

OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA



Inaugural Lecture Series 83

**LINGUISTICS
IN THE SERVICE
OF
MANKIND**

By S. Ayotunde Ekundayo

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LINGUISTICS IN THE SERVICE OF MANKIND · 83

the Service of Mankind". Before going into the heart of the lecture, I will endeavour to state what led me into this specialised area of my discipline in the choice of a topic. First of all, although I will be the third professor of Linguistics in this University, this will be the first inaugural lecture in the discipline. My predecessors never delivered their inaugural lectures. My predecessor, the first professor of this University, then made some introductory remarks on Linguistics at the first inaugural lecture.

by

S. Ayotunde Ekundayo
Professor of Theoretical Linguistics

Second, Nigeria has in the past adopted various cost-saving measures. One of such measures, (which is partly wise though), includes the much talked-about rationalisation of university curricula. The ASUU has consistently rejected the idea for such rationalisation in several advertisements in the Nigerian Press. But it appears that devoted students and staff have already concluded their exercise secretly and are just waiting for an announcement.

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The topic of my inaugural lecture today is "Linguistics in the Service of Mankind". Before going into the heart of the lecture, I will endeavour to state what led me into this less specialized area of my discipline in the choice of a topic. First of all, although I will be the third professor of Linguistics in this University, this will be the first inaugural lecture in the discipline. My predecessors never delivered their inaugural lectures before leaving the service of this University. Hence, there is the need to give some introductory remarks on Linguistics at the first inaugural lecture.

Second, Nigeria is now in its oil doom period and various cost-saving measures are being adopted by the Federal Military Government. One of such measures, (which is penny wise though), includes the much talked-about rationalization of university curricula. The ASUU has consistently rejected the motif for such rationalization in several advertisers' announcements on the pages of Nigerian newspapers. But it appears that devotees of rationalization have already concluded their exercise secretly and are just waiting for an opportunity to unleash their venom on the helpless Nigerian public. While I will not go into details on the recommendations of the inter-ministerial committee set up by the erstwhile Buhari administration on the revision of university curricula, I will comment on parts of their recommendations against the study of linguistics in Nigerian universities.

Among the courses listed for ultimate phasing out through ignorance are linguistics, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and other European languages. Incidentally, the committee saw nothing adverse about the teaching of English and African languages which are, at present, the greatest language beneficiaries of linguistics. If a degree in English or any African language should exclude its linguistic component, we would be sorry to discover that we have thrown out the baby with the bath water. The level of education in Nigeria is now as low as it is partly because the students do not have the language; and linguistics, which should develop this aspect of our students' knowledge has been bastardized

as an abstract and elitist discipline, sooner or later to be phased out of existence by the rationalization experts. Perhaps some knowledge of what benefits could accrue from linguistics to the society will be useful to all, including those bent on its elimination even if they eventually decide to have it obliterated along with other Arts and Science subjects.

Third, Nigeria claimed to have Africa at the centre, or as the focus, of its foreign policy during the Murtala Muhammed administration, and she gave the MPLA government of Aghostino Neto in Angola financial assistance in the face of multiple aggression from Savimbi's UNITA and the South African racist regime. However, our only means of communication with Angolans is the Portuguese language which had already been slated for eradication by the rationalization experts; and linguistics, which should help us with the other Bantu languages in Southern Africa is also at the receiving end. If we are actually serious about our orchestrated foreign policy goals, our revision of university curricula should cease to be penny wise and pound foolish.

On Sunday, December 7, 1941, the United States of America woke up to experience its first and only humiliation at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Through a series of subterfuge, organized deception and prevarications, the colonial regime of Emperor Hirohito was able to outwit the democratic government of Franklin Delano Roosevelt into a state of inaction and unpreparedness while their airforce swooped on the American naval base in a Sunday morning surprise onslaught. The sleeping giant woke up to action, and later retaliated through the first detonation of the atomic bomb on human beings, the guinea pigs being the civilian populace of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945 respectively. But the more important outcome of the incident at Pearl Harbor was that the Americans were determined never to be so surprised again. In order to effect this resolution, through the National Security Act of 1947, the U.S. government established the Central Intelligence Agency. The C.I.A., as it is popularly called, with headquarters at Langley,

Virginia, was established in order to coordinate, evaluate and disseminate intelligence from various United States intelligence agencies; and its linguistic section is one of the most potent arms of the agency. Apart from monitoring radio broadcasts and communication fall outs from all parts of the globe, this linguistic section also funds research into the syntactic projects of major American universities. Similarly, the UCLA syntax research project, which was in full session while I was there for my Masters degree in Linguistics in 1967, was financed entirely by the United States Air Force.

Nigeria on the other hand merely plays to the gallery by pretending to be a giant of Africa but without the wherewithal to lead itself or its immediate neighbours. So it will be presumptuous of Nigerians, whose National Security Organization could not even prevent the day-light theft of a whole impounded aircraft by two British pilots from Murtala Muhammed Airport in 1984, to arrogate to itself the leadership of the continent. The situation becomes more serious when we realize that we do not even have the language with which to dribble our enemies.

Linguistics and Mankind

A layman's concept of linguistics is one's ability to speak many languages. When I told some American inquirers in 1967 that I was studying for my Masters in linguistics, I was asked "How many languages do you speak?" This misconception of a linguist as a polyglot is so universal and independent of social strata that it is one of the obstacles a linguist must scale through in order to effectively communicate with others on his discipline.

However, I will limit my discussion of the linguistic content to the mere observation that linguistics is generally recognized as the science of languages. A simple analogy will be that of the relationship between Mathematics and the physical sciences. As Harold Whitehall once remarked, "...as no science can go beyond mathematics, no criticism

can go beyond its linguistics.”¹ While this appears to be an extreme statement if interpreted literally, there is an element of truth in it. As far as Literature and Linguistics are concerned, the linguist, in a syntactic description, provides the core of a language description by separating grammatical from ungrammatical sentences in the language. Any writer of fiction or non-fiction in the language is expected to have tacit knowledge of this distinction. Even if he chooses to deviate from the grammatical pattern of the language to achieve literary effect, his composition is understood in relation to the standard from which he deviated. This point was actually made in my paper on the Literary language of twentieth century English Literature in 1976. More will be said about that paper at the end of this lecture.

I will now itemize some of my research engagements in this university in order to show how even Theoretical Linguistics can serve mankind. Since questions of interest in Linguistics must be discussed with specific human languages as data, I will exemplify my theoretical discussions with data from the Yoruba language principally.² English will be used to exemplify Applied Linguistics.

Creativity in Language: Syntax

Human Language is creative because there is evidence that in normal communications, we create the sentences we use afresh. We do not rehearse a memorized set of sentences in answering questions in day-to-day discussions. Hence, it is very likely for one to encounter new sentences he has never heard before, but one's language acquisition mechanism will enable the person to understand such novel sentences. It is this possibility that leads to the assertion that human language is infinite, and this provoked a “Chomskyan” definition of language as “a set, finite or infinite, of sentences, constructed from a finite alphabet of symbols.”³

In my research studies on the Yoruba Language, I have discovered that this infinity is not restricted to sentences

alone since there are Yoruba nominalization rules which would make us extend the observation on infinity to noun phrases and nouns. The infinity of nouns (or complex nouns to be specific) was explored in *An alternative to lexical insertion for Yoruba Complex nouns* published in Los Angeles in 1976 where I also established the first and only alternative to lexical insertion in Linguistic theory. The discussion is continued in "The Sigmamization of Syntax" (1976) and extended to Yoruba Noun Phrase numerals in *Vigesimal numeral derivational morphology: Yoruba grammatical competence epitomized* which was published in Bloomington, Indiana (1977).

