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*In this paper Wale Adegbite assesses the adequacy of the language skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing - content of some Yoruba and English coursebooks for pupils in early primary education in some Yoruba states of Nigeria. Using certain principles of Sequential Bilingual Teaching of Language Skills (SBTLS) as parameters, he examines whether the coursebooks present these skills in such a way that can enhance efficient acquisition and learning of Yoruba and English by pupils. He later observes that although most of the textbooks recognise some of the SBTLS principles of presentation of language skills, they are characterized by certain limitations which prevent them from promoting efficient bilingualism. He then suggests that coursebooks of Yoruba and English should present language skills in a way in which skills learnt earlier will facilitate the learning of later ones.*

## 1. Introduction

It is common in history to hear about 'great men who lived before their times'. As much as these men who are geniuses in their respective endeavours live in a society and make useful suggestions concerning the plight of humanity, people snub them and wave aside these suggestions. The internal consistency and deep-seated positive implications of the suggestions might not be in any doubt. However, because of the controversial nature of such proposals which may question or seek to alter the status quo (and human beings are so resistant to change), or because of some flimsy excuses and myopic considerations, the proposals are readily dismissed with much negative labels as 'impracticable', 'idealistic', non-feasible, etc. By the time the truth and essence of the proposals dawn on the people, the proponents are no longer around to explain them. And the invaluable suggestion would have been lost on the society. It is my hope that Professor Afolayan's view on the proper recognition, development and utilization of languages in Nigeria be heard and valued in his lifetime when he can still explain, promote and guide their application.

Professor Adebisi Afolayan in the first and third issues of *Journal of English as a Second Language* (JESL 1 and 3) discusses three faces of English as a Second Language (ESL), viz, the ESL variety, the ESL discipline and the ESL applied linguistic policy for development. These faces of ESL are interrelated. For example, for ESL to be a variety in its own right, with recognizable standard and non-standard forms, it has to be an outgrowth of an efficient programme of ESL discipline which develops through a formal educational system (Afolayan, 1987). Also, for an efficient programme of the ESL discipline to be developed, a planned progress of development of language learning and use ('applied linguistic policy for development') has to be

recognised within the various stages of curriculum activity, viz, curriculum planning, development, implementation, evaluation and revision-cum-renewal (cf. Afolayan 1988 and 1991). Meanwhile, the ESL concept is itself an aspect of bilingualism and it assumes the prior existence of one or more languages alongside English in the Nigerian (and African) society. This assumption forms the main thrust of Professor Afolayan's view on the issues of 'bilingualism and ESL.'

The discussion in this paper represents an assessment of current achievement on these issues (see Valedictory Lecture). It also represents a projection of new demands in the area of language teaching and textbook development in Nigerian primary education. Specifically, the discussion examines, comments and makes suggestions on the presentation of language skills in some Yoruba and English coursebooks for pupils in lower primary schools. The Yoruba texts selected are representative of the Nigerian or African indigenous Mother Tongue (MT) texts. Apart from being the MT of this writer, Yoruba also provides the language of the immediate environment of the experiment on the Six Year Primary Project (SYPP) on mother tongue and second language education in Nigeria (Bamgbose, 1976; Afolayan, 1979); a lot of Professor Afolayan's views on bilingualism and ESL are based on this project.

The assessment of the coursebooks is done based on the principles of sequential bilingual teaching of language skills (SBTLS) in primary schools, as will be adumbrated below.

## 2. Towards an Efficient Bilingual Educational Process in Nigeria

Bilingualism is a fundamental feature to effective education and national development in a bi/multilingual nation like Nigeria. The nation has over 400 languages both indigenous and non-indigenous. To participate effectively in the developmental activities of the Nigerian nation, a Nigerian should at least be functionally bilingual, barring other local and foreign languages which he might wish to learn voluntarily for some personal specific purposes. The citizen becomes relevant to his immediate locality through his MT which is usually one of the indigenous languages of the nation (e.g. Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, etc.); and he participates in national affairs through English which though foreign is the official L2 of the nation (EL2).

