

Dialect as a Means of Identification among Hausa Speakers

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Abstract : Language is a system of conventionally spoken, manual and written symbols by human beings that members of a certain social group and participants in its culture express themselves. Communication, expression of identity and imaginative expression are among the functions of language. Dialect is a form of language, or a regional variety of language that is spoken in a particular geographical setting by a particular group of people. Hausa is one of the major languages in Africa, in terms of large number of people for whom it is the first language. Hausa is one of the western Chadic groups of languages. It constitutes one of the five or six branches of Afro-Asiatic family. The predominant Hausa speakers are in Nigeria and they live in different geographical locations which resulted to variety of dialects within the Hausa language apart of the standard Hausa language, the Hausa language has a variety of dialect that distinguish from one another by such features as phonology, grammar and vocabulary. This study intends to examine such features that serve as means of identification among Hausa speakers who are set off from others, geographically or socially.

Keywords : dialect, features, geographical location, Hausa language

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