

Current Research in African Linguistics

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*Papers in Honor
of Oladele Awobuluyi*

Edited by

Ọlaniké Ọla Orie, Johnson Folorunṣo Ilori
and Lendzemo Constantine Yuka

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**We pro-noun-ce his name
(for Oladele Awobuluyi)**

Tosin Gbogi

i

it was summer '37
in a place where
the lullabies of birds
overwhelmed guitar and song,
where hornbills hearkened to the call
of thrushes singing in rush
above streams that strolled gently
gently without a word to the king

*he met language in summer '37
when earth was kind to man
and man was kind to earth*

it was from the armpit of the hills
that the phonemes carried him
into a syllable of sounds,
and from there into
logarhythms of words—
syntax of stones
which against each one another hit
and burst into utterances of light

*he met language at oke-agbe
where earth was kind to man
and man was kind to earth*

ii

the globe in his hands
the benevolent wind sailed him to
the shores of another sea
there where latin lay
snoring, waiting for its requiem and rites

in columbia he learnt
that before empires fall
languages die
and that for each word that withers
a generation of ignorance is born
into forgetting, into *orangutanguage*

iii

and so he returned
into the tell-tale sign of hope—
the vernacular freewheel of freedom
he returned
to the hills
where blues first sang his name
to the hills
where in the plenitude of rhymes
he learnt the poem
that's the first speech of god to man
he returned
saving land, salvaging language

today we pro-noun-ce his name
from limpopo to ilqorin

today we pro-noun-ce his name
from lusaka to lagos

today we pro-noun-ce his name
from brazzaville to ibadan—
addis ababa to akungba

*yes, we sing his name
in the tenor of timeless tunes*

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PROFILE OF OLADELE AWOBULUYI



Professor Oladele Awobuluyi is one of the world's leading scholars of African linguistics. He specializes in Niger-Congo languages, especially Yoruba, Yoruboid and Akokoid languages. Born in Okeagbe-Akoko (Nigeria) in 1937, he studied at the University of Colorado, Boulder (BA Classics, 1961) and took two MAs (Latin 1962; Linguistics 1964) and a PhD (Linguistics, 1967) at Columbia University, New York. He taught at Michigan State University, City University of New York, and University

of Lagos, before becoming a professor of linguistics at the University of Ilorin in 1976. In 2001, he left Ilorin and went to his home state (Ondo State) to help build a new institution—Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. He was there as professor of linguistics in the Department of Linguistics and Languages from 2001 to 2012.

Over the course of his career, he has been a pioneer on many fronts. He served as the foundation head of the department of Linguistics and African languages, University of Ilorin from 1976 until 1980. He was the foundation Dean of Arts, University of Ilorin from 1976 to 1984, and acting vice Chancellor of the same institution from 1977 to 1980. His superior administration skills were also put to use at Adekunle Ajasin University, where he was acting vice chancellor from 2009 to 2010. He has served on many university and professional committees at the national and international level; for example, he was a member of the University of Ilorin Governing Council, a member of the Nigerian National Universities Commission, editor Centrepoint, president of the Yoruba studies association, and current chairman Yoruba cross-border language commission. He is a strong advocate of using indigenous languages in education and has contributed in myriad ways to the development of contemporary linguistics in Nigeria and Africa and to the professional training and development of scores of scholars of African linguistics. His book, *Essentials of Yoruba Grammar* published by Oxford University Press, has been a classic best-seller since the 1970s.

FOREWORD

Going back in memory to 1988, when I started my graduate studies at the University of Ilorin, I remember being excited about meeting Professor Oladele Awobuluyi, the great linguist and author of *Essentials of Yoruba Language*.

However, the first person I met as I entered the School (Faculty) of Arts Building was Olóyè (Chief) Olajubu who was Professor and Dean of Arts at the time. I recognized him because he had spent a sabbatical year at the University of Ifé while I was there as an undergraduate. I introduced myself to him. Upon hearing that I am an Ifé alumna, he grabbed my hand with excitement, took me to his office and introduced me to everyone as the ambassador from Ifé. Olóyè asked if I had met Baba Egbe (Father or Grand Patron of the Society). I said no. Quite frankly, I was surprised that the School had a special Society and a Father/Grand Patron. I knew this must be an important person that I needed to know, so I asked, “Who is Baba Egbe?” Olóyè laughed heartily and answered:

It’s Dele Awobuluyi. Dele Awobuluyi is the father of the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages; he is the father of the Faculty of Arts. He is our leader. He leads by example. He is disciplined and hardworking.