The need for an alternative to lexical insertion became necessary because the following three requirements a standard theory must meet exclude an infinite number of complex nouns (i.e. nouns obtained from outputs of true syntactic or non-lexical transformations) from Linguistic description.⁴ The requirements are:

1. "A standard theory specifies, for each sentence, a syntactic structure $\Sigma = (P_1, \dots, P_1, \dots, P_n)$ (where P_1 is the deep, and P_n the surface structure), a semantic representation S , and a phonetic representation P . It asserts furthermore that S is determined by P_1 and P by P_n under the rules of semantic and phonological interpretation, respectively. More generally, the theory is 'syntactically based' in the sense that it assumes the sound-meaning relation (P, S) to be determined by Σ ." (Chomsky, 1971: 185)

2. "A lexical transformation associated with the lexical item I maps a phrase-maker P containing a sub-structure I into a phrase-maker P' formed by replacing Q by I ." (Chomsky, 1971: 184)

3. "Given $(P_1 \dots, P_n)$ in K , there is an i such that for $j < i$, the transformation used to form P_{j+1} from P_j is lexical, and for $j \geq i$, the transformation used to form P_{j+1} from P_j is nonlexical." (Chomsky, 1971: 184)

The intermediate point P_i between the P_1 and P_n of Σ in (1) is the level of syntactic deep structure. Then (3) implies that P_i must be the last place where the lexical transformation of (2) can operate since the transformation used to form P_{j+1} from P_j for $j \geq i$ is non-lexical. As a result of requirement (3), once a non-lexical or true syntactic transformation has applied, no lexical insertion transformation can again apply. While many transformational rules can be condensed to the formal schema *Move* α in most post-1980 studies on government and binding, there are other transformational rules like the English passive which, in addition to the *Move* α rule, introduce new formatives to the structure index during the process of structure change. The true syntactic transformational nature of such rules is undeniable, and only such rules were used to demonstrate that some Yoruba noun formation rules apply to the output of true syntactic transformations thereby violating requirement (3). And once such examples exist, the alternative options available for the grammarian are either to postulate another lexical insertion stage between P_i and P_n for Yoruba complex nouns or to discard the theory. The establishment of another lexical insertion point was found to be inconvenient since complex nouns are recursive. One example constructed to illustrate the lexical amalgamation process is

4. àì-fàìlógbónlórífìgòtótífóbáìfúnràrènisimijà ni a bu Dele fun (not using a broken bottle to fight against one who does not give himself any peace of mind owing to lack of wisdom) is what we condemned Dele for).

When it was first proposed in 1976, lexical amalgamation was stated as being non-transformational and this has created problems for some scholars who thought it was a global rule. But there is nothing of empirical import in its transformational or non-transformational nature. Actually, it is better as a transformational rule since its operation of deleting all boundary symbols is similar to the deletion transformations of transformational grammar.

The significance of the lexical amalgamation alternative to lexical insertion for all agglutinating languages like Yoruba is that we were able to solve the problems of new derived lexical items not recorded in dictionaries by lexicographers. While the paper was being written in 1975, some examples of such neologisms were collected by me. Some examples were *agbomiró* (a + VP = (Gba omi ró) for 'water pipe' constructed by a translator of a Christian Science lecture on "The Power of Prayers" by Albert B. Crichlow (1973; 1975) "Agbara Àdúra" Christian Science Board of Directors, Boston, Mass p.1). On June 4, 1975, we had *àjo káfowòwòwòkòlèèwò omọ Nigeria ati Britain* as a Yoruba translation of 'The Nigeria Britain Friendship Association' from a WNTV/WNBS news broadcast at 7.30 p.m. The neologism *káfowòwòwòkòlèèwò* can be translated literally as 'it is not wrong for people to mix together.' Then on Monday, 3rd November, 1975, from the same television network during a similar broadcast at 7.30 p.m., we had 'bi orin se je *apàbànújèrun*' with a repeated application of the prefix plus verb phrase rule, and where the neologism *apàbànújèrun* is translatable as 'something which destroys sorrow.' If lexical insertion in Linguistic theory is not supplemented with lexical amalgamation elsewhere, then lexicographers must anticipate all new syntactically derived nouns and record them in dictionaries for lexical insertion purposes. No such dictionary can ever be constructed. Hence, as proved in my next paper on this same topic i.e. "Sigmamization of Syntax", any descriptively adequate Syntactic Theory for human language must incorporate

somewhere my lexical amalgamation framework or a notational variant of it. This position has never been faulted.

Another paper on creativity which introduced another element into the discussion was "Vigesimal Numeral Derivational Morphology: Yoruba Grammatical Competence Epitomized." Apart from being another paper on Yoruba noun phrase productivity, it introduced another original proposal in Linguistic theorizing, which is the establishment of the equivalence of the linguistic competence necessary for the construction, perception and syntactic representation of the infinite set of sentences in Yoruba to the computational and representational competence I established for the construction and perception of an infinite set of Yoruba numerals. This paper which was published in Bloomington, Indiana and abstracted in San Diego, California, provided a rule schema for the vagaries of the Yoruba numeral system like discontinuities in *egbèrún ajá dúdú ó lé méta* for "1,003 black dogs" or *ḡédín* polysemy in *ḡédógún* (15) where it means -5, *áádótá* (50), where it means -10, *ḡédégbèta* (500) where it means -100 and *ḡédégbàata* (5,000) where the same *ḡédín* now means -1000.

The vigesimal numeral paper also shows that different compositional processes can be employed for numerals and that these do not lead to any change in meaning just as in language, not all differences in derivational techniques lead to changes in meaning. For instance, three ways of deriving the numeral 72 are:

- (a) English - seventy-two = $[70 + 2] = 72$
- (b) Yoruba - *ḡìléláádòrin* = $[2 + (80 - 10)] = 72$
- (c) French - *soixante-douze* = $[60 + 12] = 72$

For very high numerals, the Yoruba person must construct them afresh because their functional load is low. Hence, someone constructing the Yoruba numeral for 19,669 must use his internalized rules to derive it in various ways. Seven different representations of that numeral are in (d) to (j) below, while a tree diagram for one of them i.e. (f) is given as (k):

- (d) ọkẹ kan ó dín irínwó ó lé oókàndínláadórín
 $((20,000 \times 1) - 400) + ((80-10) - 1) = 19,669$
- (e) ọkẹ kan ó dín ọ́ọ́dúnrún ó dín oókànlélogbòn
 $((20,000 \times 1) - 300) - (30 + 1) = 19,669$
- (f) ẹ̀ẹ́dẹ̀gbàawá ó lé ẹ̀gbẹ̀ta ó lé oókàndínláadórín
 $(20,000 - 1,000) + 600 + ((80 - 10) - 1) = 19,669$
- (g) ẹ̀ẹ́dẹ̀gbàawá ó lé ẹ̀ẹ́dẹ̀gbẹ̀rín ó dín oókànlélogbòn
 $((20,000 - 1,000) + (800 - 100) - (30 + 1)) = 19,669$
- (h) ẹ̀ẹ́dẹ̀gbàawá ó lé ọ̀tálẹ̀gbẹ̀ta ó lé mẹ̀san
 $((20,000 - 1,000) + (600 + 60) + 9) = 19,669$
- (i) ẹ̀ẹ́dẹ̀gbàawá ó lé ọ̀rínlẹ̀gbẹ̀ta ó dín oókànlá
 $((20,000 - 1,000) + (600 + 80) - 11) = 19,669$
- (j) ọkẹ kan ó dín ọ̀tàdínínrínwó ó lé mẹ̀san
 $((20,000 \times 1) - (400 - 60) + 9) = 19,669$

There could be more ways of arriving at 19,669 since the Yorubas employ both addition to and subtraction from vigesimal and other units as well as multiplication in numeral derivation. This makes the Yoruba numeral system (more than English or other languages which use addition only) very similar in creativity to the creativity of human language. Through the arithmetical processes involved, ambiguous representations are obtainable e.g. 3,000 is both *ẹ̀gbẹ̀ẹ́dógún* (200×15) and *ẹ̀ẹ́dẹ̀gbàajì* ($4,000 - 1,000$) while 5,000 is both *ẹ̀gbẹ̀ẹ́dógbòn* (200×25) and *ẹ̀ẹ́dẹ̀gbàata* ($6,000 - 1,000$).

