your life.

*Gotānyidāma gonderammāro rinamma dāgai.*

The unmarried with pregnancy, 1Fear them  
in your life.

*Gotānyidāma gowataro, rinamma dāgai*

The unmarried who behave like the married,  
Fear them in your life.

*Gowata yanzāro ngaworo, rinamma dāgai.*

The married one who behaves more than her  
mother, Fear them in your life.

*Gotānyidāma ngawon tadaaro,*

To the unmarried but carrying a child on the  
back,

*Wande ashirnam gullemi,*

Don't tell your secrets,

*Diya.* <sup>211-221</sup>

I say. <sup>211-221</sup>

The verbs are: *Songowo*, “wake him up”, *katā* “desist”, *fantā*, “listen”, *notā*, “knowledge”, *yado* “conveying”, *fertā* “spreading”, *kālitā*, “folding” *baktā*, “beating”, *cintā* “cleaning” *gotā* “holding”, *datā*, “standing” *kujangro yirtā*, “throwing it away”, *naptā*, “siting”, *kālekāletām* “majestically dressing”, *yado*, “conveying”, *lottāgā*, “peeping”, *wutā*, “watching”, *bowotā* “calling”, *gultā*, “saying”, *yezo*, “killing”, *koltā*, “leaving”, *ritā*, “fear”. Ganaram uses these action words in the poem in order for the bride to hear and understand the messages she wanted to deliver to be in a clear picture that seemed near to her. Kanuri is a tonal language, the tonal changes assist the voice quality and the graphetic is described as the choice words and foregrounding.

Kanuri is an agglutinative language; its words are build up with several morphemes glued together, (Lucas (1937) Hutchison (1981), Cyffer (1991 and 1998) and Fannami (2011). “The verb is without doubt the most complex word class in Kanuri. The reason for this is the distinction of two verb classes...” (Cyffer 1997: 32). The verbs in Kanuri are divided into two classes, that is, Class I and II.

Ganaram used both classes in her poem. Furthermore, verbs in Kanuri are further divided into finite



and non-finite, non- finite verb has two elements: the verb root and the verbal noun elements. Then the finite verbs are conjugated with the following components: [a] Verb root [b] Person or the subject morpheme [c] The tense or aspect morpheme.

Hence, Kanuri verbs can be extended by derivations giving additional meaning or functions. The derivations are: intransitive, applied, causative and intensive, (Lukas (1937), Hutchison (1981), Cyffer (1991 and 1998), Bulakarima (2001) and Fannami and Muazu (2011.)

Beside these, verbs in Kanuri may accommodate other morphemes like emphatic case, subject marker, negativity etc. In the example [a] above, the use of verb *songwoye* “wake her up”, the verb *songo* is a verb class I that consists of verb root *song*, and rounded vowel /o/ the verbal noun element. The rest of the morphemes *wo* and *ye* are plural marker and subject marker respectively, marking the whole word is in subjective imperative. The use of *kane* “desist”, *kanede* “desists from it” and *kazamga* “if you could (desist)” in example [b], reveals that the verb *kane* is class II. But the present form (*kanede*) is in a command mode, singular and the addition of morpheme /de/ is emphatic. The form *kazamga* “If you could” is in third person plural plus conditional marker/ga/. As in example [k] above, the use of conditional marker *gullamga* “If you tell” is foregrounding or hidden something, if not *Wajiyama dawu laiben*, “it would be in the streets”. The use of conditional maker, “if” after series of recommendations for activities the poet presented will bring success to the bride as revealed by the use of stylistic devices in Ganaram’s poem. Look at example [j] the verb *gulle* has a number of meanings in English: Call, Say, and Tell. After the series of commandments, another verb came in as *kəngəsənzə yeje* “you kill his lice”. The good news is coming with a conditional *ga* meaning “if” *cejimga* “if you kill”, i.e. the success comes: *Awo suro liwunzəbe, Tajiwuma koljinba* “Of the things in his pocket, without even sparing his rosary beads, he would give you all”.

