

ASPECT OF BORROWING IN THE IPE AND YORUBA LANGUAGES

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Abstract

Borrowed words are those that found their ways into a particular language from another which were not part of the vocabulary initially. This is as a result of educational, religious, political or incidental social contacts. These borrowed or loan words are used as part of the lexicon of the new language, because they have gone through some phonological and morphological processes in the language. This paper explicates the aspect of borrowing as a morphological process in the Ipe and Yoruba Languages in order to account for how words from other languages found their ways into the lexicons of Ipe and Yoruba. The study is corpus based and also a word-based morphological study. It depends primarily on the words available in the lexicon of the two indigenous languages under investigation. Data is elicited from both monolingual and bilingual native-speakers of the Ipe Language and the Yoruba Language in Ipe-Akoko and Oyo towns respectively. With the deployment of the Hockett (1954)'s Item and Arrangement and Word and Paradigm as expatiated by Crystal (2008), the study reveals that while the Ipe language has borrowed extensively from English, Yoruba and Edo, the Yoruba language has borrowed so much from English and Hausa, due to colonization, education, politics and social-economic contacts. It concludes that there is the need to investigate more into the Nigerian indigenous languages in order to prevent them from endangerment and possible extinction. The study recommends that studies in other morphological processes such as reduplication, blending, clipping, affixation and compounding in Nigeria's indigenous languages should be carried out to further give prominence to the languages.

Keywords: Borrowing, Morphology, Ipe, Yoruba, Language

Introduction

This paper deals with the aspect of borrowing in the Ipe and Yoruba languages, two indigenous languages spoken in the South-West Nigeria. It is hinged on the fact that no language is sufficient on its own without depending on one or two languages to populate its linguistic codes. Borrowing is also known as loan words. This is because there is no language that exists in isolation; hence the inevitability of borrowing from one language to the other. For this reason, it is not out of place to assert that borrowing as one of the morphological processes takes central stage in word formation.

Morphological processes otherwise referred to as Morphological patterns or Morphological systems by some linguists, such as Haspelmath and Sims (2013:34), are the changes that occur in words when they are found in certain environments or placed side-by-side with other words. They are the ways through which

gradual changes in the structuring or formation of words are realized. Morphological processes occur in various forms, ranging from the modification and formation of individual words to compound words. In other words, they are the ‘systems’ or ways involved in the formation of words. Morphological processes include affixation, compounding, blending, clipping, coinage, acronyms, reduplication, borrowing and sound symbolism in English and other languages of the world. The fact that the word forms the basis of Morphology, a branch of Linguistics, means that all spoken languages of the world have Morphology as a component which comprises the morphological processes employed in forming words in such languages. For the purpose of this paper, the aspect of the morphological processes chosen is borrowing as it concerns the Ipe and Yoruba languages.

The Ipe Language

Ipe, as recorded by Fadoro (2014), is the native language spoken by the people of Ipe-Akoko in Ondo State, which is a classification that this study adopts. Fadoro (2014) submits:

Akoko is the most linguistically diverse area of Yorùbáland. In addition to Yorùbá, there are several other languages spoken natively in the area. These languages belong to five language sub-groups of the Benue Congo below:

1. The Yoruboid: Oka, Ikare, Iboropa, Akungba, Ifira, Oba, Ikun, Supare, Irun, Afin
2. Arigidi Cluster: (Akokoid) Arigidi (Comprising Arigidi and Erushu), Ọwọ̀n (Comprising Afa, Aje, Udo, Oge, Oyin, Igashi and uro), Ahan, Ojo
3. AkpesAkpes : (Akunnu), Ase, Daja, Esuku, Gedegede, Ibaram, Ikaram (Ikorom), Iyani
4. Ukaan (Ikani): Auga (Ilgau), Ise (Ishieu), Kakumo-Akoko (Ikaan), Ayanran (Iyinno) (Ayanran is spoken in Edo State)
5. Edoid: Ehueun (Ekpinmi), Uhami (Ishua), Ukue.

Of all these languages, Yorùbá is incontrovertibly the most dominant. Its influence on the Akokoid speech forms is more pervasive than any other one. The reason for this is not far-fetched. Akokoid speakers live among the larger community who are speakers of Yorùbá. In fact, Fadoro (2010) asserts that majority of these Akokoid speakers prefer Yorùbá to their speech forms because of four factors. These are: Economic, Demographic, Institutional Support and Historical factors.

