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SOCIOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF BILINGUAL COMMUNICATION IN YORÙBÁ AND ENGLISH IN A COSMOPOLITAN CITY: A CASE STUDY OF ÌBÀDÀNLAND

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Abstract

Several psychosocial factors influence the choice of Yorùbá and English codes by indigenes of the cosmopolitan city of Ìbàdàn for communication in various domains. This paper highlights some of these factors after describing some instances of code choice in the domains of education, family interaction, social interaction and official communication. The study reveals that apart from the general trend of preference for the choice of English for communication in official and public domains, some Ìbàdàn indigenes are also beginning to use English more than Yorùbá in informal domains. The over-utilization of English to the detriment of Yorùbá, especially in public communication in the city, cannot but have some negative effects on social development. The paper therefore proffers recommendations related to efficient bilingual communication in Yorùbá and English in Ìbàdàn.

Keywords: Yorùbá, Ìbàdàn, Ìbàdànland, English, English-as-a-Second-Language

Abstracto

Varios factores psico-sociales influencian la decisión del uso de códigos de yoruba e inglés entre indígenas de la ciudad cosmopolita de Ìbàdàn que se comunican entre sí con varios dominios. Este estudio detalla alguno de factores causante de este fenómeno luego de describir algunas instancias de elección de códigos en las áreas de educación, interacción familiar y social y comunicación oficial. Revela además, que aparte de la tendencia general preferida de elegir el inglés para comunicarse en dominios públicos y oficiales, algunos indígenas de la etnia Ìbàdàn también están comenzando a utilizar el inglés más que el yoruba, especialmente para asuntos informales. La sobre- utilización del inglés detrimenta el yoruba, especialmente en la comunicación pública de la ciudad y además causa efectos negativos en el desarrollo social. Esta investigación provee recomendaciones relacionadas a la comunicación bilingüe eficiente entre el yoruba y el inglés en Ìbàdàn.

Palabras clave: *Yorùbá, Ìbàdàn, Ìbàdànland, inglés, inglés como segundo idioma.*

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Introduction

The patterns of code choice in communication situations in Nigeria are determined by social factors pertaining to topic, purpose, participants and setting (Fishman, 1972; Goke-Pariola, 1987; Mkilifi, 1978). The findings of (Goke-Pariola, 1987) show that the attitudes of participants to the different languages in the nation's repertoire are responsible for the fluidity in the languages and dialects they use, or will prefer to use, on particular occasions. At the individual level of communication, participants may seem to choose languages and dialects for expedient reasons and there may be no need to regulate individuals' personal interests in their choice of codes for communication.

However, inter-group communication may be regulated from time to time based on social changes and changes in group attitudes and ideologies. For example, a nation may decide to abandon its colonial mentality and change from overrating a language of colonial origin at the expense of indigenous language(s) and dialects in the locality, e.g., Spanish and Guarani in Paraguay (Rubin, 1972).

Ìbàdàn is a cosmopolitan city in the Yorùbá-speaking area of South Western Nigeria. It is recognised as one of the largest cities in Africa with an estimated population of over four million people (1991 Population Census). Although Yorùbá speakers, many of whom are monolingual, constitute about 95% of the population, the cosmopolitan

nature of the city accounts for its multiethnic, multilingual and multidialectal character. However, from the viewpoint of societal bilingualism, the dominant languages in the community are Yorùbá and English.

This paper describes the use of Yoruba and English in communication interactions in Ìbàdànland. Drawing upon instances of uses of both languages, collected between May 2000 and September 2005, from some domains of communication, e.g., education, family communication, social communication and official communication, the paper describes the patterns of choice of the languages and examines the implications of the patterns for efficient bilingual communication in the city. The instances presented derive from participant-observer experiences, personal observation and tape recording of conversations in non-formal and formal interactions, responses to questionnaires and tape-recorded interviews. A combination of ethnographic and interpretive frameworks of sociolinguistics is utilized for analysis and description of data.

The research is carried out based on two major assumptions. The first is the assumption that both Yorùbá and English will be used for communication in Ìbàdàn, since the city is a stable bilingual community. The second is that a diglossic relationship of High (H) and Low (L) will exist between English and Yorùbá, whereby the former will be assigned more prestigious roles than the latter. In other words, English will be used for official and administrative purposes, education and the news media, while Yorùbá will be restricted to personal interaction at home.