In order to achieve effective bilingualism in MT and EL2 one needs to pass through an efficient educational process of acquisition of bilingualism. Such a process unfortunately is absent in Nigeria's educational system. Though

some features of bilingualism run through the various stages of curriculum activity in the formal educational system in the nation, it is apparent that the acquisition of effective bilingualism is not promoted in the system because of certain lapses at three stages. At the policy stage several problems have been identified by scholars (cf. for example, Afolayan 1997; Brann 1977; Akindele and Adegbite 1992; Adegbite 1993; Bamghose 1993). Though the provision in the *National Policy on Education (NPE)*, Para. 11:3 that the medium of instruction in pre-primary education will be "principally the mother tongue or language of the immediate community" is laudable, the provision itself is not at variance with what is practised uninhibitedly in the schools. At the primary school the abrupt switch from the MT to English "at a later stage" in primary education (NPE, para. 15:4) cannot but be detrimental to pupils' educational attainment. At the junior and senior secondary schools, the information provided about language is scanty, giving only a list of core language courses and electives among other subjects (NPE, para. 19:4,6). And at the higher education stage, the role of language is not mentioned at all (NPE, para. 30-34).

Other problems constantly identified at the development and implementation stages include those of inadequate trained teachers, inadequate and inappropriate textbooks, shortage of equipment, poor infrastructural facilities, poor teaching of learners, etc.

Two major tasks are performed in this paper in an attempt to tackle some of the problems mentioned above. First, we suggest that a sequential bilingual teaching of languages skills programme be introduced into the primary education system to facilitate the efficient acquisition of bilingualism in MT and EL2. This suggestion should guide the teaching of language skills to acquirers of bilingualism in Nigerian/African primary schools. Second, we assess the staging and presentation of language skills in some coursebooks of MT and EL2 in lower primary education in Nigeria and observe the implications of our findings for textbook development at this level. Our restriction to the lower primary school enables us to look closely at manageable data; the data provides us with an opportunity to observe the implication of current textbook development for the laying of a solid foundation for education in Nigeria.

### 3. The Sequential Bilingual Teaching of Language Skills (SBTLS)

The concept of STBLS derives from a set of principles and procedures underlying 'mother tongue education' and 'ESL' theory which are utilized mainly in the accomplishment of the monumental SYPP experiment.

At this rudimentary stage of its proposal we can identify three principles: (i) the primacy of the MT and the early introduction of it in primary education, (ii) the consequent role of English in the nation as well as in the educational system, and (iii) the sequential priority of MT presentation over EL2. The fact that the MT should be a subject and also a medium of instruction of pupils throughout the primary schools suggests that MT skills ought to be introduced to the pupils very early in the educational system. To complement the MT skills, the English language skills must be integrated into the language teaching programme in a manner in which the different skills in both languages are made to facilitate one another.

At the primary school stage, suggestions have been made concerning the sequential bilingual teaching of MT and EL2 skills in order to promote the effective learning and use of these languages (cf. Omojuwa 1985; Akindele and Adegbite 1992; Adegbite 1993). Scholars have argued that the four basic skills of language, viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing, normally interact with one another in an efficient teaching programme whether they selectively combine as oral-aural, literacy, productive or receptive skills. In several observations made by scholars (Cummins 1979 and 1984; Pialorsi 1974; Royer and Carlo 1991), the prior acquisition of some skills in both the MT and L2 was shown to facilitate the acquisition of some other skills in L2. Cummins' (1984) hypothesis, which says that MT 'academic' or 'literacy' (i.e. reading and writing) skills and strategies transfer readily to an L2 whereas basic interpersonal communication skills in each language develop independently of one another, is confirmed by Royer and Carlo 1991. Cummins (1984:143) has suggested that:

... if instruction in the native languages is effective in promoting proficiency in it, transfer of this proficiency to L2 will occur provided there is adequate exposure to L2 (either in school or environment) and adequate motivation to learn L2.