From the submission of Fadoro, it follows therefore that Ipe belongs to the Edoid language sub-group. It should be noted that the last language under the Edoid sub-group (Ukue) is the same as Ipe, spoken in Ipe-Akoko. “Ukue” which was originally spelt “Uqwe”, according to the Onipe of Ipe-Akoko, over the years, became “Ipe” as a result of civilisation and modernisation. Hence, the native speakers adopt spelling and pronunciation as Ipe.

The Yoruba Language

According to Atanda (1996) cited in Salawu (2004:98), “The Yoruba people are found in the West of the lower Niger, what is now commonly referred to as the South West of Nigeria. It has even been claimed that at one time the vast areas from the banks of the Niger to the Volta had come under the authority of Yoruba rulers”. They are spread across the Republic of Benin and Togo, and are also found in such places as Sierra Leone, The Gambia and across the Atlantic, as far as the Caribbean, West Indies and the Americas, especially in Brazil and Cuba. Arifalo and Ogen (2003), cited in Salawu (2004), note that worldwide, it is estimated that the Yoruba have a population of over 40 million. They also assert that Yoruba is one of the major and most prominent ethnic groups in West Africa. In fact, Falola (1999) claims that Yoruba is one of the most researched ethnic groups in the world, contending that as far back as 1976, the available literature on the Yoruba, despite many omissions, numbered 3,488 items. Scholars note that this vast amount of work is quite substantial and unrivalled in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Yoruba have several traditions about how their people began life. One of them says that it was at Ile-Ife, which the Yoruba regard as the cradle of their nation, that mankind was first created (Davidson, 1976: 117). This mythical creation legend intimates that the Yoruba were the original inhabitants of the Ife area.

Recounting this legend, Stride and Ifeka (1978: 288) report that at the dawn of time, the world was a watery waste. On the orders of his father – the supreme God, Olorun - Oduduwa climbed down a chain from the sky. He brought with him a handful of earth, a cockerel and a palm-nut. He scattered the earth upon the water and it formed the earth at Ile-Ife. The cockerel dug a hole in which Oduduwa planted the palm-nut, and up sprang a mighty tree with sixteen branches, each the ruling family of an early Yoruba State.

Stride and Ifeka (1978: 290) also recall another tradition which indicates that the Yoruba people were produced by inter-marriage between a small band of invaders from the Savanna and the indigenous inhabitants of the forest. The story is that Oduduwa was the son of Lamurudu, sometimes described as a ruler from the East, sometimes as a prince of Mecca. When Islam was introduced into his homeland, Oduduwa refused to forsake the religion of his ancestors, so he and his supporters were expelled from their native land. After long wanderings, they settled among the forest people and founded the site of Ife. The deviation in these two traditions, notwithstanding, one common fact is that Oduduwa is regarded as “the much-revered legendary ancestral hero of the Yoruba” (Osae and Nwabara, 1980: 92). Oduduwa had seven close descendants who traditions say were his sons; while others call them grandsons. These seven young men moved out to found the ruling families of seven new Yoruba states which include Owu, Sabe, Popo, Benin, Ila, Ketu and Oyo.

The term Yoruba describes a number of semi-independent peoples loosely linked by geography, language, history and religion. The Yoruba live primarily in Nigeria and some parts of Benin, Togo, Sierra Leone, Cuba and Brazil. They have resided in cities for many hundreds of years and are among the most urbanized people in Africa. Ibadan, located in Southern Nigeria, is one of the oldest and largest black cities in Africa with a population estimated at well over 5 million. Yoruba cities formed the political centres of city-states governed by a king and supreme council. In pre-colonial times each city-state was autonomous and had its own distinct dialect, religious cults and army. These ancient states frequently warred with one another, and several centuries ago one of these kingdoms, Oyo, became dominant. Old Oyo, as this state is called, gave cohesiveness to Yoruba custom and contributed greatly to the collective identity of modern Yoruba-speaking people.

Today, however, a Yoruba will often call himself or herself *Ibadan, Oyo, Ijesa, Ekiti, Ondo, Egba, or Ijebu* rather than Yoruba in order to emphasize his or her local identity. There are more than fifty traditional Yoruba city-states recognized today. Though their domains have been absorbed into the government of the modern nation of Nigeria, traditional kings often have considerable local and national political power.

Over the years, scholars cite many reasons for studying Yoruba, including personal interest in West African cultures, research interests and fulfilment of foreign language requirements. African-American students often study Yoruba out of interest in their own heritage, since many of the slaves brought to North America during the 18th and 19th centuries came from Yoruba-speaking areas. For students of Comparative Linguistics and Sociolinguistics, a study of Yoruba can help and yield astounding results through an examination of the various changes and differences that occur between the language and the culture in the home base on the one hand and the diaspora on the other.