Then he added, “You must work hard to succeed in this place.” I gestured “yes” by nodding and said, “Yes, sir. Thank you for your advice.”

As I walked down the hall from the Dean’s office toward the Department of linguistics, I wondered if I would recognize Baba Egbe from Oloye’s description of him as “disciplined and hardworking.” What does he look like? I wondered. Someone in the Department office eventually answered this question:

He is dark-skinned, average height, medium-built, neatly dressed, and wears glasses. He is the chief professor here.

Armed with this information I still was unable to find someone who matched this description. Finally, I decided to go to his office to introduce myself. I knocked on the door, and when I heard him say “Come in,” I went in and introduced myself. He was welcoming and polite. He smiled (a little) and told me that he was pleased to meet me. I felt honored and

humbled to meet him. I later took a graduate seminar on Yoruba phonology with him.

It is an extraordinary privilege to know Professor Awobuluyi, and there are many things that I find remarkable about him. First, he loves Linguistics and his passion for the field shows through his teaching. Although he generally has a quiet demeanor, one gets to see his gregarious side when he is teaching. He gets excited as he lays out data and presents arguments in support of his analysis. He always has a wide-eyed enthusiasm for new language discoveries. I remember once when I told him I had found a regular rule of vowel deletion in Verb Phrases with loan nouns in Yoruba, his eyes lit up with excitement behind his glasses, and he said, “That’s an excellent finding! No one has said that before.” This finding became the core contribution of my MA thesis. Although Professor Yiwola Awoyale supervised my thesis, Professor Awobuluyi was encouraging and always generous with his time and ideas.

Secondly, he is a very shrewd scholar. He is meticulous and pays close attention to language details. I remember when he was working on “Denasalization in Yoruba,” he looked everywhere for data. He collected Standard Yoruba data. He told me he would look at data from other Yoruba dialects, for example, Egba and Onko. He interviewed Mr. Ade, an office staffer who speaks Ebira, a related language with interesting nasal patterns. I couldn’t agree more with Professor Olasope Oyelaran’s characterization of Professor Awobuluyi as an outstanding linguistic inquirer (Chapter 20 of this book):

Oládélé Awobùluyi’s body of work gives him to us as an attentive student of and inquirer about language, constantly mindful of the dictum “la langue est un système où tout se tient” (‘language is a system within which everything coheres’). That explains why he does not ignore externalities in theory and matters of raw data but insists on rigorous intra-language paradigmatic contextualization in any attempt to provide an account of and explanation for any observable phenomenon in language.

Third, Professor Awobuluyi involved himself as a scholar in an astonishing array of topics in linguistics. Over the past forty years, he has published prolifically on phonology, morphology, syntax, language and education, language policy, and indigenous language advocacy (see his Curriculum Vitae). In Yoruba linguistics circles, he is especially known for insisting that vowel coalescence occurs in Standard Yoruba. While taking the Yoruba phonology graduate seminar with him, I looked forward to the day when he would talk about vowel coalescence. That day finally arrived. He began by presenting the works of J. De Gaye and W. Becroft