A tree diagram for one of the seven forms above i.e. for (f) is (k):

Restrictions

Another aspect of linguistic theorizing I engaged in is in the area of restrictions. One thing that came to mind in the lexical amalgamation paper is that restrictions must exist to prevent creativity from being ungoverned since the time when human beings are most free is the time that they are most unfree. The expressway is perhaps the freest road for motorists, but it also has the largest number of restrictive rules. Apart from rules on road use, there are rules on road construction. And they are all "no's" or "don'ts" or other forms of restrictions. For an expressway, it is: no stopping, no U-turn, no pedal motorcyclists, no pedestrians, no learner drivers, no reversing, no traffic lights, no T-junction, no railway crossing, no cross roads, no sharp bends, no traffic wardens and in civilized and developed countries, no armed robbers.

This has led me to examine the "no's" of creativity. In "Lexical Nominalizability Restrictions in Yoruba" which was published in Supplement 7 of *Studies in African Linguistics* in Los Angeles, California, I established six restrictive rules against lexical nominalizability which will exclude all outputs of VP nominalization rules from the lexical insertion or amalgamation operations. But an infinite set of lexical nominals still remain which make the lexical amalgamation process unassailable for polysynthetic languages like Yoruba and many other African, Amerindian and Polynesian languages.

The journey to the restrictive world also took me to serial verbs where my "Yoruba serial verb string commutability constraint" published jointly with Akinnaso in *Lingua*, North Holland in 1983 constituted a departure from the usual serial verb research into its historical derivation or synchronic grammatical status. The positional semantic classification I suggested there facilitates the prediction of permissible, doubtful, and non-permissible serial verb strings, showing (i) the commutability restrictions arising from such a functional-semantic classification and (ii) how various

reductionist derivational explanations of the serial verb phenomenon can arise from undue concentration on one or the other of the various verb semantic functions. I will not examine these papers here because of their technicalities. But I will talk briefly about another restrictive paper on Yoruba personal names published in *Anthropological Linguistics* in Bloomington, Indiana, because of its interesting revelations about rules unconsciously applied by the Yorubas in personal name construction. As names constitute a proper subset of nouns, this paper constitutes one of my research findings within the Yoruba noun phrase, but it is also an area where we find linguistics in action in the service of mankind.

Any Yoruba speaker-hearer will readily admit that Èyítáyò (this is enough joy), Oládiméjì (honour is doubled), Omóparíọlá (a child epitomizes wealth), Òṣákùà (òrìṣà kù iwà) — òrìṣà (the idol is really cultured) and Adéọṣun (the crown of the River Òṣun) are authentic Yoruba personal names, the first four of which are full sentences. On the basis of these five names, one can, through the creativity of language, construct new personal names that one has probably never heard before such as Ilétáyò (the home is enough joy), Ọmódíméjì (children are doubled), Ayọparíọlá (joy epitomizes wealth), Olúkùà (the Lord is really cultured) and Adéọbà (the crown of the River Ọba). The second set of constructed names have not yet been encountered in my investigations but they are permissible Yoruba personal names since they are not excluded by an important Yoruba principle for personal name construction which states that 'ilé ní à ñ wò kí á tó sọ omọ ní orúkọ' (the condition of the home determines a child's name). Since suitable home conditions are possible, any of Ilétáyò to Adéọbà could function as Yoruba personal names. For instance, if there can be a crown for River Òṣun, there is no reason why River Ọba too cannot have its own crown especially if it is realized that both rivers were joined together in order to increase the volume of water in the dam supplying drinking water to Ibadan metropolis. River Òṣun and River Ọba were

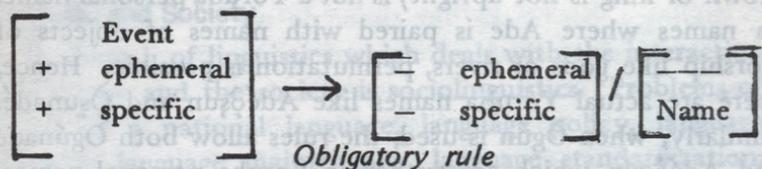
artificially converted into twins there, and this action of conversion into twins was nominalized into *a ʒe èjiré* (we created twins). From this action, the dam obtained its name *Aʒèjiré*. The possibility of *Adéṣbà* as a complement to *Adéṣun* was suggested to me in a discussion of my personal name rules by Professor Wande Abimbola.

However, what shows that restrictions exist even here can be taken from Yoruba literature. On the basis of the real name *Ọládíméjì*, we earlier derived the potential name *Ọmọ́díméjì*, but we cannot derive the unusual form *Ọmugọ́díméjì* (foolishness is doubled) which was one of D. O. Fagunwa's characters in *Ìrínkèrindò nínú Igbó Elégbèje* (1954). It is the task of the linguist to explore the unconscious rules which allow *Ọládíméjì* and *Ọmọ́díméjì*, or to take another set i.e. the real name *Ọdédìrán* (hunting becomes a family tradition), the potential name *Owọ́dìrán* (Money is in the family) versus Fagunwa's facetious form *Wèrédìrán* (madness is hereditary), although there may be home conditions in which madness is actually hereditary. Thus the home condition rule is not the only one determining the form and content of Yoruba personal names. This observation then led to the examination of "Register peculiarities and sociological inhibitions: Restrictive Forces against Yoruba personal name sentence proliferation." The discussion in the paper was limited to sentence names but in 1980, Akinnaso extended the discussion to noun phrase names in another paper published in *Anthropological Linguistics*.

For register peculiarities, I examined home condition, length restriction, singular polarity condition and the mood restriction. The exclusion of sentence names like *Wèrédìrán* or NP names like *Ìbẹ̀mbẹ̀ Olókùnrùn* comes under sociological inhibitions and not register peculiarities. Two formats were used for presenting restrictive rules in this and other papers. First, normal syntactic rules like context sensitive phrase structure rules were used. These were supplemented with rules employing the terms and predicates of the

predicate calculus. Only one of the seven restrictions will be mentioned here and that is the singular polarity condition. This is necessary because some recent *ew* exponents have interpreted Adéogún as the negation of the name Adégún, giving the impression that one name is the negation of the other.

