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First Published 1997

ISBN 978 - 027 - 474 - X

TEACHING THE LANGUAGE SKILLS IN YORUBA

A HAND BOOK FOR
LANGUAGE SPECIALISTS.

By

Lanre Makinde

Teaching The Language Skills In Yoruba

A Hand book For Yoruba Language Specialists.

By

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Lanre Makinde 1997

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First Published 1997

ISBN 978 - 027 - 474 - X

DEDICATION

*This Book is Dedicated
To The
Makinde Family.*

Published by: **ZIKLAG EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**
P. O. Box 4096 Festac town, Lagos, Nigeria

Printed by: **KALOST VENTURES LTD.**
Lagos, Nigeria Tel: 5890256

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Preface

The rationale behind this book is to assist the Primary School Teachers in the Yoruba speaking States in Nigeria who may or may not be an indigine. Such teachers should be able to teach the pupils in the lower classes using Yoruba as the medium of instruction. They should also be able to teach Yoruba as subject in the primary school.

Basic concepts in Yoruba language, guidelines into the teaching of the language skills: Listening, speaking, reading and writing were explored. For proper mastery of the language introductory lessons on aspects like the sound system, parts of speech, loan words, contraction, assimilation and other items that would assist the reader or the teacher were given. This book will equally assist a learner of the language as a second language(L2)

Solomon O. Makinde,
September, 1997

CHAPTER 1

YORUBA LANGUAGE

1.0

1.1 Introduction (Ìfààrá)

Language is a very important tool to human species most important form of communication and this is a unique distinguishing factor, between human and non human beings. It is no doubt man's unique accomplishment. It serves as a very strong basis for creative thought and there is no gain - saying in progress, civilization and culture.

For effective communication especially through the use of the human language. Individual must learn or acquire the art of using language. This involves learning the language skills and developing the skills to the fullest for the purpose of effective oral and written communication. Listening and speaking skills otherwise known as the skills of Oracy or Audio - Lingual skills make the first two language skills. Reading and Writing skills (Literacy) are the last two language skills. To acquire literacy mean to be able to read and write.

1.2 Linguistic System of Communication

One of the two ways of transmitting information is the linguistic system. It involves the use of speech and the written language. A speech is a product of human activity. Message has to be encoded by the speaker and then decoded by the receiver. The parts of the body responsible for speech making include:

<i>Lips</i>	- ètè méjèjì
<i>tongue</i>	- ahòn
<i>teeth</i>	- eyin
<i>nostrils</i>	- ihò imú méjèjì
<i>lungs</i>	- ẹ̀dò - fòró
<i>voice box</i>	- gbógógò

The written language makes it easy to communicate with many readers at the same time without distortions. Textual materials

are however limited by the fact that they could influence many readers either positively or negatively and misinterpretations could occur.

1.3 Non-linguistic system of communication. There are number of ways through which communication could be made using the non- linguistic media. We can communicate or speak through colours, symbols pictorial drawings, objects, gestures, hands eye, head drumming and others too numerous to mention. For instance, while communication through colours (ààwò funfun) white colour stands for (àláfíà) and holiness or purity (ìwà mímq̄ tábí mímq̄); blue (búlúú) stands for love (ìfẹ́) etc.

Use of symbols (àrokò) is another non-linguistic way of communication among the Yoruba people. Apart from the colours which are symbolic objects on their own, others are cowrie shells (owó ẹyọ) six cowrie shells tied together and sent to somebody is an indication of love (ìfẹ́) or desire to meet with the person. If three cowries are sent, it signifies a break in relationship or friendship. When palm fronds (mārìwò) are tied to a place, it tells all that it is a sacred place. It could be a shrine.

Gestures (fifí ara sòrò) cut across all people. Actions it is said speak louder than words. Our sitting, or standing posture, the look of our face or countenance could mean a lot. The head (Orí) could be used to indicate agreement or disagreement. We can nod the head to give an approval or wag the head to express a disapproval. With the eyes (ojú), we can look at a person in a particular way or manner to indicate love, approval or disgust. Drumming (lù lùú) can be used to say thousands of words in Yoruba Language. For instance, (gbèdu drum) is used to announced the demise of a King (qba) or an important personality. With the hand (Qwó) we can beckon to someone at a distance, salute, warn, tell a secret or show annoyance by clenching our fists.

However, It must be clarified that linguistic system of communication is more important to language learner than the non-linguistic forms except the sign language used to communicate with hearing impaired.

Yoruba is one of the major Nigeria languages and it has al-

ways had a place in the educational system of most of the Yoruba-speaking areas of the country, such as Lagos, Kwara, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti and Oyo State (Abiri 1982).