At times, Ganaram uses adverbs to qualify the verbs in her poem, see example [d] above: *sətiyama* “when the time comes”, *nonəmma* “you know it”. The word *sətiya* is an adverb of time; morpheme/*ma*/is an emphatic which qualifies the verb *nonəmma*, a class II verb perfect complete, because tense-aspect- mood system operating in the language which is marked by morpheme/*na*/assimilated /*ma*/.



The use of question element /wa/ “Have you”, for foregrounding and bringing out the action word with emphasis by the use of numerical form *yaskə* “three” and the idiophone *kujang* “act of pouring” in the poem; as in example [f] above *fernəmi wa?* Have you spread it? *yaskəro fernəm* “spread it three times” (to show the importance of the activities she (Ganaram) uses numerical value [thrice] described the emphatic nature). Followed by action (whereby she (the poet) illustrated the situation in sanding position) *Danəm kujangro yirne* “throw it away while standing”. The use of balance structure in the poem by Ganaram shows how she uses adjective *Lawu* “weak” impliedly to describe the best location to sit near the groom, *Kəmburam* “right hand” as in example [g] and the word *Kələ-kələtəm* and *Langawatəm* “majestically” as a technique of her movement as in example [h]. As well, example [l] above describes certain class of women according to the Kanuri tradition not to be too open to them. Ganaram uses the verb *ritəmma* “to you fear them”. A class II verb in second person singular form, with an adverb of time *dəgai* “in your life” as qualifier to the verb *ritə*. Another device of language used by Ganaram in the poem after the repetitions of the verb is the strong warning and commands as in the end of example [l] *wandə ashirənəm gullemi* “don’t tell your secrets”.

### **Dialect**

Standard Kanuri is used in the poem. Because Ganaram’s variety of Kanuri language or accent is called Bodoi, is one of the idiolect that constituted Yerwa dialect of Kanuri language. According to Bulakarima (1983) and (1987:12), the major features of Yerwa dialect are: “... degemination, voicing, sonorization, sprintization and deletion as a result of consonant weakening, palatalization, assimilation and compensatory vowel and consonant lengthenin”. The variation in pronunciation in Kanuri language is not limited to the level of dialects only, it also occurs within a single dialect. As (Cyffer 1981: 1) pointed out that “... the phonetic realization has recently undergone considerable changes... this also leads to remarkable variation, not only between dialects, but also within the same dialect i.e. idiolects of the same dialect ...” So almost all the phonological features are found in the poem. Some will be discussed in 3.1.8 below.

### **Time**

Contemporary linguistic utterance is used in the poem because the poet is still alive. The poem is classified as epithalamium that is, wedding song. Marriage is one of the social institutions that occur



daily. As part of the tradition in Kanuri society, such kind of poem takes place always. The performance (*kawe*) traditionally occurs in the night of the day before a bride is taken to her matrimonial home (Sheriff 1992 A and B). He further said that, the performance starts after supper and lasts till daybreak. This is shown in the following:

*Hauwa Mada Gonirambero,* For daughter of Hauwa Mada Goniram,  
*Watā gaskaro gonye,* We promise (to sing) till daybreak,  
*Diya. 550 - 553* I say. 550 - 553

*Watā gaskaro gongo,* I promise to take the night-long,  
*Abi lambonem yabe,* What is then your concern my dear,  
*Diya? 555-558* I say? 555-558

Performance of the oral poem is categorized into two. The first category is the *Cidi Bikke*, which denotes all types of performances outside initiation. It starts from supper to mid-night. The second category is called *Fero Betā* that is, initiation or epithalamia performances. It takes place from the midnight to daybreak). Use of stylistics device by the poet starts with this:

*Gāle letcinga songowoye,* If she is asleep wake her up,  
*Ferodā galange.* Let me advice the girl  
*Tāngackinga songowoye,* If she is asleep wake her up,  
*Ferodā galanye* Let me advice the girl  
*Galange gotāro wawonoga,* If she refuses to take my advice,  
*Wudāma sāmāna zandengo, diya* <sup>1-6</sup> Mine is just a mere conversation, I say. <sup>1-6</sup>

### Discourse

Both medium and participation show that the discourse is simple not complex. The poet and the chorus “address” listeners who are not making any contribution. There is only one dialogue between the audience and the poet towards the end of the poem. The listener asked a question and the poet responded. As shown in:

*Gāle fero Hajja Hauwaber,* For the daughter of Hajja Hauwa,



Daath Voyage

: An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in English  
(A peer reviewed open access journal)

ISSN 2455-7544

Vol.6, No.4, December, 2021

www.daathvoyagejournal.com

*Abi gaskaro gonye,*

What would be our promise?

*Diya?* <sup>545-548</sup>

I say? <sup>545-548</sup>

*Hauwa Mada Gonirambero,*

For daughter of Hauwa Mada Goniram,

*Wata gaskaro gonye,*

We promise (to sing) till daybreak,

*Diya.* <sup>550-553</sup>

I say. <sup>550-553</sup>

*Wata gaskaro gongo,*

I promise (to sing) till daybreak,

*Abi lambonem? Yabe,*

What is then your concern? My dear,

*Diya?* <sup>555 – 558</sup>

I say. <sup>555 – 558</sup>

### **Modality**

The mode is spoken. It is a performance to a gathering of marriage procession through the use of the personal pronouns *our* as in above stanza 544 “what would be our promise?” *We* in verse 550 “we promise (to sing) till daybreak”, and *I* appeared in stanza 555 “I promise (to sing) till daybreak.”

### **Province**

It is entertainment and educational but with economic undertone, social, political, health and religious materials. The discourse centres on socialization and initiation of the newly wed bride to inculcate the norms and values of the society.

### **Status**

It is a formal interaction between a speaker (poet) and listeners. The audience of this kind of the poem is female of different range of ages. There is social factor of kinship, relationship and respect among the agents. The level of formality is both formal and intimate. The poet uses pronoun *Our*, *We* and *I*, once toward the conclusion of the poem, as stated before, to show intimacy and immediacy between the poet and the audience so that they imbibe and accept the message she delivers.

### **Singularity**

This aspect of situational dimension carries the bulk of any analysis because it is on the preference of the individual choice or style. The style of the poet under study includes her occasional unique idiosyncratic linguistic features. We are going to look at such idiosyncrasies under all the linguistic features by Crystal and Davy, (1985). These are the phonological, grammatical, (comprising both syntactic and morphological) lexical and semantic features of the language used.

---



### Phonological features

As outlined in the individuality, graphetic use explains the rhythmical features of the poem. The repetition of a single sound (consonants or vowels) at different locations (word beginning or ending) of the words in the poem makes form rhythm, alliteration, assonance and onomatopoeia. These are features that deal with phonological features of the poem. It is one of the stylistic devices of Ganaram poem, making her to be unique among other poets in the society.

### Phonology processes in the poem

Phonology deals with the sound system of a particular language, Ganaram being a native speaker of Yerwa dialect maintains some of the features of Yerwa in the poem, as stated above.

[A] Deletion is one of the features of Yerwa dialect. It occurs as a result of consonant weakening process. It is a process whereby a given sound segment or consonant is omitted in certain environment, (Crystal, 1985: 87 and Bulakarima 1987:74). In Yerwa Kanuri the deletion of consonant is restricted to *k*, *g*, occurring between identical vowels *a*, *e*, and *i*. Example in Ganaram songs:

I. *Nje kura b̄ari baaro kane*, Desist from having a big pot without food,  
*Yanyi kazamga diya*. My mother, if you could, I say.