However, before examining the singular polarity restriction, one observed phenomenon in Yoruba personal names is that the abstraction of generalities is also a condition for naming and this, with the length restriction, severely restricts the number of sentence names, thus making Yoruba Personal Names a finite language. Given the name Ayòdèjì or Oládèjì, we are only sure of the birth of the child as one of the events interpreted as *ayò* (joy) or *Olá* (honour). Any other favourable event in the universe can be the other one, and this infinite number of events is generalized to only one single word *ayò* or *Olá* or any other possible lexical item. A context sensitive rule can then be used for stating this observation viz,



The singular polarity condition shows that no Yoruba personal name is obtained from the direct negation of another personal name. Akinnaso (1980) confirmed this finding and also showed that this condition is true of all Yoruba Noun Phrase names. The restriction limits the number of candidates that qualify as Yoruba personal names. By this condition, if we have negative personal names, like *Fá.tànmí - Ifá kò tànmí* - (ifa does not deceive me), *Olá.ṣebìkan - olá kò ṣe ibì kan* - (honour does not reside in only one place), *Kú.jẹmbólà - Ikú kò jẹ kí mbá olá* - (death deprived me of luck), *Adé.gbònmirè - adé kò gbòn mí rẹ* - (the crown has not deserted me), *Olórundṣebi - Olórún kò ṣe ibi* - (God does no harm), we do not have their

affirmation — Fátanmí (Ifa deceives me), Oláṣebìkan (honour resides in only one place), Kújémbólà (death made me lucky), Adégbònmírè (the crown has deserted me) and Olórunṣebi (God has done some harm) — as personal names. Similarly, if we have affirmative names like Èkúndayò (sorrow is turned into joy), Abímbólá (someone born with honour), Adéníyì (the crown has dignity), Morákinyò (Bravery made me happy), Olórunfèmi (God loves me), Olúyémisí (the Lord honoured me), we do not have their negation like Olórunòfèmi (God does not love me) as Yoruba personal names.⁵

The apparent counter example with Adégún and Adéògún in an ewi exponent's musical composition is a case of misinterpretation. Adéògún (the crown of Ogun) is like Adéòṣun which we mentioned earlier in our discussion of Òṣun and Ọbà at Aṣẹ̀jiré. Hence, since Adégún (the crown or king is upright) is a Yoruba personal name, by the singular polarity condition, its negation Adé.gún or Adékògún (the crown or king is not upright) is not a Yoruba personal name. In names where Ade is paired with names of objects of worship like gods or rivers, permutation is possible. Hence, there are actual Yoruba names like Adéòṣun and Òṣunadé. Similarly, when Ògún is used, the rules allow both Ògúnadé and Adéògún which are authentic Yoruba personal names. Hence Adéògún must be paired with Ògúnadé instead of Adégún.⁶

Singular polarity is maintained even when home conditions make the Yoruba construct bad names. Hence in cases of infant mortality (*àbíkú*) bad names are constructed to annoy the troublesome dead infant from coming back to life, but none of such names is a direct negation of authentic personal names like Olúdyémisí (The Lord does not honour me). Only the predicate calculus can be used to state the singular polarity condition thus:

$$(\forall x) (\exists y) (\sim (y \text{ is } x)) \equiv \sim (x \text{ is } y)$$

“for all x , if x is a personal name, then there exists no y , such that y is also a personal name, and y is identical with the negation of x .”

For Yoruba, names are research topics since the Yoruba man's attitude to personal names epitomized in the saying *orúko ní n ro ni* 'one behaves exactly as his name indicates', makes it very different from English or several European languages where the Shakespearean dictum of 'what's in a name' holds sway. There are more interesting facts about Yoruba names which require research work like the preponderance of NP names over sentence names for place names, and these are areas where linguistics can help further in fulfilling Alexander Pope's opening lines in his *Essay on Man*:

“Know thyself, presume not God to scan,

The proper study of mankind is man.”

Language and Society

The branch of linguistics which deals with the interaction of language and the society is sociolinguistics. Problems of choice of a national language, language policy, language planning, language maintenance, language standardization, orthographic representations, Pidginization and Creolization, language use, language interlarding, code mixing especially the frequency of occurrence of English words in the Yoruba sentences of many native Yoruba speakers all come under sociolinguistics. One theoretical paper in the field is my paper “On the Sociolinguistic/Semantic Boundary” published by *Language Sciences* in Bloomington, Indiana. According to popular belief in syntactic description, sociolinguistic phenomena only operate at the level of performance and not of competence. But this view was debunked in the paper where the inevitability of incorporating sociolinguistic information into competence-based grammars before they can even be observationally adequate was demonstrated.

affirmation — Fátanmí (Ifa deceives me), Oḷáṣebìkan (honour resides in only one place), Kújémbólà (death made me lucky), Adégbònmírè (the crown has deserted me) and Oḷórunṣebi (God has done some harm) — as personal names. Similarly, if we have affirmative names like Èkúndayò (sorrow is turned into joy), Abímbole (someone born with honour), Adéníyì (the crown has dignity), Morákinyò (Bravery made me happy), Oḷórunfèmi (God loves me), Olúyémisí (the Lord honoured me), we do not have their negation like Oḷórunòfèmi (God does not love me) as Yoruba personal names.⁵

The apparent counter example with Adégún and Adéògún in an ewi exponent's musical composition is a case of misinterpretation. Adéògún (the crown of Ogun) is like Adéòṣun which we mentioned earlier in our discussion of Òṣun and Oba at Aṣẹ̀jiré. Hence, since Adégún (the crown or king is upright) is a Yoruba personal name, by the singular polarity condition, its negation Adégún or Adékògún (the crown or king is not upright) is not a Yoruba personal name. In names where Ade is paired with names of objects of worship like gods or rivers, permutation is possible. Hence, there are actual Yoruba names like Adéòṣun and Òṣunadé. Similarly, when Ògún is used, the rules allow both Ògúnadé and Adéògún which are authentic Yoruba personal names. Hence Adéògún must be paired with Ògúnadé instead of Adégún.⁶

Singular polarity is maintained even when home conditions make the Yoruba construct bad names. Hence in cases of infant mortality (*àbíkú*) bad names are constructed to annoy the troublesome dead infant from coming back to life, but none of such names is a direct negation of authentic personal names like Olúdyémisí (The Lord does not honour me). Only the predicate calculus can be used to state the singular polarity condition thus:

$$(\forall x) (xN \supset \sim (\exists y) (yN \& (y \equiv \sim x)))$$

“for all x , if x is a personal name, then there exists no y , such that y is also a personal name, and y is identical with the negation of x .”

For Yoruba, names are research topics since the Yoruba man's attitude to personal names epitomized in the saying *orúko ní n ro ní* 'one behaves exactly as his name indicates', makes it very different from English or several European languages where the Shakespearean dictum of 'what's in a name' holds sway. There are more interesting facts about Yoruba names which require research work like the preponderance of NP names over sentence names for place names, and these are areas where linguistics can help further in fulfilling Alexander Pope's opening lines in his *Essay on Man*:

“Know thyself, presume not God to scan,

The proper study of mankind is man.”

Language and Society

The branch of linguistics which deals with the interaction of language and the society is sociolinguistics. Problems of choice of a national language, language policy, language planning, language maintenance, language standardization, orthographic representations, Pidginization and Creolization, language use, language interlarding, code mixing especially the frequency of occurrence of English words in the Yoruba sentences of many native Yoruba speakers all come under sociolinguistics. One theoretical paper in the field is my paper “On the Sociolinguistic/Semantic Boundary” published by *Language Sciences* in Bloomington, Indiana. According to popular belief in syntactic description, sociolinguistic phenomena only operate at the level of performance and not of competence. But this view was debunked in the paper where the inevitability of incorporating sociolinguistic information into competence-based grammars before they can even be observationally adequate was demonstrated.

The irony of linguistic theorizing is that we have the raw data like the raw materials of colonial days, which others use for proposing grand theories just as our raw materials were turned into manufactured goods and sold back to us at astronomical prices; this makes us permanent slaves to the International Monetary Fund (I.M.F.), the World Bank and similar supranational organizations.

