

The Syllable Structure and Syllable Processes in Suhwa Arabic: An Autosegmental Analysis

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Abstract : Arabic linguistic science is redirecting its focus towards the analysis and description of social, regional, and temporal varieties of social, regional, and temporal varieties in order to show how they vary in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. This is not to say that the traditional Arabic linguists did not mention scores of dialectal variations but such works focused on the geographical boundaries of the Arabic speaking countries. There is need for a comprehensive survey of various Arabic dialects within the boundary of Arabic speaking countries and outside showing both the similarities and differences of linguistic and extra linguistic elements. This study therefore examines the syllable structure and process in noun and verb in the shuwa Arabic dialect speaking in North East Nigeria [mainly in Borno state]. The work seeks to establish the facts about this phenomenon, using auto- segmental analysis. These facts are compared, where necessary; using possible alternative analysis, with what operate in other related dialects within and outside Arabic speaking countries. The interaction between epenthesis and germination in the language also generate an interesting issue. The paper then conclude that syllable structure and process in the language need to recognize the existence of complex onset and a complex rhyme producing a consonant cluster in the former and a closed syllable in the latter. This emerges as result of resyllabification, which is motivated by these processes.

Keywords : Arabic, dialect, linguistics, processes, resyllabification

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