The Statement of the Problem

Over the years, the aspect of morphology has been neglected, as little or no attention is paid to the area that studies how the words we speak in our languages are formed. If the general area of morphology is not given attention, how much can one say about other aspects such as borrowing which is the thrust of this study? It is on this premise that the current study takes a step forward by advancing the argument for an investigation on the aspect of borrowing in the Ipe and Yoruba languages. Appeals have also been made by specialists, educationists and linguists such as: Tinuoye (1991) and Banjo (1995) on the need for more research works in the field of Linguistics, especially as it concerns indigenous languages in Nigeria for sustainability and rescue from extinction. In as much as this study recognizes the importance of English in the national and international lives, it agrees with Salawu (2004) that the indigenous languages must also be accorded their pride of place. Banjo (1995:187), cited in Salawu (ibid) captures this essence:

The dominance of the English language at this stage of modernization is inevitable, but the situation is evolving rather than static. In that process of evolution, all the languages

have a part to play, and if Nigeria is to make a distinctive contribution to human civilization, it will have to be as a result of the symbiotic relationship between English and the indigenous languages, a pooling of the resources of all the languages without foreclosing the contributions that any of them can make.

This current study is therefore a positive response to the appeals by those cited above and several others, in order to fill the existing gap.

Theoretical Framework

This work hinges on Contrastive Analysis as a theory because it provides the basis for comparing and contrasting borrowing morphological process in the two Nigerian languages under investigation. Contrastive analysis was used extensively in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in the 1960s and early 1970s, as a method of explaining why some features of a target language were more difficult to acquire than others. According to the behaviourist theories prevailing at the time, language learning was a question of habit formation and this could be reinforced or impeded by existing habits. Therefore, the difficulty in mastering certain structures in a second language (L2) depends on the differences between the learners' (L1) and the language they are trying to learn. In the case of this research, the source language is Ipe while the target language is Yoruba.

The choice of Contrastive Linguistics is in agreement with the proposition of Johansson (2000) that Contrastive Linguistics is the systematic comparison of two or more languages, with the aim of describing their similarities and differences. According to him, the objective of the comparison may vary as earlier indicated by Johansson and Hofland (1994:25): "Language comparison is of great interest in a theoretical as well as an applied perspective. It reveals what is general and what is language specific, and is therefore important both for the understanding of language in general and for the study of the individual languages compared".

Johansson goes further to say that Contrastive Linguistics is thus not a unified field of study. The focus may be on general or on language specific features; the study may be theoretical, without any immediate application, or it may be applied, i.e. carried out for a specific purpose. This is the perspective of the current study; it is mainly a theoretical study which would be consequently applied, especially for the speakers of Ipe Language who also speak Yoruba Language.

The study also employs the position of James (1980) which states that CA involves two steps:

1. Description, that is, a formal description of each language is made.
2. Comparison, which is concerned with the identification of areas of differences and similarities, including prediction and signalling areas that may cause errors and difficulties, with linguistic explanation as regards this. James' position on CA as theoretical framework is adopted for analysis because of its suitability and appropriateness for describing and contrasting the two selected languages.

Two models of theories of Morphology according to Hocket's (1954), supported by Artkinson (1982) are also employed for analysis:

- i. Item and Arrangement (IA) which involves only the assumption that there exist morphs and these morphs are arranged in particular ways in accordance with the tactical rules of the language.
- ii. Word and Paradigm which is couched entirely in terms of word forms. Thus, every language has a system of morphemic variations which is correlated with a parallel system of variation in the environment.

This same approach was expatiated by Crystal (2008:314) where he asserts:

Morphological analysis may take various forms. One approach is to make a distributional study of the morphemes and morphemic variants occurring in words (the analysis of morphotactic arrangements), as in item-and arrangement models of description. Another approach sets up morphological processes or operations, which see the relationships between word forms as one of replacement (e.g. replace the /e// of *take* with the /ä/ of *took*), as in item-and process models.

This means that contrastive analysis could produce accurate descriptions of individual languages, and therefore is a suitable theory for this study. These approaches are related to this study in that on the one hand, the contrastive analysis is used to account for the areas of convergence and divergence in the aspect of borrowing between the two indigenous languages under investigation. On the other hand, the item and arrangement model of description is used to account for the aspect of borrowing as morphological process in the Ipe and Yoruba languages.