Yoruba provided the raw data for this theoretical insight. In Yoruba, our tendency not to speak evil of ourselves or in describing our situations or in reporting unpleasant events to third parties leads to certain expressions like: *Owó pẹ̀ l'owó mi* — which actually means 'I have plenty of money' but is normally used for (I have no money). Also, *ng kò ì tii fi yín sílẹ̀ o* (I am not leaving you behind yet) is used only when I am actually leaving you behind. Then, *mo m' bọ̀* (I am coming) is used when I am actually going away from you, (see Delano, 1969 I: 51).⁷ Also *Ẹ́ kú iwájú* (I greet you for being in front) is a form of greeting used when I am actually overtaking you and your period of superiority is ending. Sentences like these do not have their Katzian compositional meanings⁸ in normal language use, but any learner of Yoruba must know that the set of sentences actually mean their exact opposites. Any generative grammar that fails to account for such phenomena is weak in both weak and strong generative capacity and cannot claim to be an adequate grammar of human language.

The phenomenon is also noticeable in place name changes in Yorubaland. In Egbadoland, between *Ìṣàgá Orílẹ̀* and *Jìgá*, there is a high hill on the road formerly called — *Òkè Pọ̀mọ̀lẹ̀kún* (the hill which makes children cry). There is also a village formerly called *Ṣàwọ̀npa* (collect and kill them) just as *Jìgá* itself is not distinct from the jigger insect. By 1954, there were moves to change these names so that *Jìgá*, between *Ìṣàgá* and *Ìbódòrò* became *Jọ̀gá* (be a master), *Pọ̀mọ̀lẹ̀kún* became *Pọ̀mọ̀lẹ̀rín* (make children laugh) while *Ṣàwọ̀npa* became *Ṣàwọ̀njọ̀* (collect them together). But in actual life, each of these name changes is euphemistic since

Pòmólérin still continues to pòmólẹ̀kún i.e. (to make children cry) while the jiggers of Jògá still remain there. Hence, when we now call that hill Pòmólérin, the child going from Íṣàgá to Jògá or Jìgá will still cry rather than laugh before ascending the steep hill. In Ekitiland in Ondo State, there were similar town names like Ìnù (state of being lost) Ìyapa (separation) and Ará (state of disappearance) which have now been changed to new names like Arámọ̀kọ̀ or Ayétòrò which are unrelated to their earlier forms. Other similar town names like Itàpá (the act of kicking) still remain there till now.

In Ibadan, a street called *Ináléndé* (I was driven here by fire) is usually modified by taxi commuters to *Ináléwondé* (they were driven here by fire). What the preceding shows is that the Yorubas do not always say what they mean, and since this is generally understood by speakers and listeners, there is no loss in intelligibility. In order for linguistic theory to adequately account for such Yoruba phenomena, its semantic rules must be supplemented with a principle of compositional indeterminacy which I proposed in the said paper.

My paper on the proposed Yoruba Monolingual Dictionary in A. Afọlayan (ed), *Yoruba Language and Literature*, University of Ife Press and University Press Limited discussed, among other things, the problems of Yoruba orthography. Recently, Yoruba orthography has been modified through the proposals of the members of the Yoruba Orthography Committee in 1969.

At present, there is an inconsistency in written Yoruba expressions. While members of the old generation like Chief Hubert Ogundemuren or Ogunde continue to spell his recent film titles *Aiye* and *Jaiyesimi* with *i* between *a* and *y* or modern eniyan as *enla* in another film title *Aropin n t'enia*, modern writers, starting from Delano, have started using the modern spelling without *i* in *ayé* or *àyà* or *ẹyẹ*, etc. As recently as 1985, when one tunes to the television

service of the Ondo State Radiovision Corporation (OSRC) Akure for Yoruba news, one finds news written with an *h* in *iròhìn*, and as soon as that station changes to its *egberi* for Ijò speakers, those who then tune to the Broadcasting Corporation of Oyo State television station (BCOS), Ibadan for a completion of their own Yoruba news find a different spelling *Iròyìn* with a *y*, at the end of the news. Until the last quarter of 1985 by which time both stations had adopted the modern spelling as *iròyìn*, this practice calls into question the ability of our television news producers and directors to march with the times. Inconsistency in spelling is a very serious problem for lexicographers and dictionary users. Since everybody uses the dictionary, the linguists' contribution to orthography reform is an important service to mankind.

Among the orthographic problems discussed were the representation of *n* and *l* by one symbol *l* since Ladefoged (1964) has classified both as a single significant sound or phoneme. Bamgboṣe (1965) suggested two criteria a good orthography must meet: "that it should represent all and only the significant sounds in the language; the second is that it should have only one symbol for each significant sound." While these criteria are good in themselves, they are not the only requirements of a good orthography since both criteria only suggest that a good orthography must be phonemic. The second criterion restates the principle of bi-uniqueness, one of the discredited principles of the phoneme. However, even if new orthographies may be phonemic, all good ones need not be since the French orthography which is far from being phonemic provides us with syntactic information which could have been lost through phonemization. In French, *il parlet* (he speaks and *ils parlent* (they speak) are pronounced identically suggesting identical orthographic representation using the phonemic criteria. But from the spelling, the *s* after *il* and *ent* after *parl* in (they speak) give us essential information on the pluralization of pronoun and verb. Hence, good orthographies are

good only if they serve the purposes of the linguistic community using the languages orthographically represented. Consequently, *n* and *l* need not be represented by one letter just as *an* and *on*, two phonemically identical sounds, need not be modified to *on* as proposed by Bamgboṣe. The separate representation as *an* and *on* provide information on labialization or lip rounding which a purely phonemic writing system would have made us lose irretrievably.

The most serious of the problems encountered in modern Yoruba orthographic representations deals with vowel multiplicity. One often finds in the dictionary of R.S. Abrahams or in Delano's *Dictionary of Yoruba Monosyllabic Verbs* different spellings for the same word caused by vowel multiplicity. We first start with double vowels which go to triple or quadruple vowel representations in some cases. Traditionally, a kind person was represented as *alanu* with a single *a* between *l* and *n* with the tilde on this *a*. In the *Report of the Yoruba Orthography Committee* in 1969, this single *a* becomes three in *alaaanu* while some writers limit theirs to two. The evidence for a multiple vowel representation of this particular word was provided by Professor Wande Abimbola who supplied the word *alanú* (first born of a woman), culled from oral literature, as one that must be distinguished from *aláḍḍánú* during his contribution to the preliminary discussion of this paper in 1969. Another motivation for vowel multiplicity was the result of consonant elision in Yoruba. In a paper presented on consonant elision by Wande Abimbola and Oḷasope Oyelaran in Yaounde in 1974, it was found that multiple vowel representations arise from the deletion of consonants and assimilation of vowels in words like *egúngún* (masquerade) *erùpè* (soil), etc., to obtain *eégún*, *eèpè*, etc., respectively. The traditional spelling of *eégún* as *ẽgun* with one *e* and the tilde misses the fact that the word was originally trisyllabic and that this trisyllabicity is maintained even after consonant elision.

Multiple vowel representation is introduced as a corrective measure against the ambiguous nature of the tilde which represents both vowel length and different tones. When the tilde is used, one cannot distinguish between *òdùrùn* (sun) and *ḍòrùn* (smell) from the unique representation *Ṷrùn* or *òdḡùn* (medicine) and *ḍòḡùn* (sweat) when they are both represented as *òḡùn*. However, multiple vowel representation also creates its own problems.