And Royer and Carlo (1991:452) have claimed that:

- a. reading skills learned in MT show up a year later in reading in L2;
- b. listening skills acquired in L2 show up a year later in reading in L2;
- c. listening comprehension in MT does not transfer to listening comprehension in L2.

From the scholars' findings above, we can thus infer that:

- a. listening in L2 can facilitate reading in L2;

- b. reading in MT can facilitate reading in L2;
- c. writing in MT can facilitate writing in L2;
- d. facilitation in 'a', and 'b' and 'c' above will also depend on effective instruction in L1, adequate exposure to L2 and adequate motivation of pupils to learn L2.

The implication of the above findings for SBLT can then be seen in the following requirements:

- a. All four skills in MT can be taught in Primary 1. Actually, the emphasis in teaching ought to be on reading and writing since pupils already can listen to and speak the language well before coming to school; oral MT skills practice through use, diagnosis of defects and provision of remediation, etc., will be achieved in the process of developing MT literacy skills.
- b. L2 listening and speaking (oracy) can be introduced in Primary 1; L2 pronunciation will be facilitated by the pre-school acquisition of sounds in MT which are similar to other sounds in L2 (cf. Afolayan 1967). Some scholars also believe that L2 speaking may come up a little later in the year than L2 listening as pupils naturally will have to listen first before speaking (cf. Dulay, *et al.* 1982).
- c. L2 listening and speaking (oral skills) can be taught in Primary 1 alongside the MT literacy skills.
- d. L2 literacy skills should be taught after the literacy skills in MT and oral skills in L2 have been mastered. This implies that L2 reading can be taught in Primary 2 or thereafter, after pupils' MT reading and L2 oracy have been reasonably developed. It also implies that L2 writing should not come earlier than Primary 3, or thereafter as Professor Afolayan would say. Since Yoruba and English, for example, have many similarities in their scripts, only the graphical differences between these languages would need to be emphasized.

#### 4. Materials Demanded by The Implication Above

In the present circumstances, an SBLT programme in Nigerian primary education will require texts in basically two different languages, MT and EL2. In view of the expected roles of the MT as a subject and medium of instruction throughout the primary school, texts in the language should through their contents aim at doing two things: (i) presenting the basic language skills

to pupils (with emphasis on literacy), and (ii) presenting a wider knowledge/experience to pupils about their immediate environment and the world. To present the basic language skills, certain basic texts (coursebooks) will be required to serve for intensive work in the MT classroom. Apart from consolidating pupils oral skills through practice and discussions, such coursebooks will present reading and writing skills through exercises in reading mechanics, reading comprehension, mechanics of writing, composition and creative writing. The coursebooks should comprise of pupils' texts, teachers' guide as well as workbooks to cater for both learners and teachers in the programme.

Unlike the above presentation, the presentation of wider knowledge will require certain supplementary texts which will focus on experiences cursorily presented in the basic texts. These texts will serve for extensive work both inside and outside the MT classroom to widen and deepen pupils knowledge in line with the following objectives of primary education (NPE, Para. 14):

- a. the inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively;
- b. the laying of a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
- c. citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
- d. character and moral training and the development of sound attitudes;
- e. developing in the child the ability to adapt to his changing environment;
- f. giving the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable him to function effectively in the society within the limits of his capacity;
- g. providing basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

Considering EL2 as secondary to MT in primary education, English should be taught only as a subject in the system. In addition the presentation of EL2 skills should follow that of MT skills at a reasonable distance. English texts should also consist of basic coursebooks as well as supplementary readers. The primary concern of the coursebooks is that they should present the basic language skills in an appropriately sequential manner, in accordance with the SBLT principles presented earlier in this study.

5. An Assessment of the Current Situation

At this juncture, we shall apply those principles to evaluate the current practice in Yoruba-speaking states as it is reflected in the following coursebooks on Yoruba and English community used in the first half of primary education in the states.

