

**Sergio Baldi, *Dizionario Hoepli Hausa. Hausa-Italiano. Italiano-Hausa, Milano 2015: Editore Ulrico Hoepli, ISBN-10: 8820370743; ISBN-13: 9788820370749.***

The series of Italian bilingual dictionaries from Hoepli Publishing House has recently been enriched by a dictionary of Hausa, one of the most important African languages used both in the function of first language and lingua franca. Over the more than one hundred years of intensive studies into this language, authoritative sources of lexical data have appeared mostly in English (Bargery 1934; Abraham 1962; Newman 2007). Hausa dictionaries in European languages other than English are rare and supplementary to the English versions or specialized in some specific lexicon (McIntyre, Meyer-Bahlburg 1991). The Hausa dictionary addressed to users of Italian opens a new stage in the practical application of wide-ranged knowledge of the Hausa language in the European context.

The dictionary consists of 13 000 distinct lexical entries in the Hausa-Italian dictionary and 10 000 entries in the Italian-Hausa dictionary presented on 553 pages of the dictionary proper (the Hausa-Italian part encompasses 336 pages, whereas the Italian-Hausa – 217 pages). The final part (33 pages) is devoted to a short presentation of Hausa grammar that explains the applied orthographic convention and rules of pronunciation, as well as providing the fundamentals of morphology applicable to Hausa nouns and verbs. It also includes an annex that contains lists of names related to days of the week, months of the European and Islamic year, as well as a long list of geographic names (mostly names of countries).

Particular parts of the dictionary (the Introduction, Bibliography, User's guide, Abbreviations, the Hausa-Italian and Italian-Hausa dictionaries, as well as the Outline of the grammar) are headed with two versions of their titles: Italian and Hausa. The abbreviations are also expanded in Italian and translated into Hausa. This enables Hausa speakers to be users of the dictionary, at least in searching for Italian equivalents of the Hausa items.

The limits for the range and scope of the dictionary data have not been clearly specified; out of the basic inventory, the lexicon of Baldi's dictionary seems to adhere to a wide range of cultural texts rather than to an *a priori* constructed list of lexicographic entries. The author's contribution to the studies on loans (Baldi 2008) is reflected in the way of presenting borrowings which are marked for their origin. Links with the Arabic language and Islamic culture have been given great prominence, i.e. the original Arabic forms are cited even when Arabic words were introduced into Hausa through other African languages, e.g. **kāsuwa** *mercato*/ 'market' from Kanuri **kasúwu** < Ar. **sūq**. The original forms of the English and French borrowings have also been provided. Some English borrowings not noted in earlier dictionaries are worth mentioning, such as **tàlāhō** *telefono*/ 'telephone'.

The Hausa Standard norm is the dictionary base, but non-standardized variant forms accepted for use in spoken and written Hausa have also been included. The alternative forms that function in Standard Hausa are cross-referenced, as in **wunì** = **yinì** *passare il pomeriggio (la giornata)* ‘spend a day’, where the two forms are provided with explanations, but for **jimà** *passare un certo tempo* ‘spend some time’ the variant **jumà** is not mentioned. Some problems are created by loanwords which are in the process of naturalization when the rules of their transcription have not as yet been ultimately established, e.g. **gilàs/ gilàshì** *bicchiere/* ‘glass’ from Eng. glass. In the dictionary under review, the rules of indicating orthographic (also spelling) variants of the lexemes are not uniform. The words **àlkālì** and **àlkālì giudice musulmano/** ‘Islamic judge’ are shown as separate entries which are cross-referenced, whereas the pair **àlkalāmì** = **àlkalāmì** noted in other Hausa dictionaries is left in the latter version as the only equivalent of *penna/* ‘pen’. On the other hand, the main item **talàbijìn televisione/** ‘television’ is confronted with three other variant forms, two of which have separate listings, whereas the third one (**talèbijìn**) does not; the item **tònìk/tònìk/tònìs acquatonica/** ‘tonic water’ is left in three orthographic variants as one entry.

A number of non-standard dialect forms are included and the labels Sk. (Sokoto), Za. (Zaria), Kt. (Katsina), etc., are used to distinguish the particular dialect. Words characteristic for Hausa spoken in Niger are indicated as the Nr (Niger) variant. They receive a separate listing in the Hausa-Italian part of the dictionary, e.g. **zuzù** [Nr] *giudice/* ‘judge’; in the Italian-Hausa dictionary they appear as alternative Hausa counterparts of the Italian word.

Regarding the transcription adopted for the notation of Hausa words, it follows the rules of Standard Hausa in using Latin characters. Therefore, the hooked letters **ɓ** **ɗ** **ƙ** and **’y** are used to indicate distinct phonemes which are alphabetized separately. The digraphs **sh** and **ts** are also used in accordance with the orthographic norm, but in the list of items, they are interpreted as sequences of characters and hence words with initial **sh** and **ts** are placed under **s** or **t** respectively. This means that both **tayà** and **tsayà** are placed under **t**. Similarly **r** and **ř** that distinguish distinct phonemes are not differentiated while listing the entries. The Hausa-Italian dictionary also distinguishes two other consonants that form a separate heading: **p** which covers words that are mostly of French origin (**pàřmì** < Fr. *permis*, **pàsàjê** < Fr. *passager*) and **v** established for the purpose of one word only: **Voltà** ‘Volta river’.