The strategic status and position of Ìbàdàn as a city of the largest concentration of one of Nigeria's major ethnic groups, Yorùbá, as well as the seat of one of the nation's largest administrative, commercial and industrial centres, where English is likely to be

widely used, make a sociolinguistic study of the city appropriate. Apart from giving insights into language choice in a cosmopolitan city, observations from the study will enable us to make suggestions that will assist in developing and fully utilize the language resources of the society for human and social development.

Review of Relevant Literature

Studies on language choice and attitude in Yorùbá-speaking South-western Nigeria have proffered many findings, comments and suggestions. Oke (1972) examines language choice patterns along the Yorùbá-Èdó border where he notes that factors like group attitudes towards a second language, ethnic consciousness and the social status attached to a particular language are significant in the determination of speakers' language choice. In a study of code selection among Ìkòròdú-Ìjẹbú Yorùbá speakers, Akere (1983) reports that the allocation of the codes available in the community's linguistic repertoire are governed by the place or locale of interaction, person and topic of interlocution. Goke-Pariola (1987) and Ferguson (1972) demonstrate that language choice patterns in the city of Ilé-Ifẹ̀ are constrained also by the situation of interaction and participants in communicative interaction

A number of studies on this topic have also been carried out from the domain of language use framework. Adeniran (1977) discusses the role of English in various domains of language use in the country. He observes the dominance of English in all these areas to the extent that its use has seemingly made it sine qua non to the survival of the individuals in the nation as well as to the developmental objectives of Nigeria. All edicts, laws, governmental policy decision, tax forms and all those things crucial to the

life of every Nigerian citizen are first and foremost handed down in English. Similarly, the role of English is incontrovertible in the realm of science and technology, which is germane to the progress of every nation. Bamgbose (1985) and Adegbite (2003) blame the elite for the attitude that recognizes as normal the continued use of European languages in all advanced sectors of life.

In contrast, Adeniran (1977) further observes that the use of indigenous languages in lower domains appears normal and there is nothing notable about it. Indigenous languages are employed in the Grade C Customary and Alkali Courts. Even in these types of courts, English still remains vital as records are kept in it. The only area where the use of indigenous languages seems to be encouraged is the domain of agriculture as the government requires extension workers to be proficient in the local languages so as to be able to reach out to farmers at the grassroots.

Oyetade (2001), reporting on a survey by Iruafemi (1988) of attitudes of parents in Lagos and Ìbàdàn towards the use of indigenous languages in the early stages of the children's education, states that the majority of parents are not favourably disposed towards early education exclusively in the mother tongue or in English. A negligible 6.3% supported the use of mother tongue. The use of English alone was supported by 23.7% of the respondents, while overwhelming majority of 70% supported using both the mother tongue and English simultaneously. The reasons given in support of each option reflect quite clearly their attitudinal disposition toward these languages; there is a suggestion of split commitment for both. While they recognize the importance of English in the educational career of their children, the mother tongue cannot be sacrificed.

In another language-attitude study, Adegbija (2000) asks 600 randomly-sampled respondents if they would like a local language to replace English as a medium of instruction in schools. The pattern of responses shows that 76.6% would not agree, while 22.8% agreed and only 10.8% strongly agreed.

Salami (1999) reports a survey carried out in the two communities of Ifẹ̀ and Mọdákẹ̀kẹ́ in Ifẹ̀ East and Central Local Government areas of Ọ̀ṣun State. Using both ethnographic and descriptive frameworks, he demonstrates that the processes of code selection among Yorùbá city dwellers are so complex that we might need to appeal to sociological, social, psychological as well as ethnographic explanations for a much more fruitful understanding of language use behaviour. He also demonstrates that code selection processes among the respondents encode status, power and solidarity relations between and among interlocutors. The process is so complex that a particular code could symbolize solidarity or intimacy in one situation while it may signal power and social distance in another.

Choice of Yorùbá and English Codes in Ibadanland

A case study of fifty nursery schools in Ìbàdàn (nursery schools in Nigeria are at present run by private individuals) reveals that English is used as a medium of instruction in all of them. Eighty percent of the schools teach Yorùbá as a subject while 20% do not teach it at all. Additionally, pupils are constantly admonished to speak English. Although some teachers agree that there is a temporary set back for some pupils from non-English-speaking homes, in terms of lack of participation in class lessons and relatively poor

performances. However, they claim that such pupils adjust to the school situation by the end of their first term at school.