I. The Yoruba Language Books (The MT)

- A. *Aláwìyè* by J.F. Odúnjo (1949/1988) Longman, Nigeria  
*Iwe Kìn-ín-ní, Iwé Kejì ati Iwé Keta* (Bks. I-III).
- B. *Tátwò àti Kéhìndé* by T.T. Solaru (1984) University Press Ltd., Ibadan  
*Iwe Kìnní, Iwé Kejì ati Iwé Keta* (Bks. I-III).
- C. SYPP Yoruba Project Books, edited by A. Afolayan (1980-84). Coursebooks in the series include:
  - (1) *Igbaradi fun Iwé Kíkà* (1980) )
  - (2) *Wò ó wò* (1980) ) Primary
  - (3) *Mò ó* (1980) )
  - (4) *Ko ó* (1980) )
  - (5) *Iwé Kíkà Odún Kejì* (1981) - Primary 2
  - (6) *Iwé Kíkà Odún Keta* (1984) - Primary 3

II. The English Language Books

- A. *The New Oxford English Course Bks I and II* (4th ed.) by A. Banjo, S. Miller and D.C. Miller (1980/81) University Press Ltd., Ibadan.
- B. *Nigeria Primary English* by N. Hawkes, N. Macauley and D. Dallas (1979) Longman, Nigeria.

- C. *Nationwide English Bks I and II* by R. Ridout, A.A. Baba, O.A. Ismaila and M.E. Muoneke (1978) Evans Brothers Ltd., Ibadan.
- D. *Primary English for Nigerian Schools* by NERDC (1989) Heinemann, Ibadan.

In carrying out an assessment of the coursebooks just listed we shall pay attention to these two criteria: (i) basic skills covered and manner of presentation, and (ii) wider knowledge presentation.

5.1. The Yoruba Language Coursebooks

5.1.1. Basic skills covered and manner of presentation

The presentation of symbols, figures, shapes and sketches in two SYPP books *Igbaradi fun Iwe Kika* and *Wo o wo* sets this series apart from the other two Yoruba coursebooks examined. Apart from this, all the three coursebooks in Primary 1 present sounds, letters, syllables, words, phrases, sentences and texts (stories, verses and drama sketches) matching these with pictorial illustrations. These content features project the knowledge which pupils are expected to acquire from the texts. In the process of acquiring this knowledge, pupils are expected to acquire and develop the basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing which are crucial to proper education and language learning in primary schools. The coursebooks examined present these basic skills to pupils in different ways. The manner of presenting the skills attest to the limitations or efficiency of the different texts in meeting their various objectives.

A major limitation of *Alawiyè* is the lack of a comprehensive teacher's guide to enhance the teacher's efficiency and streamline what he will teach. For example, the target of reading is stated in the front cover of the Books I and II. However, the means of reaching this target is not clearly stated. The opening pages of the pupil's book contain brief instructions to the teacher, of which the most extensive requires the teacher to discuss texts with pupils before embarking on each of Lessons 7-40. Apparently, these instructions are very vague and are of little help to teachers who would have to use their discretion in presenting features in the text to pupils. Without a proper guide, the diverse experiences of teachers might result in lack of uniformity in teachers' presentation in different schools.

In contrast to *Aláwíyè* above, *Tátwò àti Kéhìndé* has a workable teacher's guide accompanied by some information in a pamphlet called Lecture Note. It is from the guide that we read, for example, that lessons should begin with the introduction of oral skills - the teacher is expected to teach the standard pronunciation of certain sounds and words to pupils of different dialectal backgrounds. Also, we read from it that reading should begin in the 1st week of Primary 1 and writing in the 3rd week of the same class.

In the Lecture Note certain comments are made in respect of teaching Yoruba language in primary education which need to be examined for their validity since they provide the basis for the content of the coursework. One of such comments, which is written in Yoruba, reads thus in English:

The tasks which pupils should perform with the guidance of teachers are four: (i) phonetics, (ii) language, (iii) culture and (iv) literature. These differ completely from the four classifications done previously thus: (i) listening (ii) speaking, (iii) reading and (iv) writing.