An important orthographic solution refers to marking vowel length and tonal pattern which conforms to the practice of Hausa linguistic works rather than to the standard orthographic rules. For the users of the dictionary both advanced in studying Hausa and beginners, the adopted convention is clear and easy to follow. On both the Hausa-Italian and Italian-Hausa sides, the main entries appear in boldface, along with their morphological variants, similarly to the

equivalents of loans in the source language. As far as layout is concerned, the dictionary is laid out in two columns per page.

Organization of dictionary entries is primarily determined by the way of expressing the meaning and coding the grammatical categories. In the Hausa dictionary of the Hoepli series, both aspects have been reduced to the possibly most concise form. Entries have brief definitions, more developed in the Hausa-Italian dictionary than in the Italian-Hausa part, in which the dictionary is organized simply as a presentation of counterparts.

Among the features of Hausa morphology and the way they are coded, there are two grammatical categories that differentiate the existing dictionaries: noun plurals and verb grades. As far as the first aspect is concerned, the dictionary under review provides the plural nouns in their full lexical form, not as a structural pattern with its morphological determinants (occasionally with more than one form, e.g. **kadā**, pl. **kādānnī**, **kadōjī**, **kaddunā**, **kadandunā** *coccodrillo* ‘crocodile’). Referring to verbs, the labeling system includes the notation of verb grades by attaching their numbers 0–7, according to Parson’s grade system as modified by Newman (2000). Additional information is related to marking the transitivity of verbs as well as the gender of the nouns. Special attention is paid to irregular verbs that are presented in their contextual use (**dībā** *prendere* ‘dip out’; **tā dēbi ruwā dāgà rījīyā** *ella ha attinto dell’acqua dal pozzo* ‘she drew water from the well’; **tā dēbē shì** *ella l’haattinta* ‘she drew it’).

Definitions related to culture-specific vocabulary are primarily constructed on the basis of equivalents from the target language, e.g. **sarkī** *emiro, sultano, re, capo, leader*. Occasionally the items are given more elaborate explanations, e.g. **rīgā** *vestito tradizionale (lunga tunica da uomo), galabia*. Some items are cross-referenced to their synonyms.

Collocations and fixed expressions are presented as separate entries (**bābban ḡan yātsā** *dito pollice* ‘thumb’) or as subentries. Nominal compounds are regularly listed under the head noun and distinguished by a decreased font size; therefore, **ābin wuyā** *collana* ‘necklace’ is identified under **ābin** *cosa, roba* ‘thing’, and thus it precedes **ābinci** *cibo* ‘food’, which is listed as a separate entry, similarly to phrasal verbs that appear together with the main verb (**yi barcī** *dormire* ‘sleep’ is a subentry of **yi fare** ‘do, make’). The qualification of nominal and verbal phrases and the way they are listed in the dictionary may be somewhat problematic for dictionary users, as for example when searching for **ci gāba** *continuare* ‘continue’ listed as a main entry that follows **ci nasaḡā** *riuscire* ‘win’ which is listed as a subentry of **ci consumare** ‘eat’. As the font size determines the proper interpretation of what is the main entry and what is a subentry, the nominal compound **yan sōjā** followed by **yan cī** *libertà* ‘freedom’ on the list of main entries seems to be a typographic error and all **yan**-compounds should be indicated as subentries of the head entry **yan figli** (pl.) ‘sons’.

The number of phrases and fixed expressions is relatively high in the dictionary base and it makes the publication useful for students, readers and translators of Hausa literature and other cultural texts. Among the idioms, word collocations and other petrified expressions, there are some newly created terms, such as **hōdār ibilīs** *eroinal* 'heroin', **hōdār kōkèn** *cocainal* 'cocaine'.

There is full correspondence between the two parts of the dictionary. However, the Hausa equivalents of some Italian words are numerous, e.g. **prèzzo** *dařajã*, *fařãshì*, *kadãrĩ*, *kudĩ*, *kadãrĩ*, *kĩmã*, *ujilĩ* 'price', and this fact manifests the differences between Italian and Hausa not only at the structural but also at the cultural level. The richness of Hausa vocabulary with its culture-determined semantics forms the basis for their further investigation. Also the borrowings are open for further comparative works on the development of the communicative functions of Hausa and creating new terms in this language.

*Dizionario Hoepli: Hausa* presents the results of the Author's long-term work on the language. It has been prepared with the aim of being used by students, businessmen and tourists. Aside from such practical purposes, it helps to clarify the similarities and differences between European and African languages and to understand the cultural context in which the Hausa language functions.

## References

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Nina Pawlak