The *National Policy on Education* (NPE, 2004) states the following provisions in respect of pre-primary, i.e., nursery, and primary education in Nigeria:

> (a) …Government, will… ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother-tongue or the language of the immediate community… (NPE, Para. 14 (c))

> (b) The medium of instruction in the primary school shall be the language of the environment for the first three years. During this period, English shall be taught as a subject. From the fourth year, English shall progressively be used as a medium of instruction and the language of immediate environment and French shall be taught as subjects (NPE, Para. 19 ('e' and 'f').

Our findings, in respect to the above, have thus revealed that provision 'a' only exists on paper with respect to approved nursery schools. Despite the fact that some headmasters and headmistresses of the approved schools admit that there is an inherent danger in forsaking the learning and use of Yorùbá in nursery schools, they claim that they still must do the bidding of parents who send their children to school and pay their school fees. As far as the parents are concerned, their children need to have an early access to English, policy or no policy. Perhaps it is the duty of the government to appropriately enlighten parents and implement its own policies.

On provision 'b', our findings reveal that the requirement of the provision is followed to some extent, at least in the lower primary level in public schools, while it is

not followed at all in private nursery schools where English is used throughout. At the upper primary level in public schools, the situation becomes amorphous. Teachers, who use English most of the time, have to fall back on Yorùbá when they observe lack of comprehension of topics by the pupils.

If a pupil has been taught English as a subject for three years in primary education, can the knowledge of English acquired be adequate enough to enable him / her to learn other subjects through it from the fourth year in the primary school? Also, given the limited ability and experiences of the teachers themselves in English, to what extent can we expect them to sustain the use of the language effectively as a medium of instruction at the upper primary level?

Choice of Yorùbá and English Codes in Family Communication

The general trend is that Yorùbá still continues to be the dominant language choice in family communication, accompanied with occasional switches to English. But in recent times, it is increasingly becoming noticeable for some parents to forbid their children from speaking Yorùbá and instead encourage them to speak English all, or most, of the time. Some overzealous parents even do all they can to prevent the children from playing with Yoruba-speaking children in the environment, (except those who can speak to them in English). This is in addition to sending the children to nursery schools where they learn through English and are forbidden to speak Yorùbá. Surprisingly, the parents themselves enjoy unfettered freedom to use both languages in their own communication with people.

Let us cite two personal experiences to buttress our point here. One day I visited a family (the father was a colleague at the secondary school several years ago) and met the parents and their two children (B and T) at home. After the initial exchanges of greeting with the parents in Yorùbá, I then went on to greet the children. The encounter goes thus:

VISITOR: (To the first child) B, Pèlé o. Şe àlàáfià ni? (Translation 'How are you?')

B: (No response to the visitor's greeting in Yorùbá. Looks at his father.)

VISITOR: (Turns to the second child) T, Şe dáadáa ni? (To both children) E wá kí mi. (Translation 'How are you? Come and greet me')

B and T: (The children move towards the visitor, but they do not talk.)

MOTHER: B, can't you greet Uncle?

B and T: Welcome, Uncle!

VISITOR: How are you fine children? Mo rò pé e ń bínú sí mi ni. ('I thought you were angry with me')

Of course, I did not have the feeling that the children did not understand my greetings in Yorùbá or deliberately ignored them. It is most likely that they have been under strict instructions not to speak in Yorùbá at home.

On another occasion, a friend reported that his Uncle got a job at Abuja where he married and had a set of twins who were taught to speak only English. The Uncle's mother visited the family when the twins were about three years old. The children and their granny were dearly fond of eacg other, but there was a communication gap between them. For the two months that the granny stayed with the family, she could not

communicate with her grandchildren verbally, even though she communicated well with the children's parents in Yorùbá, the only language she understood.

Choice of Yorùbá and English in Social Communication

Three settings are presented here to guide our discussion of social communication. The first presents the communication between the Olúbàdàn, the traditional symbol of authority of Ìbàdàn city, with different groups of people. The second presents a community celebration and launching, e.g. the Ìbàdàn-Day ceremony, in which the Olúbàdàn and some other social leaders address a gathering. The third presents communication in social clubs.