II. *Bakciya b̄anḡar b̄ala fuwubero kane*, Desist from being a loose woman  
of the outskirts of the town,

III. *Yanyi kazamga diya*. My mother, if you could, I say.

*Kalun̄am daz̄anaga are fandolan gone, diya*. If your condiments have finished come and take  
it from your house, I say.

In the above examples, there are some consonant sounds that are deleted or omitted in underlying form. In examples (i) and (ii) above, the semivowel consonant [w] occurs in between two identical vowels \a\ and /u/. That velar stop voice [g] is deleted: in deep structure is phoneme /g/ > [w] > [o] i.e. [*bagaro*] and [*fugubero*]. Then example (iii) also the consonant [g] is omitted in the location between two identical vowel /a/ i.e. central, low, unrounded vowel is omitted in the word [*daz̄anaga*].

---



[B] Germination and determination occur as a result of consonant weakening. It results to compensatory lengthening through assimilation. According to Bulakarima (1987:83), it is taking place in two dimensions (a) through assimilation (b) the assimilated sound will be de-geminated. In the poem of Ganaram some sounds are germinated to the nearest sound segment. Example:

- I. *Hauwaye Limanram*, Hauwa of liman,  
*Sato yanyi kakke*, Sato my own mother,  
*Diya.* I say.
- II. *Hauwa Mada Limanram*, Hauwa Mada of Liman,  
*Goniram kakke*, Daughter of Imam my own,  
*Diya.* I say
- III. *Kāla yaskā karmabero*, To the young girls of today,  
*Rinamma dāgai* Fear in your life
- IV. *Aluta suro muskonambe*, With the handkerchief in your hand,  
*Muskorammin cinne.* Clean it.

In examples (i and ii) the verb *kaske* “mine” is the underlying form, the alveo-dental voiceless plosive consonant /s/ assimilated to the preceding sound segment velar voiceless plosive [k] i.e. /sk/-[kk]. However, the geminated sound will be degeminated whereby assimilation rule is applied and the loss of sound will be compensated- /kk/-[sk] in the underlying form, as in examples (iii and iv) above *yaskā* “three” and, *musko* “hand”.

[C] Voicing is one of the features of the poem since the poet is a native speaker of the Yerwa dialect in Kanuri language and is part of her idiosyncrasy. Voicing means a process whereby a voiceless phoneme or segmented become voiced in the environment of voiceless sound. Example:

- I. *Ya Fanna fandonro? kanede.* Is Ya Fanna at home? Desist  
*Kazamya.* If you could desist.





II. *Yaanyi Aisada Bindu mbeji waro?* Is my sister Aisada Bindu at home?

*Kane kazamga.*

Desist if you could.

According to Bulakarima (1987:73) in the verb system the morpheme /k/ usually becomes a voiced [g]. When the past aspect morpheme /k/ is preceded by a nasal segment as in *nankaro* → *nangaro*. The above rule applies to this situation. The alveo-dental voiceless plosive/t/ changes to alveo-dental voiced stop [d] when it is followed or preceded by a nasal sound, as in the song: [a] *Fatonro* → *fadonro* [b] *Bintu* → *Bindu* [c] *Aisata* → *Aisada*

### Grammatical Features

The grammatical feature that deals with the syntax of the language in the poem is also treated. The mixture of both simple sentences out of clauses and phrases pattern creates variety. The sentence length is varied through adopting different sentence types and length. The first two stanzas have only one noun phrase and one relative clause. *Ale yabe, Yanyana yabe diya* “Ale of my mother, my sister, of my mother I mean”. The alpha noun phrase (subject unmarked) is subordinated by a beta noun phrase (object) and relative clause. It serves as introduction by the poet and continuously foregrounding by the choristers- a sum-up for the whole poem.