First, let us examine the implications of multiple vowels for the status of the 'word' in Yoruba. Bamgboṣe (1965) offered the transcription of a sample text which obeyed his proposed orthography. In it we find dual representations of single words. For instance, we have *nóḡ* and *nóḡḡ* (the), *àḡbàdò* and *àḡbàdoo* (maize), *òkò* and *òkoo* (farm), *kḡkḡ* and *kḡkḡó* (cocoa), *abà* and *abàa* (barn), *òjù* (of *lójù àlá*) and *òjùu* (face), etc (Bamgboṣe, 1965; 33). One point in favour of a representation of *nóḡ* with double vowels is that it contrasts with *nó* (to spend). Now, we have three 'words' or three orthographic forms: *nó* (to spend), *nóḡ* (the) and *nóḡḡ* (the) where, orthographically, *nó* is to *nóḡ* as *nóḡ* is to *nóḡḡ*. For instance, in *nóḡ* or *nóḡḡ*, no two consecutive vowels have the same tone. If the difference between *nó* and *nóḡ* is sufficient to make them two words, as any Yoruba will agree they are, how is one to be convinced that the same cannot be said of the representations *nóḡ* and *nóḡḡ*? Suppose the arguments on the contrast *nó* (spend) versus *nóḡ* (the) were applied to other dual representations we have quoted from Bamgboṣe, then we would concede that *kḡkḡ* and *kḡkḡó*, etc., are different words. But since this is not the case, one of the difficulties created in practice by vowel doubling is that it makes the Yoruba word more unstable than it used to be in normal traditional orthographic scripts. Consequently, it makes the status of a 'word' in Yoruba more problematic. The lexicographer will then be unable to decide whether he should have two entries for each word e.g. *òkò* = *òkoo*, *nóḡ* = *nóḡḡ*, etc.

Moreover, anyone using the dictionary can no longer decide whether the lexicographer has transcribed *Jésù* (Jesus) as *Jéésù* or *Jééésù* as very few Yoruba speakers pronounce that name with a single *e* sound. Hence, he is at sea as to whether he will find *Jésù* or *Jéésù* or *Jééésù*, and whether he ought to look for it before or after the entry *jenje* (tiny). While Bamgbose's orthographic practice (1965: 33) would predict *Jéésù*, and while his orthographic criteria could guarantee *Jésù* with a single *e*, we find that many of those who multiply vowels in their writing of Yoruba words (e.g. Delano, 1969-195) write the name as *Jésù*. Since Delano is a lexicographer, one can say that in Delano's dictionary, the Yoruba word for 'Jesus' would appear after *jenje*, but in Bamgbose's dictionary, it would precede *jenje* and possibly other words. It follows that a multiple vowel representation, apart from violating even Bamgbose's two criteria for good orthography, makes the alphabetical listing of lexical items in dictionaries indeterminate if not impossible. We first observed this problem of indeterminateness in the alphabetical listing of lexical items in Abraham's *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba*. While the multiple vowel representation cannot be blamed entirely for the difficulties one normally encounters when using Abraham's Dictionary, it seems to be more responsible for the confusion in his alphabetical listing of items than any other single factor.⁹

One solution for the representational problem is to allow double and sometimes triple vowel representations provided that no two consecutive vowels will be on the same tone. This is the practice in all my writings and several other Yoruba writers exclude representations like *Jéésù* and Delano's *jòóórùn* etc., where consecutive vowels occur on the same tone. Another practice is to refrain from dual or ambiguous representations of the same word. By the second process, dual representations like *nòṛ* and *nóṛ* for (the), *kòkò* and *kòkó* for (cocoa), etc., as in Bamgbose's model (1965:33) will be forbidden.

Finally, in spite of everything, it still seems that conservatism prevents many people from modifying spellings when they deal with place and personal names. Hence, today, we still have *Ọfa* spelt with double *f* while *Iyana Ọfa* has a single *f*. *Ikere* has double *r*, *Ọta* is spelt with a double *t*, the *mẹta* of *Ebute mẹta* is spelt with double *t* while some old people and Federal government agencies still use *sh* for *ş* in *Işola*, *Ogunşola*, *Şesan*, *Aşaye*, *Fọlaşade*, *Aşaolu*, *Ileşa*, *Şagamu*, *Oşogbo*, *Ogbomoşo*, *Şaki*, etc. This conservatism was confirmed by one of my former Unife students who, until she graduated here in 1978 spelt her own names with *ş* for *Fọlaşade* but *sh* for her surname, *Aşaye*, and who, on being challenged by me, said that her family refused to drop the *h* in "Ashaye." It appears that all *Aşaye*'s like the additional *h* of *sh* (See Minute 3465, p.1 of Unife 195th Meeting of Senate: 29th January, 1986). So, although the linguist has tried to bring sanity into Yoruba orthographic practices, no one can cure the disease of conservatism.

My recent excursion into sociolinguistics took me to a proposal of political linguistics as a subcomponent of the discipline. In a paper I presented at Madison, Wisconsin in 1983, which was later accepted for joint publication with *Akinnaşo* in *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* at Urbana, Illinois, I examined the political uses of Yoruba suggestive puns and graded insults. While the discussion used mainly examples from Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintọla of the First Republic, it appears that more data can be obtained from Chief James Ajibọla Ige who was the only Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) civilian governor of *Qyo* State. Both *Samuel Akintọla* and *Bọla Ige* employed Ciceronean rhetoric in their political pronouncements ranging from false similes to direct verbal onslaughts. Professor *Ayo Bamgboşe*, in the first *J.F. Ọdunjo* Memorial Lecture in *Ibadan* in 1984, discussed the Madison version of this paper extensively.

When *Akintọla* punned on *Ikejani* with *Ikíní á ní* (the first will have), *İkeji á ní* (the second will have), *İketa á ní* (the third will have), *İgbà wo ni ẹyin qmọ Yorùbá á ní*

nñkankan? (when will you Yoruba people have anything?), he employed a false interpretation of the Igbo name Ikejiani to score a political point on the acquisitive instincts of the Nigerian ruling parties of the First Republic. A similar game was practiced by University of Ife students on the middle name of this university's former Vice Chancellor, Cyril Agodi Onwumechili, where an analogy was made between this name and Agodi Prison in Ibadan.¹⁰ The other resolution of one of Akintola's political colleagues in *kàkà k'á d'qbalè fún Gàmbàrí, ká kúkú kú* (rather than prostrate to a Hausa man, we had better die) was only an alliterative expression of self pride since nobody can prefer death to the mere paying of obeisance to one's countrymen. Also, when Bọla Ige declared in Yoruba that whoever tried to rig the 1983 elections would suffer more than the nearest cow to a Fulani man, *wón á jiyà ju màlúù tí ó kángun sí Fúlàní*, he was using a pastoral image that has become institutionalized through the procession of cows on Nigerian major highways. When the Fulani cowherd wants to drive cattle away from the highway to allow normal vehicles to pass through, he whips the nearest cow to him and that one moves away thereby pushing the remaining cows away from the road. This simile is now part of normal Yoruba usage. Curses were even added to rhetoric and insults in the language of the 1983 presidential and gubernatorial elections and the political effects of such additions must be studied. It is possible for political scientists to examine what ultimate effects such single utterances have on Nigerian political history.

One controversial dictum was "If the East were allowed to secede whether through any act of omission or commission, the West would follow." Was the sentence an invitation to secession, or was it an indictment of the Federal Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon for allowing the East to secede through some acts of omission or commission? One reason offered for heated agitation for the creation of the Midwestern Region from the Western Region

during the constitutional conference of 1954 was linguistic since it was alleged that the Yorubas called the Midwesterners *kòbòkòbò* which the affected people interpreted as "some-one speaking an unintelligible language." Although *kòbòkòbò* was actually used for people mispronouncing *kòbò* (one penny) as *kòbò*, it is worth examining whether such utterances actually have political significance, realizing that the Midwestern region was eventually created in 1963. Similarly, the effect of Chief *Ọbafemi Awolọwọ's* wartime statement that "starvation is a weapon of war" on the outcome of the Nigerian civil war and his subsequent political fortune points to the significance of the political aspects of Linguistics.