Our findings reveal that the choice of code by the Olúbàdàn in different public communication events depends on the group of people the Olúbàdàn addresses. For instance, the Olúbàdàn, whom we perceive as a coordinate bilingual, addresses (i) representatives of traders' associations in Yorùbá, (ii) a group of visiting academics of Ìbàdàn origin in both Yorùbá and English, (iii) addresses a group of journalists in English, and (iv) a group of mixed (i.e., Yorùbá and non-Yorùbá) visitors in English.

Our explanations for all these instances of communication are as follows:

(i) In the first instance, the Olúbàdàn understood that the first group would feel at home with communication in Yorùbá since some of them were Yorùbá monolingual and many others were "incipient" or "subordinate" Yorùbá -English bilinguals, i.e., they were not high on the scale of knowledge of English.

(ii) In the second instance, the Olúbàdàn knew that the code for the academic communication was English and that the academics would be more familiar with that language. Also, he might want to identify with the academics by also demonstrating his fluency in the English code.

(iii) In the third instance, the Olúbàdàn knew that the journalists could present his views beyond the Yorùbá community. Addressing them directly in English might thus reduce the risk of misinterpretation of his address.

(iv) In the last instance, the Olúbàdàn decided to use English as the language of inter-ethnic communication. He did not want any member of the group to be left out.

The Olúbàdàn is acknowledged above as a social leader, the traditional symbol of authority of Ìbàdànland and also an epitome of Yorùbá traditional and cultural values. In the face of threats to the Yorùbá culture being posed by modern civilization, the Olúbàdàn stands to defend and preserve the culture and legacy of the Yorùbá race.

A typical Ìbàdàn-Day celebration witnesses many activities, including various addresses by different speakers. Usually, Olúbàdàn government officials, community leaders and prominent Ìbàdàn citizens give addresses. The addressees are 99% Yoruba (95% Ìbàdàn origin) with the remaining 1% being non-Yorùbá invited guests who are well-wishers of the Ìbàdàn people. The Masters of Ceremony are seasoned broadcasters;

there are two of them present, one speaking Yorùbá and the other speaking or interpreting into English.

Observations of codes used at the ceremony reveal that both Yorùbá and English are used by speakers. Those who use Yorùbá try to identify with the predominant Yoruba audience, while those who speak English do so either for wider communication (for the benefit of the few non-Yorùbá speakers present) or to show off their skills and mastery of English. Although both codes are acceptable in varying degrees among listeners, experienced leaders, most especially notable politicians, know how to gain the audience's attention more through their use of Yorùbá.

There are many social (not religious) clubs formed by Ìbàdàn indigenes both inside and outside Ìbàdàn. The prominent ones among these societies are registered and affiliated with the Central Council of Ibàdàn Indigenes (CCII), the umbrella body of Ìbàdàn associations. An investigation of bilingual communication in Yorùbá and English in 100 of the prominent societies reveal that although the members speak both Yoruba and English during the meetings, the minutes of meetings of most (about 85%) of the societies are written in English.

Even though the pattern of code choice favours English more than Yorùbá on most occasions, or code switching between both languages, it is difficult to rationalize the attitude of members to the languages used on some occasions. For example, sometimes, a member is accused of speaking too much English and admonished to speak Yorùbá; on such occasions the member is welcomed with such comments as "Ẹ ṣèdè táráyá gbá" (Why not speak the language that people understand) or "Mbí Yorùbá a sì ni ọ" (After all you are a Yorùbá). On another occasion, at a communal celebration organized by the

CCII to raise funds for the development of Ìbàdàn city, a distinguished professor of Yorùbá (an accomplished Yorùbá writer) was requested to present the guest lecture in English in order for the address to get to a wider audience. Of course, the professor had to oblige, in his own words, against his personal wish and desire.