(1922, Yoruba Grammar) and R. C. Abraham (1958, Dictionary of Yoruba). He then presented additional data from his own work (Awobuluyi 1964, 1986, 1989, etc.), and argued for three types of vowel coalescence: coalescence by assimilation, merger, and polarization. He then asked if anyone had any questions. The entire class was silent; who would disagree with Baba Awobuluyi? There were four of us in the class: three males and one female. The men said they did not have any questions. I had questions, but I struggled with how best to present the questions without sounding rude to an elder. He must have sensed my struggle, because he smiled and said, “If you have always wondered about this phenomenon, here is your opportunity to ask questions.” So, I told him that I was having a tough time believing coalescence by polarization; how can the merger of two high front vowels produce a high back vowel? His answer was that, if dissimilation is a natural phonological process, coalescence via polarization must be a natural process too. Although I never wrote a paper supporting this approach, I thought his response made sense. He continues to work on vowel coalescence. Several years later, while I was doing fieldwork in Nigeria in the mid 1990’s, he told me (with the usual wide-eyed enthusiasm) that he found supporting evidence for coalescence in Diola Fogny. I mentioned these incidences because they illustrate a major facet of Professor Awobuluyi’s character. He is a very principled person and is not afraid to stand alone. He is very careful in documenting data and thoughtful in theorizing, and yet does not impose his view on others, however strongly he feels he is right.

In my opinion, Professor Awobuluyi is a veritable scholar, one of the most talented linguists in the world. This volume recognizes his contributions to African linguistics. The contributors, an international group of scholars, represent five generations of African linguists who have been influenced by Awobuluyi’s work in one way or another. They are: Michael A. Abiodun (Ekiti State U.), Tunde Adegbola (African Languages Technology Initiative, Ibadan), Oluseyé Adeṣòla (Yale U.), Maduabuchi Sennen Agbo (U. of Benin), Ọladiipo Ajiboye (U. of Lagos), Akinbiyi Akinlabi (Rutgers U.), Ahmed Amfani (Usmanu Danfodiyo U., Sokoto), Diana Archangeli (U. of Arizona), Ayo Bamgbose (Emeritus U. of Ibadan), Hounkpati B. C. Capo (U. d’Abomey-Calavi, Benin Republic), Rose-Marie Déchaine (U. of British Columbia), Tosin Gbogi (Tulane U.), Johnson Ilori (U. of Lagos), Constantine Kouankem (U. of Yaounde I, Cameroon), Christine Ofulue (National Open University of Nigeria), Simeon O. Ọláògún (Adekunle Ajasin U.), Yetunde Oluwafisan (U. of Ilorin), Gideon Sunday Omachonu (Nasarawa State U.), Olaniké Orie (Tulane U.), Francis Oyebade (Adekunle Ajasin U.), Olasope Oyelaran

(Kalamazoo College), (Douglas Pulleyblank (U. of British Columbia), Funmi O. Olúbódé-Sàwè (Federal University of Technology, Akure) and Constantine Yuka (U. of Benin).

Thank you, Prof., for your intellectual distinction. Thank you for being an outstanding teacher and mentor. Thank you for your modesty. I am honored to be numbered among your students.

Olaniké Ola Orie
Tulane University

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Awobuluyi, O. (1987). Towards a Typology of Coalescence. *Journal of West African Languages* 17. 5 – 22.

Awobuluyi, O. (1989). *Iyopò Fawèli: Amojufo Ara Fonolòji Yoruba*. Laangbasa 1, 1-39.

de Gaye, J. and W Beecroft. (1922). *Yoruba Grammar*. London: Kegan Paul.

CURRICULUM VITAE OF OLADELE AWOBULUYI

I. General Information

Name: AWOBULUYI, Oladele
Nationality: Nigerian
Date & Place of Birth: 17th July 1937, at Okeagbe-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria

II. Education and Qualifications

1951 – 56	Victory College, Ikare-Akoko, Ondo State
1959 – 61	University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, USA
1961 – 67	Columbia University, New York City, New York, USA

Qualifications:

B A (Classics), University of Colorado	1961
M A (Latin), Columbia University	1962
M A (Linguistics), Columbia University	1964
Ph D (Linguistics), Columbia University	1967

III. Academic Honours

1951 – 56	Book prizes for coming first or second in class, Victory College, Ikare-Akoko
1956	Cambridge University and West African School Certificate, Division One
1960 – 61	Dean's Honours List, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, USA
1961	Men's Residence Halls Association Commendation on 4.00 Grade Point Average, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, USA
1960	Induction as a member of Phi Beta Kappa by the Alpha of Colorado at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, USA, 3 rd June 1961

