Yorùbá People and their LANGUAGE

Yorùbá is a tonal language spoken in Nigeria by about thirty million people and in the neighboring countries of the Republic of Benin and Togo. In Nigeria, Yorùbá speakers reside in the Southwest region in states such as Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti, Lagos, Kogi and Kwara states. Yorùbá is a Kwa language, which belongs to the Yoruboid group. Apart from about 30 million native speakers of the language found in south-western Nigeria and South-eastern Benin Republic, there are also descendants of Yoruba people transported to the New World during the Transatlantic slavery of 18th to 19th centuries; most especially in Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Trinidad, Puerto Rico, etc who speak variations of the language. Yoruba is a tonal language and so it is important to pay attention to the tones in the language. Tones occur on the syllable in Yoruba but in the orthography, tones are marked on vowels and syllabic nasals. There are three basic tones of different pitch levels in Yoruba: High, Mid and Low. In the writing system, the High and Low are marked with (´) and (´) respectively, over the vowel. The mid tone is generally unmarked except where there might be ambiguity or confusion.

The Structure of Languages: “The study of [a] language requires some knowledge of language structure and of the way that structure varies from one language to another. Let us now look at the components of language: the sounds, the way sounds are grouped into words, and the way words are combined to form sentences or utterances. In combination, these elements make up the formal structure of a language—what linguists call a grammar.” –

“This, in order to understand a language, we must first understand its rules; the sounds that it recognizes and the way it organizes sounds into words and words into meaningful statements”


COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course is a continuation of Beginning Yoruba. It picks up from where First Year Yoruba ends. Emphasis will be on reinforcing the basic structures that were learned during the Beginners’ Year through oral and aural activities, and increasing the level of active vocabulary through more reading and writing. More authentic texts will be provided for reading activities to expose students to authentic Yorubá writings and cultures. By the end of the session, students are expected to have reached the intermediate middle or intermediate high level in oral proficiency.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Our main text for the course will be: Schleicher, A. Y. F, (1993) Jé Ká Ka Yorábá
New Haven & London: Yale University Press. (ISBN Number 0-300-07145-0). Get your personal copy of this textbook from the University Bookshop by 1 day of class.

A Yoruba Dictionary is strongly recommended, try and buy one if you can.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: To achieve our set objectives, regular class attendance, punctuality and active participation in class discussions are required. Also, we may use the language laboratory once every week; lab day will be announced in class at appropriate time.
COURSE EVALUATION: Attendance and Class participation:  10%

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to have done the assignments for that day. The class attendance and participation grade will be based on whether the student is prepared for class or not. Students are encouraged to ask questions, participate in drills and discussions and volunteer answers. More than THREE absences will lower the class participation grade.

Course work (take-home assignments and class Quizzes):  20%

Students will be given a number of take-home assignments and quizzes during the semester. There will be no make-up quizzes except for unavoidable circumstances.

Mid-Semester test  20%

This will involve both written (10%) and oral (10%) presentations

Special research assignments: 15%

Students are encouraged to keep a personal audio journal in Yorùbá. The journal will be collected for grading twice each Semester.

Final Semester examination:  35%

This will also involve both written (20%) and oral (15%) presentations

Grade Correspondence:

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<tr>
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General

Feel free to ask questions in the class so that you will not be left behind. However, if there are issues that we cannot resolve in class, you are encouraged to use my office hours or just send me an email. I look forward to a rewarding semester with you all.

“This course will observe official policy on the H1N1 virus.”

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Since language is learned over time, with persistence, consistency and great deal of patience, regular class attendance and individual/group studies are crucial to the learning process. For this reason, there shall be various penalties for the violation of class attendance policy. The following penalties shall apply for the violations listed below:

**Lateness:** A student is considered late if she or he arrives in class after attendance has been taken (i.e. about 5 minutes into the class period). Lateness shall be calculated on 2 lateness = 1 absence basis.

