

**COHESION IN SELECTED LAND DISPUTES' JUDGMENTS AT ONDO STATE HIGH  
COURT OF JUSTICE**

**BY**

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## DEDICATION

To the Almighty God

The giver of life and strength

And to:

My lovely parents, Pastor and Mrs. Peter Olufemi Sangodeyi

OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY

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### **APPENDIX**

## ABSTRACT

The study identified the cohesive devices in the selected land disputes' judgement documents at Ondo State High Court of Justice. It analysed the identified cohesive devices in the documents and also related the cohesive features to the legal context of the selected judgements. All these were done with a view to demonstrating how cohesive devices were functionally utilised in legal documents.

The study employed both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The primary data comprised six purposively selected land disputes' judgement documents. Two documents were selected from each of the three Senatorial Districts in Ondo State, namely, Ondo South, Ondo North and Ondo Central. The secondary source included books, journal articles and the Internet. The data collected were analysed using the linguistic framework of Halliday and Matheissen's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG).

The results showed that the cohesive devices in the selected land disputes' judgement documents were synonyms, antonyms, collocations, repetitions, references and conjunctions. It was realised from the statistical analysis of data that repetition had the highest frequency on the table of judgement texts analysis. It was followed by synonymy, conjunction, collocation, references and antonyms respectively. The results further showed that the device of repetition was mainly used for the purpose of precision and clarity, while synonymy was used for reiteration, emphasis and for creating textual unity. Findings also showed that conjunction served the same purpose of creating textual unity and coherence. Analysis indicated on the other hand, that collocation was used for enhancement of effective understanding of the texts; and on

the other hand, that references and antonyms were used to disambiguate the information conveyed in the judgement texts. The study further revealed that cohesive devices were found to be strategic to the conventional requirement of legal discourse in the aspect of clarity.

The study concluded that the cohesive devices in the selected land disputes' judgements were jointly utilised for making the discourse to be unified and to be devoid of ambiguities.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter contains the general introduction to the study, a brief history of Ondo State, the legal system of Ondo State, linguistic framework, the linguistic approach and so on. It also contains statement of research problem, objectives of the study, scope of the study, and expected contribution to knowledge.

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

This section provides an insight into the socio-political history of Ondo State.

##### 1.1.1 A Brief History of Ondo state

Ondo State, Nigeria was created on 3 February, 1976 from the former Western State. It originally included what is now Ekiti State, which was split in 1996. Akure is the state capital. Ondo State is located in the south western region of the country. It lies between latitudes 5°45' and 7°52'N and longitudes 4°20' and 6°05'E. Its land area is about 15,500km<sup>2</sup>. Ondo State is a multi-ethnic state with the majority being Yoruba. There are also the Arogbo and the Akpoi, who are of Ijaw extraction and are mostly located in the riverine areas of the state. The ethnic composition of Ondo State is largely from the Yoruba subgroups of the Akoko, Akure, Ikale, Ilaje, Ondo, and Owo. Ijaw minority (such as the Apoi and the Arogbo) and Ilaje populations inhabit the coastal areas; while a number of the Ondo State people who speak a variant of the Yoruba language similar to Ife dialect reside in Oke-Igbo. These people are also Yoruba. Ondo State is bounded in the East by Edo State, in the North by Kwara State, in the West by Oyo and



Ogun States and in the South by the Atlantic Ocean. The population of the State from year 2006 census, according to the National population Commission is 3,440,000. (Ondo State – Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia/www. wikipedia.org/wiki/Ondo State). The state consists of eighteen Local Governments. They are : Akoko North - East, Akoko North - West, Akoko South – East, Akoko South – West, Akure North, Akure South, Ese odo, Idanre, Ifedore, Ilaje, Ile – Oluji/Okeigbo, Irele, Odigbo, Okitipupa, Ondo East, Ondo West, Ose, Owo.

Agriculture is the dominant occupation of the people of Ondo State providing income and employment opportunities for over seventy percent of its population. It also contributes well over seventy-five percent to the State's Gross Domestic Product. Major crops produced in the State in commercial quantity include palm produce, cocoa yam, cassava and timber. Importantly, Ondo State accounts for over sixty percent of Nigeria's annual cocoa output. Indeed, Ondo state is the leading cocoa producing state, in Nigeria. Currently, the State owes its legal existence to the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. As a State, it is constitutionally mandated to establish:

1. an Executive arm of government headed by an elected Governor;
2. a legislative arm of government whose members shall be drawn from constituencies defined in the Constitution. Its activities is presided over by a speaker elected by the members of the State House of Assembly which oversees the exercise of the State's legislative energies; and
3. a judicial arm made up of upper and lower Courts that help in the administration of justice and related activities within the State. The judicial arm is headed by the State's Chief Justice. The State's tribunals are subject to the appellate review of the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Nigeria, in that order;

4. maintain the Local Government level of governance. At present, the Nigerian Constitution prescribes 18 Local Government Areas for the State; and

5. mobilize the powers of the State, the institutions and resources of its arms and levels of government in order to secure a socio-economic environment for persons resident in the State and its other stakeholders to pursue legitimate goals in dignity under the state's justice administration umbrella.

### **1.1.2 The Legal System of Ondo State**

The Ondo State Legal System comprises:

1. The compendium of Constitution provisions applicable to the State as one of the 36 States that constitute the Nigerian Federation;
2. Laws made by the Federal Legislature applicable throughout the entire federation or specifically to Ondo State;
3. Laws made by the State's legislature;
4. Laws made by the Local Government Councils in the State;

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