1983	Chosen to deliver the first Karunwi Memorial Lecture at the University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria, 22 nd – 24 th February 1983.
1988	Chosen to deliver the third J. F. Odunjo Memorial Lecture at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.
2004	Induction as a Fellow of the Nigerian Academy of Letters

IV. Professional Experience

1962 – 65	Part-time Yoruba Language Instructor for the Peace Corps, Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York City.
1964	Consultant Linguist to the Edo (Bini) Peace Corps Programme, Bernard College, Columbia University, New York City.
1964 – 66	Graduate Assistant, Columbia University, New York City.
1966 – 67	Instructor, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA.
1967 – 68	Language Materials Developer, Centre for Applied Linguistics, Washington DC, USA.
1968 – 71	Lecturer I, Dept. of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
1971 – 73	Assistant Professor, Lehman College, City University of New York, New York City, USA.
1973 – 76	Senior Lecturer, and Associate Professor (June 1976), University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria.
1976 – 2001	Professor of Linguistics, Dept. of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.
2001 – 2012	Professor of Linguistics (on contract), Dept. of Linguistics and Languages, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria.

V. Administrative/Miscellaneous Experiences

1956	Senior Prefect, Victory College, Ikare-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria.
1973 – 75	Head, Yoruba Section, College of Education, University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria.

1973 – 75 Acting Head, Division of Arts (comprising English, French, Geography, History, and Yoruba Sections), College of Education, University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria.

1974 – 75 Member, National Committee on the Standardization of Maps and Geographical Names, Lagos, Nigeria.

1976 – 80 Founding Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

1976 – 84 Founding Head, Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

1976 – 85 Member, Editorial Board of *The Nigerian Language Teacher*, published by the National Language Centre, Federal Ministry of Education, Lagos, Nigeria.

1977 – 85 Editor, *Centrepoint* (a University quarterly journal of intellectual, scientific, and cultural interest), University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

1977 – 86 Founding Member, Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (for universities), Lagos, Nigeria.

1977 – 80 Acting Vice Chancellor, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria (for brief periods only).

1983 – 86 Member (representing the Humanities), National Universities Commission (NUC), Lagos, Nigeria.

1983 – 87 Member, University of Ilorin Governing Council, Ilorin, Nigeria.

1984 – 85 Dean, Faculty of Arts, Ondo State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.

1987 – 92 President, Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria (YSAN).

2009 – 10 Acting Vice Chancellor, Adekunle Ajašin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria (18th June 2009 – 3rd January 2010).

2009 – 10 Member, Committee on Tertiary Education in Ondo State, set up to carefully study and make appropriate recommendations (December 2009 – March 2010).

2010 Commissioned to deliver ‘Linguistics and Nation Building’ as the first ‘Professor Ayọ Bamgboṣe Personality Lecture’ at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, on 23 June 2010.

2013 Chairman, Yoruba Cross-Border Language Commission (for Nigeria, Benin, and Togo).

VI. Publications

A. Theses

1964 *The Phonology and Morphophonemics of Yoruba*, Columbia University Master's Essay (available on microfilm).

1967 *Studies in the Syntax of the Standard Yoruba Verb*. Columbia University doctoral dissertation; available on microfilm and Xerox copy from University Microfilms Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

B. Books

1965 *Peace Corps Yoruba Course*. The Institute for Education in Africa, Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York City, USA.

1969 *Introductory Kanuri*. Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington DC, USA. (Available in microfiche or hard copy from ERIC Clearinghouse on Linguistics and Foreign Languages, New York City, USA.)

1978 *Essentials of Yoruba Grammar*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press.

1980 *The New National Policy on Education in Linguistic Perspective*. (University Lecture, delivered at the University of Ilorin, 5th February 1979). Ilorin: University of Ilorin Press.

1990 (Ed.) *Èdè Ìperí Yorùbá II (Yoruba Metalanguage II)*. Ibadan: University Press Plc.

1992 (Ed.) *A Guide for Creating Metalinguistic Terms for African Languages*. Lagos/Dakar: Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)/New Educational Innovation for Development in Africa (NEIDA).

2008 *Èkô İşeda-Orô Yorùbá (Yoruba Morphology)* – a detailed book length study of Yoruba Morphology, in aid of terminology development in the language.