**Absences:** Any lateness beyond the first 15 minutes of class is considered an absence for that day (even if such student decides to remain in class!) **There are about 45 days for this semester**

First Assignment: Write at least one page about what the study of Yoruba means to you and what impact it could have on your major. Include a paragraph on the history of Yoruba language learning. Do a brief research online and write your findings in an essay format. Due August 31st 2018
INTERMEDIATE YORUBA I   FALL SEMESTER

Weeks 1-2 (Wednesday August 22nd & 24th/ 27th, 29th & 31st)

Topic: Greetings beyond time of day. We shall explore other forms of greetings and the proverbs associated with greetings
Function: Greeting people on different occasions and situations
Cultural Information: Use of “ọmọ mi” and the importance of greetings
Schleicher: Preliminary Lesson

3rd to 4th Weeks (Wednesday September 3rd, Labor Day)*** 5th & 7th / 10th 12th to 14th

Topic: How to talk about Apartments or Houses in Yoruba
Function: You should be able to describe your apartment or house including the type of people who live there
Grammar: Numbers expressing “each”, “both”, “all three”, etc. Qualifying words for descriptive verbs: the verbs “mu wa” and “gbe wa”
Schleicher: Lesson I

Weeks 5-6 17th 19th to 21st / 24th 26th to 28th

Topic: More on physical characteristics and personal traits
Function: Describing people’s physical characteristics and personal Traits
Grammar: More on adjectives and adverbial verbs, expressing the opposite form of an adjective, and adverbs
Reading: An essay on the attitudes of two siblings.
Schleicher: Lesson 2

Weeks 7&8 October 1st 3rd to 5th / 8th 10th to 12th

Topic: Seasons and Times
Function: Talking about seasons and holidays
Grammar: Expressing “being cold” or “it is cold”. Expressing reactions, feelings, and opinions. Emphatic possessive pronouns — “temi “tiwo” “tiyin”, etc.
Reading: Essay on the three most important religions of Yoruba people
Schleicher: Lesson 3

Weeks 9-10 October 15, 17th to 19th / 22nd 24th to 26th

Topic: Health
Function: Talking about one’s health
Grammar: Expressing pain and illness, use of the negative maker “a!” and vowel elision

Week 10- 29th to 31st & November 2nd Homecoming)*** Mid-Semester review and test
Reading: Ijapa ati ọrẹ rè (Yoruba folktale on Mr. Tortoise and his friend)
Schleicher: Lesson 4

Friday 2nd Homecoming
Weeks 12-13 5th November, 7th with 12th as Veterans Day
November 5th Topic: More on the market system
Function: Talking about hawking one’s products
Grammar: Use of “oni-” summary of question forms, difference between “eélòó” and “eleèlóó”
Reading: Essay on Yoruba market
Schleicher: Lesson 5

Weeks 14&15 12th 14th to 16th / 23rd then November 21st to 24th as Thanksgiving holiday***
Topic: Leisure time activities
Function: Talking about leisure time activities
Grammar: Unreal Conditional form “iba”
Reading: Folktale on Mr. Tortoise and the Elephant
Week 16 27th / 29th to December 3rd ……4th Last day of class
December 14th to 18th and final revision and exam.

Final written Examination 12/10/2018 @ 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Things to take note of concerning Sentences in Yoruba:
(1). A sentence is an assemblage of words conveying a complete sense or thought. This is what we represented as S+V+O= A simple sentence
(2). A sentence may be simple, Compound or complex.
(3). A simple sentence expresses a single statement, command or question. It contains one finite verb only. The finite verbs are in bold in the following sentences, and the non-finite verbs are underlined: Verbs appear in almost all sentences. This sentence is illustrating finite and non-finite verbs. The dog will have to be trained well. Tom promised to try to do the work. (see more at http://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/finiteverbs.htm
(4). A compound sentence consists of two or more simple sentences, each of which gives, when taken separately, a complete meaning; for instance Ó yinbọn, ó sì farapamó sínú igbó—He fired a shout and hid in the bush/forest
(5). A complex sentence is one which consists of a principal sentence and one or more subordinate sentences. Every sub-ordinate sentence contains a finite verb, but does not convey a complete sense when taken apart from the principal sentence. For instance “Ěni ti ó ba ji èpò mi ji yèyé—meaning Who steals my bag/purse steals a joke/trash.

Adapted from Yorùbá composition by Gaye & Beecroft (1923)