While nothing may be inherently wrong with the organizers' goal of reaching a wider audience, one may ask if the preference should not be for the immediate audience who are mainly Yorùbá. We may also ask why English is used for writing minutes at meetings of societies where every member understands Yorùbá, or why some members will speak English at meetings, no matter what. Opinion surveys show that societies generally present themselves as elitist in their modes of operation. Some see themselves as unique from other societies by trying to show that their members are outstanding in terms of job status, education and position in society. Others see society formation as a modernist trend in which people solidarise as an exclusive unit from others. It is also further revealed that many formally educated Yorùbá persons, including highly-placed persons who serve as secretaries of societies, are either not literate in Yorùbá or find it more convenient to write in English. Lastly, it is observed that some societies have members that are academic in orientation, and the language they are familiar with in their academic pursuits is English.

While we believe that the choice of codes of communication in meetings ought to show more brotherliness / sisterliness and affection among members, it is important that the Yorùbá language must be elevated in status like English, to be able to cope with the changing social status of people. But how does a language achieve social prestige, if prestigious people do not use it on prestigious occasions?

Choice of Yorùbá and English in Official Communication

Two settings of official communication are considered in this paper: (i) the State House of Assembly in Ìbàdàn and (ii) governmental offices. In the Ọ̀yọ́ State House of Assembly, situated at the secretariat of Ọ̀yọ́ State in Ìbàdàn, it is observed that the official business of the house is carried out in English. However, recently, due to the pioneering efforts of some notable Yorùbá linguists like Prof. Kọ́lá Owólabí of the Department of Linguistics, University of Ibàdàn, some States Houses of Assembly in the Southwest of Niger a, including Ọ́yọ́ State, of which Ìbàdàn is the capital, decided to devote a particular day of the week to the use of the Yorùbá language. Consequently, every Wednesday motions are raised and argued on the floor of the Ọ̀yọ́ State House of Assembly in Yorùbá.

However, as commendable and laudable as this effort is, our personal investigation revealed that proceedings on such a day are still partially recorded in English. It should also be pointed out that correspondence to and from the other arms of government, within and outside Ọ̀yọ́ State, are still done in English. Additionally, throughout the remaining days of the week, the use of Yorùbá is reserved for personal communication or for making side comments during official proceedings. Nevertheless, with this action of the lawmakers, Yorùbá is on its way to being assigned a more prestigious role in law making. Thus, the language provision of the *1999 Constitution* of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the state's Houses of Assembly is being made effective by the decision of the state's Houses of the Assembly in Southwest of Nigeria. It reads:

> ...the business of a House of Assembly shall be conducted in English,but
> the House may in addition to English conduct the business of the House in

one or more other languages spoken in the state as the house may by resolution approve (Section 97),

In the House of Assembly of a Yoruba-speaking state, Ọyọ, situated in a Yorùbá city, Ibàdàn, it should be a misnomer and surprising if Yorùbá was not employed at all for deliberations. First, all of the legislators are Yorùbá and they ought to be able to communicate effectively in Yorùbá, alongside English. Second, all of the legislators cannot claim to have enough mastery of English to participate actively in the business of the house. Indeed, it is doubtful whether research conducted into the use of English in the House proceedings would not reveal deficiencies in grammar, inappropriate expression of politeness, wrong presentation of argument, inaccurate interpretation of speeches and documents, and shallow contributions to controversial issues. Could it also be the case that deficiencies in the English language usage may sometimes lead to unnecessary disagreements and bickering in the course of deliberations on some matters of the House? It is so ironical that the Ọyọ State House of Assembly is at present embroiled in unimaginable crisis.

In government offices, workers use both Yorùbá and English for various reasons in personal communication. They, however, use only English for the conducting of official meetings because it is the official language. Some of the workers, especially those who have acquired much formal education, find it convenient to communicate in the official language, while many of the less-educated workers find it tedious and boring. Almost all secretaries contacted would however prefer to write the minutes in English because they find it more convenient to write in that language rather than in Yorùbá.

Review of Research Findings

A review of the research findings should enable us to highlight the major issues raised in respect of (i) the factors affecting code choice, (ii) the attitudes of the community towards code choice, (iii) the consequences of code choice, and (iv) the constraints on code choice.

With respect to factors causing code choice, certain questions that emanate from the research need to be answered:

a. Why does a Yorùbá-English bilingual speak in English to a group of Yorùbá-English bilinguals when the speaker is more proficient in Yorùbá?

b. Why do some Yorùbá-English bilingual parents forbid their children to speak Yorùbá and at the same time encourage them to always speak English at home?

c. Why does an epitome of Yorùbá culture (a traditional ruler, for instance speak English in his/her Yorùbá royal domain?

d. Why does a society encourage little children to learn their subjects in English?

e. Why is English preferred for official meetings, businesses, education and interviews for gainful employment in a Yorùbá society?