Another grammatical feature based on sentence structure of Kanuri used by Ganaram as a stylistic device in the poem is the occurrence of noun phrase subordinating verb phrase to form a complete sentence. The grammatical structure of the language is Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) or Object-Subject-Verb (OSV). For instance, consider these verses:

*Hauwa Mada Gonirambo,*

For daughter of Hauwa Mada Goniram,

*Watā gaskaro gonye.*

We promise (to sing) till daybreak,

*Fero Hauwa mada yande dunyabe,*

The girl of Hauwa Mada, our mother of the world,

*Mananyi fane,*

Listen to my talk.

*Gāle letcinga songoye,*

If she is asleep wake her up,

*Ferodā galanye,*

Let me advice the girl.

Most of the simple sentences are built up through joining the two separate stanzas to give full semantic interpretation. They have modifiers and qualifiers as adverbial, genitive post positional elements like *ro, be, ga* etc.



The lexical content of the poem says a lot about sending the message. The choice and distribution of collocational words and cognate synonyms keep the continuity of the poem and idea. For instance, by borrowing the materials from religion, economic, political, health, the lexical collocations create harmonious flow of idea. Let us consider these examples:

Religion	Economic	Political	Health
<i>Wolo-</i> ablution	<i>kəmaski kunguwubero</i> <i>kane-</i> Desist from being neighbour of the black ant	* <i>Fero</i> <i>Zannaram</i> <i>Mairambe,</i> <i>Limanram,</i> <i>Shehram-</i> * <i>Goniram-</i> Daughter of Zanna, Princess, Imam, Shehu, Goni etc.	* <i>kadawunzəma tam-</i> <i>kazamgairo-</i> being clumsy. * <i>Lollori kahaarraro kanede-</i> smudges as swardy guard. * <i>Buwurnzə kəri tuljinro-</i> her utensil is washed by a dog. * <i>Fanzəma kuwi fəranjiro-</i> house being swept by a chicken,
<i>Sala-</i> prayer	Kalunəm dazənaga, <i>are</i> <i>fandolan gone-</i> If your condiments have finished, come and take it from your parent" house		
<i>Laira-</i> hereafter			
<i>Fero Hauwa</i> <i>mada yande -</i> Hauwa Mada,			



our mother of the world,			
<i>Duwar</i> - noon prayer			

Modu (2002)

Also through cognate synonyms like *Fanzana rojinbaworo* “mediator” (in stanza30), *Gudowom kamowubero* “a cock on the top of a canopy” (in stanza 133), *Fero gana duwo kowo kuraaro*- “a small girl with a loud voice” (in stanza127), and many other images create a cohesive picture for the bride to desist.

### Semantic Features

Semantics is an area of linguistics which studies the meaning of words and sentences in language. Meaning is a chameleon changing the colour of its effect with a change of speaker, hearer, context or setting, (Ndimele 2007: 2). Meaning and figures of speech have quite a lot of communicative values in human language. As pointed out by Ndimele (*ibid* 2007:115) they can be used to:

Create a stylistic effect or impression on the hearer. Emphasize a point in a discourse or to give an additional communicative prominence to a particular phenomenon. Elicit some emotional reposition from the hearer, and convey the emotional disposition of the speaker towards a particular phenomenon or situation, etc.

The use of figurative language also creates beautiful imagery through the selection of appropriate words. For example, there are many metaphorical statements made by Ganaram in the poem to create imagery such as:

*Kanyi kaza faton ngawobero kane,* Desist from being a lustful billy-goat of the backyard.  
*Yanyi kazamga diya* 41-42 My mother, if you could I say.

*Kaiya cilcili kawarbero kane,* Desist from being talkative like the weaver bird,  
*Yanyi kazamga diya.* 45-46 41-42 My mother, if you could I say 45-46

### Conclusion

When looking at the overall effect of the poem, it is good to look at the aim of the poet as demonstrated by her own personal techniques (stylistic) of delivery. The paper treated the following



variables: individuality, dialect, time, discourse, province, status, modality and singularity. As well the paper illustrated phonological, grammatical and semantics features. These are the reasons that make her (Ganaram) to be 186 exceptional in the society. The aim of the poem is to entertain and arouse the feelings of the crowd. The use of foregrounding in the form of language used is the purpose of the poet, that is, to pass on information to the target. Then, every poet must have definite ways and meanings (style) in mind which he or she wants to share with the receiver. So, the analysis demonstrated that Ganaram's stylistic is unique in terms of *Kawe*.