[Contents: Introduction/Foreword. 1. Morphemes in general and morpheme types in Yoruba. 2. Nouns I: Words featuring single prefixes. 3. Nouns II: Words featuring double prefixes, compounding, and reduplication. 4. Long and short pronouns. 5. Traditional numerals and proposed new numerals. 6. Polysyllabic and form-changing preverbal adverbs. 7. The so-called fused verb phrases analyzed with a view to determining and identifying the specific verbs and nouns or noun phrases contained in them. 8. Guide

to the creation of technical terms in Yoruba. Appendices I, II, and III. Montem Paperbacks, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria. Pp. x; 260.]

2010 *Linguistics and Nation Building* (The Prof. Emeritus Ayo Bamgbose Personality Lecture, delivered at the University of Ibadan on 23 June 2010). Ibadan: DB Martoy Books.

2013 *Èkọ́ Gírámà Èdè Yorùbá (Course in Yoruba Grammar)* – a book length discussion of various aspects of contemporary Yoruba grammar, in Yoruba.

[Contents: Introduction / Foreword. 1. Nouns – characteristics and subclasses. 2. Qualifiers – characteristics and subclasses. 3. Verbs – characteristics and subclasses. 4. Adverbs and Adverbials – characteristics and functional classes. 5. Sentences – characteristics; sentence types – sentences with sentence structure, and sentences with the structure of noun phrases. Appendices I : Nominalization or Relativization? II: Rules Governing the Short Pronouns; III: Qualifier Headlessness. Osogbo: Altman Limited; Pp xv, 313]

2014 *Yorùbá Kò Gbòdò Kú / Yoruba Must not Die Out* (being a commissioned Faculty Lecture delivered in Yoruba at the Faculty of Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, on 6 February 2014).

Forthcoming: *A Short History of Ancient Afa-Okeagbe / Ìtàn Áfá Ayé Àtijó ní Òsókí*. Lagos: Okeagbe Book Company, 2015

C. Chapters in Books

1968 ‘The Languages of Africa’, Chapter 2 of Ram Desai (Ed.) *African Languages and Cultures*. New York: N. W. Ladds Publishing Company, pp. 9 – 14.

1972 ‘Predicative Adjectives in Yoruba: A Critique’, Chapter 5 of Ayo Bamgbose (Ed.) *The Yoruba Verb Phrase*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, pp. 103 – 118.

1972 ‘On the Classification of Yoruba Verbs’, Chapter 6 of Ayo Bamgbose (Ed.) *The Yoruba Verb Phrase*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, pp 119 – 134.

1982 ‘The Yoruba Verb Phrase’, Chapter 14 of Adebisi Afolayan (Ed.) *Yoruba Language and Literature*. Ife: University of Ife Press, pp. 225 – 246.

1983 ‘Methodology of Teaching African Languages in African Universities’, Chapter 7 of Afolabi Olabimtan (Ed.) *African*

Universities and the Development and Wide Use of African Languages. Lagos: Dept. of African Languages and Literatures, University of Lagos, for Association of African Universities.

1992 'Aspects of Contemporary Standard Yoruba in Dialectological Perspective', in Akinwumi Iṣola (Ed.) *New Findings in Yoruba Studies*. (J. F. Ṣodunjo Memorial Lectures Series No. 3.) Ibadan/Lagos: J. F. Ṣodunjo Memorial Lectures Organizing Committee, pp. 1 – 79.

1994 'The Development of Standard Yoruba', Chapter 3 of István Fodor and Claude Hagège (Eds.) *Language Reform: History and Future, Vol. vi*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, pp. 25 – 42.

2001 'Ìtàn Èdè Yorùbá', (= 'History of the Yoruba Language') in Bade Ajayi (Ed.) *Eko Ijinle Yoruba: Eda-Ede, Litireso, ati Asa*. Ilorin: Dept. of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ilorin, pp. 8 – 28.

2001 'Mofoloji Ede Yoruba', (= 'Yoruba Morphology') in Bade Ajayi (Ed.) *Eko Ijinle Yoruba: Eda-Ede, Litireso, ati Asa*. Ilorin: Dept. of Linguistics and Nigerian Language, University of Ilorin, pp. 47 – 70.