Methodology

This study is corpus based and also a word-based morphological study. It depends primarily on the words available in the lexicon of the two indigenous languages under investigation. Data is elicited from both monolingual and bilingual native-speakers of the Ipe Language and the Yoruba Language in Ipe-Akoko and Oyo towns. The Ibadan 400-word list (See Appendix) of Yoruba basic words serve as primary source of data. Also, the researcher's intuition as a native speaker of the Yoruba Language is an added advantage that provided useful information for discussing the aspect borrowing in the Yoruba Language. Since language changes over time, the modern Standard British English Language is used to gloss the words in Ipe and Yoruba in order to clear linguistic doubts. For the Yoruba Language, the "Akoto Yoruba Ode Oni" (the modern correctly written Yoruba) which is the Standard Oyo Dialect spoken in Oyo Town, is used to express Yoruba words and examples of its morphological processes for elucidation and intelligibility. Research such as this would not have been easy without the help of research assistants, especially as it concerned the Ipe language, which the researcher is not a native speaker of. For adequate collection of data in Ipe-Akoko, the researcher employed the services of three research assistants. They are native speakers of Ipe and at the same time, they are competent in spoken and written English and Yoruba. The least educational qualification of these research assistants is Senior Secondary School Certificate. Their functions include but not limited to guiding the researcher on where to get adequate information about the research within the Ipe-Akoko town; and translation of the Ibadan 400 word list into the Ipe language.

Presentation of Data and Analysis

<p>Ipe</p> <p>Domains of Yoruba Loanwords in Ipe</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Yoruba names such as Ogunleye, Omolabake, Ajaloke ii. ayò - Yoruba local game iii. òse - week iv. ofà - arrow v. òkun - sea vi. padà - return vi. oke - mountain/up vii. olóòtu - group leader/anchor ix. sàngó - the god of thunder x. akòwe - clerk/scribe xi. osó - wizard xii. òróró - groundnut oil xiii. ogéde-gboli - plantain xiv. erin - elephant xv. dipaata - be rotten <p>Domains of English Loanwords in Ipe</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Catholic - ikatoliiki ii. Seraphim - iserafu iii. Bible - ibibeli iv. Tailor - itelo v. A penny - eepinni 	<p>Yoruba</p> <p><u>crayon</u> - kereyóònù</p> <p><u>handcuff</u> - áńkóòbù</p> <p><u>brassiere</u> - bèrèsìà</p> <p><u>Bible</u> - Bíbéli</p> <p><u>doctor</u> - dókítà</p> <p><u>English</u> - Géésì</p> <p><u>governor</u> - gómìnà</p> <p><u>biscuit</u> - bisikítì</p> <p><u>barrack</u> - bérékè</p> <p><u>barber</u> - bábà</p> <p><u>tailor</u> - télò</p> <p><u>Ephesus</u> - Èfèsù</p> <p><u>chain</u> - šèèni</p> <p><u>alum</u> - àlómù</p> <p><u>ink</u> - ínńkì</p> <p>Other examples of borrowed words in Yoruba language are:</p> <p>From Arabic/Hausa</p> <p>Giwa (elephant) - Gíwá- Manager</p> <p>al-basa- àlùbòsà- onion</p> <p>kwano- páànù- plate</p> <p>kafir- kẹfẹrì- pagan</p> <p>adu'a- àdùrà- prayer</p>
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vi. Cashew - ikasu	ibilis- bìlísì- temptation
vii. Butter - ibota	labari- làbàrè - news
viii. Rice - iraisi	
ix. Sugar - isuga	From English
x. Motor - imoto	slate - sflèèti
xi. Governor - igovina	rice - ìrẹ̀sì
xii. Soldier - isoja	alligator - agiliti
xiii. Teacher- itisha	peculiar mess - pẹ̀nkẹ̀lẹ̀mẹ̀ẹ̀sì
xiv. Key - ikii	upstairs - pètésì
xv. Film - ifiimu	deacon - díákónì
xvi. Letter - ileta	table - tábìlì
xvii. Bag - ibagi	Hebrew - Hébéru
xviii. Barber - ibaba	block - búlòd̀k̀ù
xix. Cement - isimeti	crayon - kereyoonu
xx. Receipt - irisiti	seraph – serafu
	cherubim –kerubu
Domains of Edo Language in Ipe	
i. oḡhun - one	
ii. ivaa - two	
iii. isaa - three	
iv. inii - four	
v. shini - five	
vi. sosan - six	
vii. shọna -seven	
viii. yẹ̀ni - eight	
ix. sheni - nine	
x. igbèè - ten	

Discussions and Findings

From the data gathered, it is evident that Ipe language has extensively borrowed from Yoruba language due to some political, economic and geographical factors. Discussions here are restricted to the contacts Ipe has with Yoruba, English and Edo languages. The reason for this is that Yoruba and Edo are neighbouring languages to Ipe with considerable influence. English is the language of the colonizers in the region. For instance, almost all the names in Ipe have Yoruba inclination. An example is the name “Bello” which is borrowed from Ilorin.