The answers to these questions are: (i) to raise status, (ii) to show off, (iii) to create social distance, (iv) to improve one's mastery of English, (v) for adequate expression of thought, (vi) lack of competence in Yorùbá, (vii) for convenience in expression of ideas, (viii) to exclude others, (ix) to reflect modernity, and (x) to mix with other ethnic groups.

Regarding the attitudes of the speech community towards code choice, it was observed that the community has a split commitment towards both English and Yorùbá. People appear to prefer English more, but they also express allegiance to Yorùbá. The tendency is to have both languages in a diglossic relationship of English as High, and Yorùbá as Low.

The consequences of a code choice pattern that tilts so much in favour of English can be identified from the respective domains of communication, thus:

i. lack of effective education in the school domain;

ii. emergence of limited bilingual children, or children who lack competence in their mother tongue;

iii. communication gaps between children, who can only speak English, and their grandfathers and grandmothers, who can only speak Yorùbá;

iv. erosion of mother tongue culture by social leaders in the process of acquisition and unnecessary display of English-orientated modernism;

v. efficient communication doubtful in the face of doubtful competence in English;

vi. communication gaps and unequal access between the elite and masses.

Lastly, the sociological constraint on efficient Yorùbá-English codeswitching is the bias attitude of the elite towards English, which has been described as that of linguistic imperialism or neo-colonialism (Bamgbose, 1985), and which, unfortunately, is being copied by the rest of the society. One wonders why forty-seven years after colonial rule in Nigeria, English is still solely used for official meetings in a largely monolingual Yorùbá community. This is the high point of linguistic neo-colonialism. Can it ever be possible to promote the use of Yorùbá for official communication? Yes, it can. But a

psycho-socio-linguistic re-orientation would be inevitable. Below, we present a socio-linguistic approach that addresses such a re-orientation.

Bilingualism-Biculturalism and Efficient Use of Yorùbá and English

The bilingualism-biculturalism approach has four basic principles that are relevant for communication in a Nigerian city where Yoruba and English are predominant. These are: (i) the principle of societal bilingualism, (ii) the integration of bilingualism and biculturalism, (iii) the recognition of tradition and modernity, and (iv) the primacy of the mother tongue (MT) and complementary role of the second language (L2). The principles are briefly explained below.

The first principle asserts the preference for social over individual considerations when we talk about language use. For example, from the perspective of individual bilingualism, as many languages can be identified in Ìbàdàn as ethnic groups; also individual speakers can vary much in terms of the number of languages they speak and also why and how they speak them. This may present difficulties for social language planning. With the conception of societal bilingualism (Fishman, 1966; Stewart, 1968), we can identify the two predominant languages in the society, i.e., Yorùbá and English, and plan for their development and use.

The second principle rests on the assumption that a Yorùbá-English bilingual in Ìbàdàn is also a bicultural person. Based on the interconnection between language and culture, it suggests that any social-cultural (i.e., economic, political, social, etc.) policy must be based on a sound linguistic consideration in order to be effective, while linguistic

(i.e., language policy) considerations must take place within the purview of socio-cultural contexts.

Thirdly, bilingualism-biculturalism recognises the roles of tradition and modernity and indeed an integration of the two perspectives, in the development of the society. The following quotation from (Spencer, 1962) explains this better:

> ...multilingual nations could make a great contribution to the world by virtue of the inevitable variety and mixture of their cultures. They are in contact with the modern world, and have moved right into it, by means of the language introduced under European rule. They are also in contact, through their own languages with an older less feverish, more stable tradition. And although we all, in the modern world, want technological progress, we all also need stability (p. 16).

Meanwhile, the distinct media of traditional and modern cultures in Nigeria are the mother tongue (e.g., Yorùbá) and English respectively. The collaboration between these media can also have two possible outcomes that are positive for both linguistic and social development, i.e., modernization of Yorùbá for official use, on the one hand, and indigenisation of English for personal use, on the other hand.