2004 'Grading of Sentence Patterns and Structures in Yoruba and Related Languages (Edo and Igbo)', Chapter 5 (inaccurately attributed to A. Oladele) of Emmanuel Chia (Ed.) *Guide to Readability in African Languages*. ISBN 3 89586 030 1. Muenchen: Lincom GmbH

2004 'Subjectless Sentences in Standard Yoruba', Chapter 23 of Kòla Owolabi and Ademola Dasyilva (Eds.) *Forms and Functions of English and Indigenous Languages in Nigeria: A Festschrift in Honour of Ayo Banjo*. Ibadan: Group Publishers, pp. 347 – 356.

2008 'On the So-called Genitive Morpheme in Standard Yoruba', published as Appendix III to (Awobuluyi 2008) above.

[Abstract: The so-called genitive morpheme occurs in genitival and appositive structures and makes no semantic contribution whatsoever to either of them. As evidence from some Mòba dialects shows, far from being a morpheme, the element is a prosthetic vowel used to restructure non-canonic nouns in Yoruba, as in many of its eastern next-door neighbours. NP₁ NP₂ noun phrases with NP₂ headed by the element *ti*, which is an anaphor, are appositive in structure and unequivocally further illustrate the occurrence of the so-called genitive morpheme in appositive structures.]

2013 'Official Language Policies in Africa' in Olanike Ola Orie and Karen W Sanders (Eds.) *Selected Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference on African Linguistics: Linguistic Interfaces in African Languages*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, pp. 68 –76. (Accessible online at <http://www.lingref.com>, document #2956)

2013 'Why We Should Develop Nigerian Languages' in Ndimele, O M, Yuka, L C and J F Ilorin (Eds.) *Issues in Contemporary African Linguistics: A Festschrift for Oladele Awobuluyi*. Port Harcourt: Linguistic Association of Nigeria, pp 347–61.

Forthcoming: 'Empowering African Languages: The Yoruba Experience' in Lawal, Nike (ed.) *Proceedings of the LALIC Conference*, Kwara State University, Malete, Kwara State, Nigeria

[Abstract: Christian missionaries and key indigenous associations played very vital roles in the development of the Yoruba language to its current level. The Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria (YSAN) in particular, adopting a top-down approach, succeeded in getting Yoruba adopted as the medium of teaching the language and its literature and culture from the primary school to the first degree level in state-owned universities all over South-western Nigeria. The "Ife Six Year Yoruba-Medium Primary Project," by contrast, adopted the bottom-up approach and failed to bring about any change at all in the existing medium of teaching other subjects in the same part of Nigeria. The crucial difference between the two approaches would appear to be the leadership-by-example that the universities displayed in the YSAN approach. Accordingly, for the major indigenous languages of sub-Saharan Africa to be successfully empowered, the universities as seats of enlightenment and catalysts for change must be fully saddled with that responsibility, and UNESCO must, accordingly, henceforth address its plans and resolutions on African languages to them direct rather than to its member governments that, as history shows, are actually not well disposed towards such languages.]

D. Journal Articles

1966 'Towards a National Language', *Ibadan* 22. 16 – 18.

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1983 'Towards Indigenous Languages of Education in Nigeria', *Proceedings of the Fifth Triennial Conference of the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies*. Suva, Fiji: The University of the South Pacific Press, pp. 36 – 43.

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1992 'Lexical Expansion in Yoruba: Techniques and Principles', *Research in Yoruba Language and Literature* 2. 14 – 30.

1992 'Issues in the Syntax of Standard Yoruba Focus Constructions', *Journal of West African Languages* 22. 69 – 88.

[Abstract: This paper shows that, contrary to Yusuf (1990), the Standard Yoruba element *ni* nowhere functions as a copula verb but as a focus marker. It also adduces additional pieces of evidence deriving from case-assignment, acceptability judgments, and number agreement to show that constructions featuring constituent (as opposed to sentence) focus are basically noun phrases rather than sentences, as indicated much earlier in Awobuluyi (1978a).]