That a language could absorb words from another language from different domains is no gainsaying. From the data gathered for this research, it is revealed that Ipe absorbs many words relating to different spheres of life from Yoruba language. These include words relating to local games, tools, personal names, traditional religion and belief system.

Examples are the following:

- i. Yoruba names such as Ogunleye, Omolabake, Ajaloke
- ii. ayò - Yoruba local game
- iii. òse - week
- iv. ofà - arrow
- v. òkun - sea

The fact that Ipe has more than enough words from English Language cannot be ignored. In the region where the Ipe language belongs and Nigeria as a whole, English is the language of the colonizers. The English language therefore influenced almost all aspects of the Nigerian people and the speakers of Ipe are no exception. The loanwords from English to Ipe include those relating to religion, social activities, education, kitchen utensils and other areas of life. Examples of some of these words are shown below:

- i. Catholic - ikatoliiki
- ii. Seraphim - iserafu
- iii. Bible - ibibeli
- iv. Tailor - itelo
- v. A penny - eepinni

The fact that Ipe belongs to Edoid subgroup in language classification is a clear indication that there will be possibly many loanwords from Edo language into Ipe language. Data collected for this study confirms that Ipe absorbs many words relating to numbering and counting and other spheres of life from Edo language. One of the major reasons for this borrowing is the need to express something new in their language. Some of these words that were borrowed are the names of things that are genuinely new to the speakers of Ipe. There is, therefore, the need for their vocabulary to accommodate these concepts when there is no equivalent of such words in the lexicon of the language.

Another arguable reason is the fact that (from the history gathered) the Ipe people, upon migration from Ile-Ife, passed through Edo and settled there for some time before their final settlement at Ipe-Akoko. History has it that they must have left the Edo land with some of the Edo words. Examples below illustrate this:

- i. oqhun - one
- ii. ivaa - two
- iii. isaa - three
- iv. inii - four
- v. shini - five

Borrowed words are those that found their ways into Yoruba but were not part of the vocabulary initially. This is as a result of educational, religious, political or incidental social contacts. These borrowed or loan words are used as part of the Yoruba lexicon because they have gone through some phonological processes in the language.

Yoruba has extensively borrowed from English, Arabic and Hausa languages. The following rules have, however, been put into consideration for the words to correspond with the phonological and morphological conditions of Yoruba words. The rules are:

- i. There should be no consonant clusters in Yoruba words, except for the letter “gb”. Consider the following words borrowed from English:

crayon - kereyòdùnù

handcuff - áńkóòbù

brassiere - bèrèsíà

Bible - Bíbéli

doctor - dókítà

- ii. No Yoruba word should end with consonant sound or intrusive “r”. Examples:

biscuit - bisikítì

barrackk - bárékè

barberr - bábà

Ephesuss - Èfésù

chainn - šéèni

Conclusion and Recommendation

The two languages under investigation exhibit the feature of borrowing as a morphological process. In the two languages, it is evident that they have extensively borrowed words from other languages to enrich their linguistic codes. For example, Ipe language has loan words such as “pada” (return) and “erin” (elephant) originating from Yoruba, itelo (tailor) and ibibeli (Bible) from English, “ivaa” (two) and “isaa” (three) from Edo. The Yoruba language borrows and coins words such as “telo” (tailor), “Bibeli” (Bible), “dokita” (doctor) and “beresia” (brassiere) from English, “alubọsa” (al-basa) and “giwa” (manager) from Hausa. The aspect of borrowing in the morphological processes of the Ipe and Yoruba languages is hinged on the thesis statement that words, in every natural language, are the oxygen and carbon dioxide with which languages breathe. Hence, there is the need to always study the internal structure of words which is the focus of Morphology. Ultimately, there is the need to investigate more into the Nigerian indigenous languages, especially how the words in the languages are formed, in order to prevent them from endangerment and possible extinction. The study recommends that studies in other morphological processes such as reduplication, blending, clipping, affixation and compounding in Nigeria’s indigenous languages should be carried out to further give prominence to the languages.

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