Lastly, the bilingual-bicultural approach also recognizes the primacy of the mother tongue and the complementary role of English for social development. In the Yorùbá community, for example, personal, social and official transactions ought to take place in Yorùbá while English is used mainly for inter-ethnic or international communication. Stable Yoruba-English bilinguals ought to be more fluent in Yorùbá than English and they ought to use the former for all kinds of communication more than the latter in their mother tongue environment. Surely, a person cannot be considered functionally literate if he / she is not literate in his / her mother tongue.

Implications of Approach to Choice of Yorùbá and English in Ìbàdànland

Certain pieces of information are essential for the proper understanding of a bilingual-bicultural approach and we briefly present these below.

The Principle of Societal Bilingualism

A community with uncoordinated individual bilingualism breeds people with diverse lingual-cultural abilities: monolinguals in the local or L2, inefficient (limited, incipient or subordinate) bilinguals and efficient (coordinate) bilinguals. Such people inevitably form group alliances that match their lingual-cultural experiences, e.g., elites versus masses and modernists versus traditionalists, and are focused on selfish individual or group accomplishments rather than social development. Where monolinguals or inefficient bilinguals, rather than efficient bilinguals, dictate the tune of social events in a bilingual city the growth of such a city is stunted. But where the principles of societal and efficient bilingualism guide the development of a community, an emphasis will be placed more on social development than individual interests. A self-respecting person or society does not take pride in the sole mastery and use of another group's language. A Yorùbá-English bilingual may exhibit pride if they have adequate competence in both languages (i.e., a coordinate bilingual) or at least in Yorùbá, but not when the person's competence is limited to English.

Complementarity of Languages for Bilingual Efficiency

The mastery of a language is not enhanced by the use of a language in inappropriate situations. On the contrary, research findings have shown that (i) language is acquired properly in the rich context of its use (Ellis, 1985), (ii) competence in a previous language influences the proper learning of a second language (Afolayan, 1970 & 1979; Tomori & Okedara, 1975; Cummins 1984; Yoloye, et al. 1989), (iii) the mother tongue is the most useful language in acquiring early education (UNESCO, 1953; Bamgbose, 1976; Fafunwa, 1982) and (iv) that children hurried over learning subjects through English end up learning both the English language and the other subjects by rote rather than by comprehension (Olagoke, 1979).

Modernization and Domestication of 'L' and 'H' Languages Respectively

Normally, one's thoughts ought to be most adequately expressed in one's mother tongue (Haugen, 1966). For example, Yorùbá should be more appropriate for expressing aspects of Yorùbá culture, at least within its home community (Bamgbose, 1982). But if the language, for some reason, cannot be used to express some modern world concepts, words can be borrowed from English or any other language to modernize the language. After all, most of the legal, scientific and technological terminologies in the English vocabulary today are borrowed or adapted into English from other languages such as Greek, Latin, and French (Nelson Francis, 1963). In a parallel manner, English also has to be domesticated to accommodate aspects of the Yorùbá culture.

Preference for 'Additive' Rather than 'Subtractive' Bilingualism

For a Yorùbá person not to have adequate oral and literacy competence in Yorùbá is a misnomer. It indicates linguistic dehumanisation and social incapacitation. If the person further claims that he / she has more competence in English, then that is linguistic colonization (Ayandele, 1966). On most occasions, the latter claim is found to be false, as many of such speakers tend to lack competence in both Yorùbá and English. Applied linguists generally believe that the acquisition of 'additive' bilingualism by Yorùbá-English learners / users is more beneficial to them and the society than the acquisition of 'subtractive' bilingualism. The former promotes the development of the two languages and encourage the user's flexibility in them, while the latter demotes the first language and results in the loss of cultural identity (Baker, 1988).

Target for Bilingual Competence

Some Yorùbá-English bilinguals may speak or write English fluently but lack creativity and originality of ideas when using it. A distinction is already made in this regard between the attainment of surface fluency in a language – Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and the attainment of Cognitive Advanced Language Proficiency (CALP) in a language (Cummins, 1981). An efficient bilingual of Yorùbá and English should acquire both BICS and CALP in the two Languages.