Among several other arguments that could be raised against the above claim, it is essential to note that the two sets of classification are not necessarily exclusive of each other. The first set of terms lists the content areas of knowledge/experience from which illustrative data are provided for pupils' acquisition of knowledge and skills for developing and concretizing the skills in the second set. It should be noted that acquiring skills is part of the knowledge acquisition process; and even when properly acquired, the skills can help a learner to gain access to further knowledge, unaided. This shows why another statement from the Lecture Note (p. 3) would have contradicted the one above while attempting to present the coursebook content (emphasis ours):

*At the beginning of this books, we saw a lot of pictures. Pictures of reading, listening in order to hear what a teacher calls each picture ... let us allow the learner to pay attention to what they see around them.*

Unlike the two coursebooks above, the SYPP series give very comprehensive information about the presentation of skills in the texts. The series claim that reading and writing should receive the priority attention of teachers in early primary education, because pupils are already advanced in listening to and speaking their mother tongues by the time they come to school at the age of six. Thus, while the *Aláwíyè Bk. 1* and *Tátwò and Kéhìndé Bk. 1* initially pay less attention to reading pay less attention to reading and writing,

the SYPP books pay attention to developing to reading and writing, the SYPP books pay attention to developing these skills in pupils. The Teacher's book on *Igbaradi jin Iwé Kikà* 'Preparation for Reading' (p. 4) sets up for the teacher certain tasks on presenting pre-reading, and perhaps pre-writing, along the following lines: *lilo eya ara eni (ojú, etí ati owó)* 'coordination of parts of the body (eyes, ears and hand)', *iríran* 'seeing/looking', *ìgbóràn* 'hearing' and *idàgbàsókè ede* language development'. These tasks will prepare the children for:

- i. oral language development exercises
- ii. direction.
- iii. visual perception and discrimination
- iv. hand and eye coordination
- v. sorting and grouping
- vi. identification and counting
- vii. auditory perception and discrimination
- viii. concept formation through sensory awareness

Generally, the coursebooks in the SYPP series for primaries 1-3 via the practice of listening and speaking present pre-reading, reading, pre-writing and writing skills.

#### 5.1.2. *Wider knowledge presenting*

One advantage the SYPP series have over the other two Yoruba coursebooks is that, unlike them, the series include supplementary texts which complement the coursebooks. The texts provide further reading materials which enable pupils to consolidate and concretize the skills and knowledge acquired from the coursebooks. The supplementary texts from the SYPP for Primaries 1-3 are listed thus:

i.	<i>Ojó, Ebè ati Oké</i> (1980)	-	Primary 1
ii.	<i>Ijàpá ati Ajá</i> (1981)	)	
iii.	<i>Ayé n lo</i> (1982)	)	Primary 2
iv.	<i>Bólá Gbaludé</i> (1982)	)	
v.	<i>Iyeó</i> (1982)	)	Primary 3
vi.	<i>Awon Asa Iwe Kíko</i> (1982)	)	
vii.	<i>Akaye ati Akoye</i> (1983)	)	

The number of readers above progressively increase with the level of primary education. The texts are intended to provide pupils with a wider knowledge of the Yoruba language, literature and culture. Also, their contents present various kinds of knowledge in line with the objectives of primary education in the NPE, e.g. good character and morality, citizenship education, numeracy and orthography.

## 5.2. The English Language Coursebooks

### 5.2.1. Basic skills covered and manner of presentation

Like the Yoruba coursebooks, the English coursebooks examined present a variety of pictures in the Pupil's Bk. 1. The pictures represent objects, actions and events in the pupils' homes and school environment. Initially, these pictures occur alone, and later they are matched with words and sentences which name the concepts represented by them. We observe also that in addition to the content features above, Nigerian Primary English Bk 1 (pp. 7-9) present a lot of symbols, shapes, colours, diagrams, etc. for teaching pre-reading skills to pupils. In the presentation of these features, this coursebook has a lot in common with the Yoruba coursebook *Igharadi fun hwe Kikà* - that both books present a similar core of features in this respect may be attributed to the fact that both are Longman publications which must have passed through the same editorial board.