2001 ‘Arōpo-Orukọ Kukuru Ẹni Kẹta Ẹyo Aṣolùwà’, (*The Third Person Singular Subject Pronoun*), *Yoruba: Journal of the Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria*. 2. 1 – 8.

[Abstract: Language-internal evidence based on number and person concord suggests that the element ‘ó’, popularly thought to be the third person singular subject pronoun in Standard Yoruba, is actually a pre-verbal adverb. It regularly takes the above form whenever the subject NP for any number of reasons does not appear immediately to its left.]

2005 ‘Mofíímu Kan Șoso Ni “ài” Àbí Méjí?’, *Yoruba: Journal of the Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria*. 3. 1 – 7.

[Abstract: The constituents of the element ‘ài’, traditionally considered as a single morpheme functioning as a prefix in Standard Yoruba, are separable, as in à-kúkú-i-bí ‘having no children at all’. The element therefore is bi-morphemic in structure.]

2006 “Ó” Kíi Șe Arōpo-Orúkọ Èdè Yorùbá, (“Ó” Is NOT a Pronoun in Yoruba!) *Yoruba: Journal of the Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria* 3.3. 1 – 14.

[Abstract: Evidence from Ekiti dialects of Yoruba as well as from within Standard Yoruba shows that the element ‘Ó’, popularly thought to be the third person singular subject pronoun in the language, is but a positional variant of the high-tone syllable (HTS), which is one of the pre-verbal elements usually found between subject NPs and VPs in the language. The third person singular subject pronoun has null phonetic content, as shown by a construction in which all other subject pronouns become overt object pronouns while the phonetically null third person singular subject pronoun predictably becomes a phonetically null third person singular object pronoun. As object, the third person singular pronoun takes the form of *un* [ú] and obligatorily assimilates all the non-tonal features of the vowels of monosyllabic verbs in all known dialects except those of Ondo, Ifon, and one or two towns in Ijesa land. The behaviour of the pronoun as a

possessive qualifier seems to require Minimalist Programme to either admit that syntactic transformations still have a place in Syntax or be unable to account for some Standard Yoruba utterances that regularly feature person and number mismatch between some anaphors and their supposed antecedents.]

2008 'Iṣe Fáwèlì Olóhùn Àárín inú Àpólà Oníbàátan Yorùbá: A Rejoinder', ('The Function of the Mid Tone Syllable in Yoruba Genitive Constructions: A Rejoinder') *Yoruba: Journal of the Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria* 5.1. 25 – 32.

[Abstract: The paper under review fails to invalidate Awobuluyi (2004/2008), as it merely brandishes theory along with unsubstantiated claims, not realising that the fresh data contained in it actually completely undermine its stand.]

Forthcoming: 'Àwọn Atóka Amúpé Inú Èdè Yorùbá ('Complementizers in Standard Yoruba'), in *Yorùbá: Journal of Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria*, 2015.

[Abstract: There are two distinct elements *tí* in Standard Yoruba. One of them, *tí₁*, is a relative clause complementizer. The other one, *tí₂*, was first noticed by Bamgbose and assumed to be a complementizer as well, because in certain definable syntactic contexts it regularly substitutes for *ni*, the focus complementizer. Further data in the language now suggest that *tí₂* is, in fact, a conjunction for linking sentences or sentential complements. In that capacity it also regularly substitutes for still other complementizers like *pé*, the declarative clause complementizer, and *bí*, the conditional clause complementizer. In addition to this, the paper notes as never before that virtually every type of qualifier in the language occurs with syntactically recoverable covert NP heads.]

E. Review Articles

1966 Review of Ayo Bamgbose, *Yoruba Orthography*, in *Word* 22. 344 – 48.

1970 Review of I. O. Delano, *Dictionary of Yoruba Monosyllabic Verbs*, in *Nigeria Magazine* No. 106, pp. 225 – 227.

INTRODUCTION

This Festschrift, *Current Research in African Linguistics: Papers in Honor of Oladele Awobuluyi*, would not have been possible without the support of the contributors. So, we say a big thank you to all the contributors. We appreciate the enthusiastic response we received after we sent out a call for papers. We would also like to thank Tosin Gbogi for writing a poem in honor of Professor Awobuluyi. Many thanks to Jarrette Allen and Mary Kate Kelly (Tulane University) for help with editing. Mrs. S. O. Awobuluyi and Dr. Oluwatoyin Ameh (nee Awobuluyi) deserve our gratitude for help with the pictures—the cover page photo illustrating Awobuluyi’s books and glasses, and Professor Awobuluyi’s photo (inside the book).