### Works Cited

- Amuseghan, S. A. "Fundamentals of Stylistic" In: *Studies in Language and Linguistics an Introductory Text* (Ed) by Toyin O. Bamisaye. Montem Paperbacks Ibadan, 1997. pp. 124-138.
- Bulakarima, S.U. "The Major Kanuri Dialects: A Phonological Comparison Unpublished B. A. project, Department of Language and Linguistics. University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri, 1983.
- ... Consonant Variation among the Major Kanuri Dialects: A synchronic Analysis. Unpublished M. A. Dissertation, Department of Languages and Linguistics, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri, 1987.
- ... *A study in Kanuri Dialectology: Phonology and Dialectal Distribution in Mowar*, Awwal Printing and Publication Limited, 2001.
- Crystal, D. and Davy, D. Investigating English Style, Longman, 1985.
- Cyffer, N. Consonant Variation in Kanuri (Maiduguri Dialect) In: *Hoffman (Hg) Festschrift Zum 60. gebus tag ven P. Anton varbrichler veroffenlichungen der institut für afrikanistik und Agytologie der Universität Wien, 14 (Beitrage zur Africanistic 11) 429 Wein*, 1981.
- ... *We Learn Kanuri*. Rudiger Koppe, Koln, 1991.
- ... "A Survey of the Kanuri Language". In: *Advances in Kanuri Scholarship*. (Ed) by Cyffer N., T Geiger. Rudiger Koppe, Koln, 1997. pp. 17-66.
- ... *A Sketch of Kanuri*. Rudiger Koppe, Koln, 1998.
- El-Miskin, T. Aesthetics of Orality: Performance Principles in Kanuri Oral Literature. A Paper commissioned by Bayero University, Department of English and European Languages for its National Conference on Literature in Northern Nigeria at Bayero University, Kano, 1987.



- ..... “Generic Classification and Performance Principles of Kanuri Oral Literature”. In: *Advances in Kanuri Scholarship* (Ed) by N. Cyffer and T. Geider. Rudiger Koppe, Koln, 1997. pp. 143-157.
- Fannami, M. and M. A. Muazu “Agglutination in Kanuri Language: A Descriptive Analysis” In: *California Linguistic Notes*, 2011.
- Geider, T. “The Universe of Kanuri Oral Literature and Documentary Texts”. In: Norbert, C. and Thomas, G. (eds.) *Advances in Kanuri Scholarship*, Rüdiger Köppe, Köln, 1997. pp. 157- 224.
- Hutchison, J. P. *The Kanuri Language: Reference Grammar*. African Studies Program. University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1981.
- Lukas, J. *A Study of Kanuri Language. Grammar and Vocabulary*. Oxford University Press, London, 1937.
- Modu, A. M. *Kanuri Wedding Songs: A Case Study of Ganaram*. Unpublished M. A. Dissertation Department of Language and Linguistic, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri. 2002.
- Ndimele, O. *Semantics and the Frontiers of Communication*, University of Port Harcourt Publishing house. Port Harcourt, 2007.
- Sheriff, B. *Theme and Style in Bala Songs of Kanuri*. Unpublished, M. A. Dissertation. University of Maiduguri, 1992a.
- .... “The Genesis of Dəla Bowotə in Kanuri Marriage Songs”. Unpublished. A Paper Presented at Staff Seminar, Department of Kanuri, Kashim Ibrahim College of Education, Maiduguri, 1992 b.
- <http://www.oxfordlivingdictionary.com/10:18am/20/1/17>.