On skills presentation, all the four coursebooks examined present the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing by the end of Primary 1. The skills are taught via several methods and in the following sequential order: (i) listening, (ii) speaking, (iii) reading and (iv) writing. For example, *The New Oxford English Course Bk. 1* introduces the skills thus:

Term 1, Week 1, Lesson 1: listening, listening and doing, listening, looking and saying, oral work with pictures.

Term 1, Week 1, Lesson 2: pre-reading from the wall or blackboard, thereafter reading from the blackboard.

Term 2, Week 1, Lesson 3: reading from books

Term 2, Week 1, Lesson 1: pre-writing exercises.

Term 3, Week 1, Lesson 3: writing.

The above trend is noticed in the other coursebooks though with some minor variations in the time the features are introduced.

Certain principles guide the sequencing of skills above as some statements in the Teacher's books show. The following statement in the *Nation-wide English* (Teacher's Bk 1, p. 5) expresses a general principles of learning language skills:

"As soon as you start teaching reading, there is one thing you must make sure of. Your pupils must be complete masters of the language you expect them to read".

*The New Oxford English Course* (Teacher's Bk 1, p. vii) comments on the teaching of the reading skill in a foreign language thus:

... in teaching a pupil the skill of reading in a foreign language, the first sentences he is asked to read should be the same as the sentences he can already hear with understanding.

And *The Nigerian Primary English* (Teacher's Bk. 1) in the following statement on reading attempts to show the authors' interest in second language learning:

The course caters for two types of reading situation (a) where children learn to read first in the local Nigerian language, which is the most natural approach; and (b) where English is the initial reading medium. To satisfy both situations, some pre-reading exercises are provided in Term 1 to reinforce what has been done in the Nigerian language, or to provide a foundation for learning to read in English.

As the discussion later in this paper will show, the statement above does not seem to recognise ESL principles, let alone implement them.

### 5.2.2. Wider knowledge presented

Unlike many coursebooks, English coursebooks are usually supported with supplementary readers. This is perhaps because of the long tradition of production of English coursebooks in Nigeria. The readers which project different kinds of knowledge exist in form of story books, link books and general readers.

While the existence of supplementary readers to compliment English coursebooks is a welcome event, their production has to be in conformity with SBTLS principles. For instance, supplementary readers in English will not be useful for lower primary classes where oracy or basic readers are being given full attention.

## 6. Discussion

From the observation made above, two of the Yoruba language coursebooks assessed have two or three major limitations that pertain to language skills development in pupils. First, both the *Alawiyè Bk. 1 and Taiwo and Kehinde Bk. 1* lack the proper introduction of reading and writing skills. Pupils ought to be properly prepared for reading through adequate pre-reading and pre-writing skills development. Ordinarily, pre-reading and pre-writing would have fallen within the jurisdiction of language learning in pre-primary education. However, since the majority of Nigerian pupils come to the primary school straight from home, this programme of preparation for literacy should be integrated into the school curriculum. When this is done the content features of Primary 1 books should go beyond picture reading to reading symbols, colours, shapes, diagrams and figures as we can see in *Igharadi fun Iwe Kikà*.

Secondly, there seem to be no justification at all for Yoruba coursebooks to give sequential preference to listening and speaking skills over reading and writing in Primary 1. What is expected is what the SYPP books have done. The target skills to be learnt at this level are reading and writing. In moving towards this goal, both pupils and their teachers will necessarily listen to and speak the MT in their various discussions. The teaching of MT oral skills will thus not be a case of introducing sounds or words but, rather, the diagnosis and remediation of wrong pronunciations occasioned mainly by speech defects.

Another limitation of the above coursebooks is the lack of supplementary readers to further widen the knowledge of pupils. In addition to the intensive reading materials, there is the need for pupils to have sufficient extensive reading materials (i) to enable them apply and practice the skills which they have learnt intensively and (ii) to enable them learn more of the Yoruba language and the content of diverse texts written in it. The pupils need to be fully grounded in the language because they will not only use it in the Yoruba lesson but also use it to learn other subjects in the primary school. The characteristic of having appropriate supplementary readers for language teaching in primary education is another asset for the SYPP books.