The volume brings together a collection of 21 papers organized thematically as follows. The first section contains articles on applied and sociolinguistics topics: bridging pedagogy gaps in Nigerian languages (Adegbola), African development and language dilemma (Bamgbosé), Orthography as a science (Capo), Bilingualism and language maintenance in small communities (Ofulue), and Issues in African language translation (Oluwafisan; Olubode-Sawé). The second section is a collection of articles on phonology and morphology: the first paper (Akinlabi and Iloene) concerns the theoretical problems posed by high vowel representation and alternations in nasality contexts in Igbo and Yoruba, and the other two papers (Archangeli and Pulleyblank; Orie) examine issues arising from high vowel behavior in tongue root harmony contexts in various dialects of Yoruba. The fourth paper (Oyebade) examines the issue of computation of counting numbers in five Benue-Congo language families (Edoid, Akokoid, Akpes, Nupoid and Yoruboid), and argues that the remarkable similarities in the numbers systems of these groups point either to a more ancient system that united the groups together or to contact history which predates the amalgamation of Nigeria by the British in 1914. The next group of papers in section three focuses on syntax and semantics and their interfaces: phonology and syntax (Abiodun), morphology and syntax (Adesola; Ajiboye), phonology and semantics (Déchaine), syntax (Amfani; Ilori & Olaogun; Kouankem; Maduabuchi; Omachonu) and the structure and semantics of proverbs (Oyelaran; Yuka).

This edited volume makes the following contributions to the field. First, it allows scope for the discussion of issues seldom addressed in current African linguistics literature, for example, computational linguistics, orthography as a science, language dilemma and African development, language maintenance in minority communities, African language loss and innovation in diaspora, and so on. Secondly, it presents new theoretical insights in the study of the phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic properties of African languages, including many languages which are not widely discussed in the literature. Third, it makes accessible to a wider audience data that have not previously been published or is not widely circulated, so that future work on African linguistics can rely on a broader database. Finally, the book makes an important contribution to the expanding work on language documentation and comparative linguistics by presenting data and linguistic analyses from different African languages: Gbe, Gungbe, Hausa, Igala, Igbo, Lamnso' and Medumba, Shona, Edoid, Akokoid, Akpes, Nupoid, Yoruba and Yoruboid.

Editors

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PART I:

APPLIED AND SOCIO-LINGUISTICS

CHAPTER ONE

BRIDGING INTERDISCIPLINARY GAPS IN THE STUDY OF NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

TUNDE ADEGBOLA

AFRICAN LANGUAGES TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE, NIGERIA

As the information age continues to unfold, more and more of human communication will be mediated by machines leading to a need for humans, not only to communicate through machines but also with machines. Such use of machines will certainly add new dimensions to the problem of language endangerment, as languages that these machines are not designed to accommodate will become endangered while users of such languages may be pushed to the fringes of the information society. To avoid such a situation with gross consequences for Nigerian languages and their speakers, there is a need to build a body of scholars that are capable of developing the theories and frameworks that will make these machines respond to Nigerian languages. Such scholarship is necessarily interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary. Although there have been successive efforts at building inter-disciplinary and multidisciplinary scholarship in the Nigerian university system, there are still subsisting difficulties in crossing certain disciplinary boundaries particularly those between the Humanities on the one hand and the Sciences and Technology on the other. The crossing of such trans-disciplinary boundaries, however, is inevitable if we are to address the problems that accompany the development of theories and frameworks necessary to develop a capacity for natural language processing. This paper seeks to establish the inevitability of these trans-disciplinary crossings and also suggests steps that could be taken to facilitate such crossings in the Nigerian university system.