The Need for 'Inclusive' Rather than 'Exclusive' Education

Section 14 (2c) of the 1999 Constitution encourages the participation of people in government. In addition, Sections 17(3a) and 18 of the constitution express the equal access and opportunity of people to social facilities and education. Contrary to the above

provisions, language has been used as a means of exclusion in Nigeria as a whole

(Oyelaran, 1990). The access to quality education has been the exclusive preserve of a

minority, and this minority has the opportunity to learn English. But since the most

important functions of government are carried out in English, the majority of the people

have been denied access to participation in social development. In developed countries of

the world, social progress has been possible because the majority are able to participate in

government via the effective use of one or more languages.

Integration of Tradition and Modernity

Although English is widely recognized in the world as a language of modernism,

it should be understood that gaining access to modernism is not an exclusive preserve of

a single language (Wolff, 1999). It is not enough to acquire modernity through English

and other foreign languages alone, but also to strive to achieve it through Yorùbá and

other indigenous languages as well. Can it ever be possible to promote the use of Yoruba

for official communication? Yes, it can. The exposure to modern science and technology

through English alone can also create the habit of consumerism, while an integration of

modernity with traditional ideas and values will further enhance creative and productive

technology (Akindele & Adegbite, 1999).

Conclusion

The suggestion of a bilingual-bicultural approach of code choice in Yorùbá and

English for effective communication has implications for different kinds of people in

Ibadanland, Òyó State and Nigeria. We shall examine the implications for five groups of

people below, i.e., (i) the government, (ii) social leaders, (iii) media practitioners, (iv) language scholars, teachers, educationists, writers, etc., and (v) the general citizenry.

The government has a great role to play in the development and use of Yoruba and English for effective communication. In an earlier suggestion of the bilingual-bicultural approach, Adegbite (1999) attached the main responsibility of developing mother tongues and English to two levels of government, i.e., the local and federal governments respectively. In this direction, at the first level, local government councils in Yorubaland have the duty to finance the development of the Yorùbá language (Babalola, 2002). The councils may however be supported in their efforts by the government in all Yorùbá-speaking states, especially since many of these states are unilingual. At the second level, the federal government is assigned the responsibility of financing the development of the English language in Nigeria for inter-ethnic, national and international use, whether by direct means or through special grants to local governments. The government also has the duty to enlighten the public and mobilize them towards developing positive attitudes towards Yorùbá and other Nigerian languages. With sincerity and commitment and demonstration of leadership by example, there is no doubt that positive results will be achieved.

Traditional rulers and social leaders have the responsibility to project the efficient use of Yorùbá and English in diverse aspects of communication in Ibadanland. Because members of the society look up to them as role models of social behaviour, their positive attitude towards the language can encourage its development. While bilingualism in Yorùbá and English can be encouraged, there is no reason, for example, why a literate

monolingual Yorùbá person should not be able to participate actively in the affairs of a local government or state in Yorubaland.

The media practitioners have two roles to perform in the promotion of efficient code choice in Ìbàdànland. First, they are to enlighten the public about the primary role of Yorùbá and complementary role of English. While Yorùbá can be used unrestrictedly in many communication situations, the use of English for public or official communication should be limited to occasions in which there are co-interactants who are non-Yorùbá. Secondly, it is their duty to popularise the use of Yorùbá through the various electronic and print media. They also have the facility to modernize the language and enhance its prestige among the users.

Language scholars, teachers, educationists, writers and publishers also must play major roles in the development and popularisation of the language. Theoretical and applied researches have to be carried out in Yorùbá and English, and qualified teachers have to teach the languages and also teach other subjects through them. Books also have to be written and published in the languages for intensive and extensive reading.

Lastly, the general citizenry must learn patriotism and self-respect in order to take pride in what is theirs. No community or nation that denigrates its indigenous language can truly develop. Japan and China are examples of nations that have based their development on the integration of indigenous and modern cultures.

In this regard, the Ìbàdàn people are already noted for their industry and potentials for development and can be expected to lead the efficient bilingual-bicultural communication revolution. Given the prominent status of Ìbàdànland in Nigeria and the persistent role of its citizens in Nigeria as a vanguard of positive change in the nation, the

paper advises Ìbàdàn citizens, particularly the educated elite in the city to set the pace of proper use of Yorùbá and English for efficient bilingual communication in Nigeria. *Ọmo ẹni kò ṣèdí bèbèrè ká fi ìlèkè sí tọmọ ẹlòmíì.* (We don't just abandon the fat buttocks of our own children and adorn beads on the buttocks of other persons' children.)

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