Concerning the English coursebooks, it is observed that all the texts examined suffer from one major limitation - the improper staging of skills. While it is true that all the coursebooks recognise and state some fundamental principles guiding the grading, staging and sequencing of second language skills in early primary education, they however do not reflect these principles in their presentation of skills. The presentation is done as if English were the MT of the pupils. Thus, even though the coursebooks state that pupils must be masters of EL2 before they begin to learn reading (see 5.2.1), they nevertheless go against this principle by introducing reading and writing in Primary 1 when pupils have just started learning oral English. In *Nigerian Primary English*, reading is even further emphasized through the inclusion of pre-reading in the programme. This further reduces the attention paid to oracy in EL2 by the text.

It is thus crucial at this stage to consider how language skills in Yoruba and English coursebooks can be properly staged. When some of the English coursebooks introduce reading in the second term of Primary 1, do we expect that pupils would master listening and speaking English properly within one term? Also when they introduce writing in the third term of the same class, how much of the earlier skills will the pupils have learnt before the time? Following the coursebooks, pupils are expected to have been introduced to all the four skills in both Yoruba and English within one year. How does this allow certain skills to be properly taught or properly facilitate other skills? How economical also will it be for pupils to re-learn in an L2 skills which they have already mastered in their MT?

In line with the SBLT principles stated earlier in this work, the pupils require a period of at least one year before being introduced to reading English. During this period they will have mastered to an appreciable degree both the listening and speaking skills in English, which will facilitate their learning to read the language. Furthermore, pupils will have learnt extensively how to read their MT and even could have on their own started struggling to read English without the teachers guiding them. In the long run, teachers will not need to teach reading from the scratch but will only concentrate on problematic areas of reading Yoruba and English.

In similar manner to the above, presentation of the English writing skill will have to be shifted to Primary 3 to allow pupils to thoroughly learn reading the language. By this time, pupils will have been fully literate in their MT. And when this is supported by their previous English reading experience, such pupils would already have started writing English on their own, having problems mainly in terms of spelling. Such problems as these can then be focused on and tackled later.

## 7. Conclusion

Arising from the discussion above, this paper suggests that the following general principles of teaching languages skills be followed by Yoruba and English textbooks for effective acquisition and learning of the MT and EL2 by Yoruba pupils.

- i. Coursebooks should aim at making pupils achieve literacy in Yoruba and oracy in English in Primary 1.
- ii. English coursebooks should aim at making pupils literate in English reading in Primary 2 and English writing in Primary 3.
- iii. From Primaries 3-6, coursebooks should aim at consolidating all the skills learnt from Primaries 1-3 through further intensive work in oral language development, reading comprehension, composition and creative writing.
- iv. Supplementary readers in MT should aim at widening the acquisition of pupils' knowledge (of people and things, social environment, language and literature, number, etc.). Those in EL2, which should come very late in primary education should aim at widening pupils' experiences about other people and things in the world.

The suggestions above have two major implications for language coursebooks. First, they imply that more Yoruba textbooks need to be written in accordance with the principles of SBTLS. The content of some of the existing coursebooks need to be revised. Also, the coursebooks should be supported with appropriate supplementary readers. Second, the present English coursebooks generally ought to be re-oriented towards achieving the goals of efficient learning of English. In this respect, all sections relating to teaching English reading and writing skills must be expunged from Primary 1 coursebooks and shifted to Primaries 2 and 3 respectively. It may well be that Pupils's Book 1 would no longer be necessary, or that it should contain only materials that will present practical oral English through only materials that will present practical oral English through role play, games, conversations and drills.

Finally, it is assumed that the issue of adequate and appropriate textbook development discussed in this paper can yield fruitful results in the context of the provision of other essential facilities such as well-trained language teachers, suitable and adaptable materials and equipment, essential infrastructure and a conducive atmosphere for learning.

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