Applied Linguistics

Before the creation of the Linguistics Department, as was recorded in the minutes of the Development Committee in March, 1975, I was in the English department which later disintegrated into the two Departments of Language Arts, now English Language and Literature in English, in September, 1977. While I was in the English department, I also published in the area of Applied English Linguistics. In one paper, I used neurophysiological arguments on cerebral plasticity to reject the current craze for objective testing of English in favour of my proposed scientific type of subjective testing.

At another time, instead of a mere taxonomic catalogue of language features of twentieth century English Literature, I examined the linguistic characteristics of various genres of twentieth century English Literature and the love of obscurity in modern writers. I used the observation on various authors, starting from Mark Twain at the beginning of the century to African writers in English who have introduced new forms of English, like pidgin, to develop the thesis that syntactic experimentation is one of the most significant characteristics of literature in English in this "century of infinite possibilities."

Recommendations

We suffer from a lot of problems in Linguistics and other disciplines, and part of our problems come from the Federal Military Government's policies on importation and foreign exchange control as well as its attitude to university curricula. The nation stands to benefit immensely from Linguistics if it is willing to allocate some of its vote on security to what I want to suggest here.

On our internal problems, it will be helpful for intellectual advancement if the government can relax its policy on the issuance of import licences for the purchase of research laboratory equipment and accessories. In our phonetics laboratory for instance, an ₦8,000.00 sound spectrograph machine has ceased to be operational for over two years now owing to our inability to obtain import licence for a fan belt which did not cost us more than ₦5.00 in foreign exchange a few years ago. All local varieties were tried and they failed to function. Other scientific equipment for which we obtained approval cannot be purchased because of this dreadful import licence monster.

It will also be useful for the academic life of this nation if the government can restore the ₦500.00 annual basic travelling allowance for international academic conferences only. The present general ₦100.00 B.T.A. does not help university personnel who had been forced to close all foreign bank accounts. The government must note that we need the money principally for accommodation and the purchase of new books and journals since, in several disciplines like Linguistics, lack of contact with new ideas as soon as they are developed makes our research efforts stale even before they are completed.

It will also be necessary to find a solution to the inability of Nigerian journal and book publishers to publish accepted manuscripts in time. Almost all my publications in theoretical linguistics appear in international journals in the United States of America. The waiting time for them there is, at most, two years. My "Alternative to Lexical Insertion"

was published thirteen months after acceptance. In the second paragraph of the accepting editor's letter of October 7, 1975 from Los Angeles, he stated: "Our general impression of the paper is that it does grapple with an important problem that has significant implications for syntactic theory, and that we should accept it for publication..... The reviewer then assured me that it's an intelligent and thorough examination of a difficult area." The "Vigesimal Numeral" paper on the other hand, had no waiting time. Its letter of acceptance arrived with the galley proof in August, 1977 and it appeared in print in December, 1977.

In Nigeria, however, I got the paper on the *Yoruba Monolingual Dictionary* in Afọlayan, A (ed) accepted for publication in 1969. It was lost by some 'interested' parties so I had to resubmit it in 1971. After its final acceptance in 1971, it appeared in print only in 1982, a total of 13 years from the time of its initial acceptance. Other papers accepted in Nigeria suffer a similar fate. If production costs make it difficult for Nigerian publishers to publish in time, Nigerian academic journal editors and managers can adopt a system of contributory financing of journal publications so that each author of an accepted paper would be asked to contribute towards its publication a sum of money that is proportional to the length of the accepted article.

On the other recommendation I propose to make, I strongly urge the Federal Military Government to set up a Nigerian Institute of Linguistics and Languages under the Office of the Head of Service of the Federation with the following subdivisions: the strategic division, the political division, the educational and language development section and the academic section. The strategic division, which will closely liaise with the Institute of Strategic Studies in Kuru via Jos, will function like the linguistic arm of the American Central Intelligence Agency. It can be located at the site of the former National Open University in Abuja. It will map out which European and African languages are of strategic

importance to Nigeria, taking note of our foreign policy commitments, and plan for their propagation. We claim to be in favour of the independence of Namibia, but if Namibian pilots overfly our territory and converse in German, our pilots would need interpreters before they could understand them.

The same can be said of our journalists. In a news report in *The Guardian* of March 9, 1986, we have, *inter alia*, "Referring to its earlier publication (No. 36 of 1985), *Profil*, in its December 2 (No. 49 edition of 1985) which was translated for *The Guardian* from German (sic) reported that under the counter-trade agreement with Nigeria, which represented the second biggest trade deal of its nature, Intertrading was selling Nigerian oil to South Africa." For taking the pains to have *Profil* translated from German, *The Guardian* has alerted Nigeria of the perfidy of its counter-trade partners. Suppose there were no honest translators? German must thus be learnt by Nigerians if they do not want their oil to go to South Africa.

We also need the Portuguese language to interact with Angola and Mozambique as well as French for all our immediate neighbours. Since these are the languages of their colonial masters, we also need to know their native languages in case we wish to converse with them to the exclusion of their former colonial overlords. The Americans waited to be surprised at Pearl Harbor (Hawaii), and Manila in the Philippines in 1941 before intensifying the study of Japanese. They now place high priority on the Russian and Chinese languages. Are we ready to learn from the American experience, or do we want to be like the civilian rulers of our second republic who refused to learn anything between 1964 and 1979?

The political division which could be in Abuja or Lagos, will interact with the Ministry of External Affairs and deal with all aspects of politically biased utterances. When a former Nigerian head of State on an official visit to the United States told the Americans in their land that Nigeria

will use her oil power against any nation which supports apartheid South Africa, I told my colleagues that if the Americans were to take that threat seriously, the end of our oil power would have come. History reminded me of the American ability to make cocoa crash on the world market in order to destabilize Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's one crop economy in Ghana. Today, we are all suffering from the effects of a political statement interpretable as a direct threat to the U.S.A., the oil glut of 1981 being the foster child of bravado.

The educational and language development section will liaise with Faculties of Education in Nigerian universities and step up the teaching of grammar in schools. With the decline in the teaching of grammar came the dreadful age of substandard English everywhere. This section will also have the necessary equipment for the taping and teaching of those foreign languages recognized for intensive study by the strategic division. The National Language Centre, which has been under the Directorate of Schools and Educational Services of the Federal Ministry of Education, has been handling what is envisaged for this section. It has already produced orthographies for several Nigerian languages. The proposed educational and language development section could merge with the National Language Centre.

Furthermore, the government must make its stand known on the number of languages an educated man must speak. A Nigerian must know at least two major Nigerian languages in addition to his own. Then two foreign languages in addition to English must be made compulsory. Since all our immediate neighbours are French speaking, French may be one of the compulsory foreign languages. We should not wait till the Cameroons and the Benin republic send hostile messages in the air over our heads on how to deprive us of our border territories before intensifying the study of French. Although those two countries are not hostile to us today, we cannot talk of tomorrow. What we must suspect now is that the I.L.C.C. experience in the W.A.F.U. soccer

semi-final in Ivory Coast in 1985 is an indication of a typical Francophone country's attitude to Nigeria.

The academic division will fund research into linguistics and languages and may coordinate all research efforts on Nigerian and foreign languages in Nigerian universities. It will also be allowed to organize international conferences on linguistics and African languages. Its location is left open.

Moreover, we must realize that linguistics is interdepartmental in nature. Linguists work together with anthropologists, sociologists, mathematicians, psychologists, historians, neurosurgeons, philosophers, literary people and computer scientists since there are branches of linguistics which deal with each of these disciplines. We must encourage interdisciplinary research between linguists and other scholars without mortgaging our emphasis on the focus of research activities.

Finally, I propose the setting up of an academy for any language which is the major means of communication in at least three states of the Federation. The functions of any language academy of the sort proposed will be similar to those of the French academy. The academy must promote our indigenous culture which must not die.

FOOTNOTES

1. Harold Whitehall's statement was quoted by Roger Fowler in Fowler, R (1971) *The Languages of Literature*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. A controversy on whether or not linguistics has anything to contribute to literature took place between R. Fowler and F.W. Bateson in Fowler (1971). Bateson's rebuttal of Fowler came out as "Language and Literature: Reply by F.W. Bateson" also in Fowler (1971) pp. 75-79.
2. Reference will be made to the following articles on the Yoruba Language in this lecture: (a - i)
 - (a) Ekundayo, S.A. (1976). "On the Sociolinguistic-Semantic boundary" *Language Sciences* 42: 6-10.

- (b) (1976). "The calculus of the Yoruba Universal Quantifier" *YORUBA: The Journal of the Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria*, University of Ife, 2: 59-70.
- (c) (1976). "An alternative to lexical insertion for Yoruba complex Nouns" *Studies In African Linguistics* (Los Angeles) 7,3: 233-260.
- (d) (1977). "Restrictions on Personal name sentences in the Yoruba Noun Phrase" *Anthropological Linguistics* (Bloomington) 19,2: 55-77.
- (e) (1977). "Lexical Nominalizability Restrictions in Yoruba" *Studies In African Linguistics* (Los Angeles) 8, Supplement 7: 43-51.
- (f) (1977). "Vigesimal Numeral Derivational Morphology: Yoruba Grammatical Competence Epitomized" *Anthropological Linguistics* (Bloomington) 19,9: 436-453.
- (g) (1981). "Yoruba Serial Verb Commutability Constraint" in *Precis From The 12th Conference on African Linguistics*, Stanford, April 10-12, 1981, edited by William R. Leban, *Studies in African Linguistics Supplement 8* (Los Angeles, Department of Linguistics, University of California), pp. 29-34.
- (h) (1982). "Thoughts on a Yoruba Monolingual Dictionary" in *Yoruba Language and Literature* A. Afolayan (ed), pp. 181-206.
- (i) and F. Niyi Akinraso (1983). "Yoruba Serial Verb String Commutability Constraints" *Lingua* (North Holland) 60: 115-133.

Also, the conference versions of these papers will be highlighted:

- (a) Ekundayo, S.A (1976) "The sigmamization of Syntax" at the *12th Conference of the West African Linguistic Society*, University of Ife, March, 1976.
- (b) (1983) "Political Linguistics: A Case Study of Political Uses of Yoruba Suggestive Puns and Graded Insults." *14th Conference on African Linguistics*, University of Wisconsin at Madison, April, 1983. A later version with F. Niyi Akinraso as second author was accepted for publication in 1984 in *Studies in The Linguistic Sciences* at Urbana, University of Illinois.

The publications on the English Language will be indicated in the appropriate sections.

3. Chomsky, A.N. (1957) *Syntactic Structures*: The Hague, Mouton and Co. has the earliest version of this quotation where the last five words of the quotation here appeared as "a finite set of elements." This was modified to "a finite alphabet of symbols" in Chomsky's contribution to

Luce, R.D., Bush, R.R. and Galanter, E (eds.) (1963) *Handbook of Mathematical Psychology*, Volume 2: New York & London, Wiley.

4. See Steinberg, D.D. & Jakobovits, L.A (eds.) (1971) *Semantics: An Interdisciplinary Reader in Philosophy, Linguistics and Psychology*: Cambridge, The University Press, for Chomsky (1971): "Deep Structure, Surface Structure and Semantic Interpretation."

5. The full stop convention inside words in the above paragraph is Ayo Bamgboṣe's method of indicating the assimilated low tone. Since singular polarity is a condition on names, the convention is redundant because if *Fá.ńńmí* (Ifa does not deceive me) with an assimilated low tone convention is a personal name, its negation, which is the affirmative sentence *Fáńńmí* (Ifa deceives me), can never be a personal name. Bamgboṣe's comment on this observation in the First J.F. Odunjo Memorial lecture in 1984 is that one will first have to know that a Yoruba personal name is negative or affirmative before dispensing with the assimilated low tone convention. This is a valid observation. But our attitude is that for the convenience of the writer, redundancies need not be represented. He was considering the convenience of the non-Yoruba reader.

More on the singular polarity condition (which led to our observation on the assimilated full stop convention) can be found in Akinnaso, F. Niyi (1980) "The Sociolinguistic Basis of Yoruba Personal Names" in *Anthropological Linguistics*, Bloomington, 22, 7: 275-304.

6. The *ewí* exponent who first made the assertion under discussion in his music is the fuji expert Kọlawọle Ayinla, popularly known as Alhaji Ayinla Kollington. Since the mistaken notion has been popularized by a musician, more people have come to regard him as a model to be copied in the error. A recent convert to the mistaken notion is the leader or king of juju music himself "King Sunny Ade" i.e. Mr. Sunday Adeniyi who repeated the same erroneous statement in his record titled: EXPLOSION. See Akinnaso (1980:289) for additional evidence for treating Adeogun and Ogunade as *Ade+Ogun* and *Ogun+ade* respectively.

The type of popularity given to mistakes by musicians here has done a lot to lower the language standard of many Nigerians. The English idiomatic expression "Cut your coat according to your cloth" was once rendered by a musician as "Cut your coat according to your size." Nigerian children usually learn this wrong expression before they learn the correct English version. Similarly, people who hesitate on the correct spelling of *kerosene* are already being converted to a wrong spelling, *kerosine*, because the wrong spelling now appears on some petrol tankers, and in newspapers.

7. See Delano, I.O (1969), *Dictionary of Yoruba Monosyllabic Verbs*. Vols. I and II, Ibadan, University of Ibadan Press.
8. Katzian compositional meanings are based on a hypothesis by J.J. Katz that "the process by which a speaker interprets each of the infinitely many sentences is a compositional process in which the meaning of any syntactically compound constituent of a sentence is obtained as a function

of the meanings of the parts of the sentence." — Katz, J.J (1966), *The Philosophy of Language*, New York: Harper and Row, p. 152.

9. The orthographic problems itemized here can be verified if one makes a deep study of the theory and practice found in Bamgbose, A (1965), *Yoruba Orthography*, Ibadan, University of Ibadan Press and Abraham, R. C (1958), *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba*, London, University of London Press.

10. Agodi Onwumechili's name suffered the fate of Akintola's Ikejiani and Osadebe at the hands of University of Ife Students. On some posters, students crossed Agodi and wrote Mọkọla (another Ibadan Street) on top. Then "Onwumechili" itself was punned as *òwú u masiini* "sewing machine threads".

11. It is encouraging to note that the Federal Military Government of General Babangida took steps along the lines recommended in this lecture later in 1986. First, the government rejected the recommendation of the Adeṣọla panel on rationalization of University curricula, where Professor Adeṣọla's Panel recommended the phasing out of courses in Linguistics and European Languages. The panel was chastised for not basing its recommendation on our disciplines on adequate data. Second, when the government introduced the Second tier Foreign Exchange Market (SFEM) on September 29, 1986, it restored 500 U.S. dollars as a basic travelling allowance for academic conferences among other measures. One hopes that the government will take other positive steps like the preceding to ensure that Nigeria will never have its own "Pearl Harbor".